4.1 Forms of Societal Exclusion

This text previously discussed how immigrants adopt the customs, values, and attitudes of their new society and, over time, become assimilated into the new culture. However, for their own reasons or for reasons beyond their control, some do not assimilate. Those who fail to assimilate often do not have the same opportunities and advantages enjoyed by those who do; the outsiders do not fully participate in the culture (Zellentin, Hinsch, & Wingert, 2012). Because of dress, language, accent, or customs, they are still viewed as different. Immigrants and the homeless are examples of such excluded populations.

When people immigrate to a new society and have needs, values, and attitudes that differ from those of the majority population, does the host society have any responsibility to try to accommodate immigrants' needs, values, and attitudes?

Proponents of assimilation would say that a host country has no responsibility whatsoever to make cultural changes to accommodate newcomers. "If they don't like it here, they can go back where they came from," goes the argument. Yet the United States in particular prides itself on being a nation of immigrants. Many social practices in American culture have continually undergone change as a result of the immigration of different groups of people into this country. For example, ethnic restaurants abound in large and small cities around the country and are frequented by people of varying nationalities. Public documents are routinely printed in several different languages in addition to English; Americans of all backgrounds routinely participate in Chinese New Year and St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Many people, however, see these social practices as inconsequential when compared to what they consider to be various ways in which minority groups are oppressed and systematically excluded from mainstream American culture. The sections that follow examine some of these views.

Oppression

Historically, the term **oppression** has described unjust treatment by a powerful person or government. Such treatment might include persecution, abuse, domination, brutality, or tyranny, such as the oppression of slaves in the United States prior to the Civil War. More recently, however, the term has been used to denote widespread or systemic social inequity by those who wield power in a hierarchical social system that grants one group (e.g., racial, gender, or socioeconomic) greater access to resources (social, economic, political, cultural, and psychological) relative to other groups (Case & Hunter, 2012). Such oppression, say some researchers, creates a minority group experience in which people feel marginalized. **Marginalization**, also often referred to as social exclusion, relegates people to the margins or fringes of mainstream society and places them at a social disadvantage.

Oppression, say some researchers, also has the potential to limit individuals in the social, political, and economic domains of their lives, while taking a psychological toll on them by creating a sense of demoralization, lowered self-esteem, and decreased quality of life (Matthews & Adams, 2009). Oppression can be accompanied by **discrimination**—actions, practices, traditions, policies, or laws that deny human rights or social participation to categories of people based on their actual or perceived membership in a certain group.

Discrimination

Broadly defined, the term *discrimination* refers to discernment—the ability to recognize and understand the differences and fine distinctions between one thing and another. However, in the latter part of the 1800s, the word acquired a meaning related to the unfair or prejudicial treatment of or behavior toward a person or minority group. As its definition above suggests, discrimination can take multiple forms. It can refer to unequal treatment by one person; a community-wide ostracizing of certain people in specific neighborhoods; a pervasive attitude demonstrated by unfair treatment in employment, housing, or education; or a societal prejudice that is reflected in regulations or legislation that affect groups of people.

For example, some Muslims have pointed to U.S. legislation, such as the 2001 Patriot Act and travel restrictions implemented through the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), as the impetus for increased discrimination toward them (Ghaffari & Çiftçi, 2010).

After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, many Muslims felt **stigmatized** because of their religion and/or ethnicity. The word *stigma* derives from a 16th-century word meaning "to mark with a brand," and it refers to singling out someone or a group and condemning them or their behavior as wrong or disgraceful. This stigmatization often becomes a rationale for various forms of discrimination.

On a 2007 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, a majority of Muslim Americans surveyed said it has become more difficult to be a Muslim in the United States since the September 11 attacks. Many Muslims believe that the government "singles out" Muslims for increased surveillance and monitoring, and they also report hate crimes, harassment, and other forms of discrimination against them due to their ethnic and cultural identity and to misconceptions regarding the religion of Islam (Ghaffari & Çiftçi, 2010).

In 2010 the Council on American–Islamic Relations estimated that approximately 7 million Muslims lived in the United States. Approximately 65% to 75% of these people are immigrants, and they belong to a diverse population that originated from 80 different countries around the world and whose members have different traditions, practices, languages, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

The Muslim population varies widely in its religious affiliation and how its members observe and practice their religion. A study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2007 titled "Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream" surveyed the identities of the Muslim American community and found that about half of the Muslim immigrant population and their children identify as Sunni Muslims, 22% do not identify as a member of any particular sect, and 16% identify as Shia (Shiite) Muslims.

Regardless of religious affiliation, overall, a third of Muslim Americans interviewed in the 2007 Pew survey reported that they experienced at least one of these hostile acts in the previous 12 months: being called offensive names, being singled out by law enforcement, or being physically threatened or assaulted.

The example of discrimination against Muslims is not unique to the United States, and discrimination is not restricted to one religious group, nationality, skin color, or appearance. Discrimination exists in many forms throughout the world.

Structural Inequities

History is replete with stories of discrimination against individuals and entire groups of people. This discrimination is not always sanctioned by the primary culture, and it is not always obvious. But it can be

reinforced, perpetuated, and even implicitly condoned when it exists within the structures and systems of the society itself.

When discrimination exists within social, political, and economic institutions or other structures within a society, **structural inequities** are rooted in the societal system. They can be found, for example, in policies that give preference to immigrants from one country over another, in university admission practices that privilege the children of alumni or other special classes of applicants, and in laws that deny voting rights to persons based on race or sex. These structural inequities exclude some groups from full participation in the culture, relegating them to an inferior status in the society.

Structural inequities can also be more subtle than explicit laws allowing or prohibiting actions by certain groups. They can take the form of systemic cultural inequalities. These could include the underrepresentation of minorities in positions of social, economic, and political influence; unlawful practices within communities such as exploitation of immigrants or other minority populations in low-wage or "sweatshop" employment; lack of input from marginalized groups with regard to political decisions; or silent rejection or subtle forms of exclusion from participation in the social structure.

In the 2009 book *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City*, Harvard professor William Julius Wilson explores the structural and cultural forces that contribute to racial inequality in American inner cities. He explains that when people share similar place-based circumstances such as living together in a poor, segregated neighborhood, they participate in social networks and a particular way of understanding social life and cultural scripts that guide their behavior. Thus, he argues, when they act according to their culture, "they are following inclinations developed from their exposure to the particular traditions, practices, and beliefs among those who live and interact in the same physical and social environment" (Wilson, 2009, p. 4). These practices and beliefs are not the same as those of people whose living circumstances are different.

Wilson (2009) identifies two types of structural forces that he calls *social acts* and *social processes*. *Social acts* refer to the behavior of individuals within the society, and Wilson includes discrimination in hiring and job promotions, housing, and college admission as well as exclusion from unions, associations, or clubs—when these are the acts of an individual or group exercising power over others.

Wilson (2009) defines *social processes* as the "machinery" of society: structural or institutional inequities. He includes policies and laws in this category. These social processes also involve more indirect forms of discrimination such as school tracking, which purports to be academic but often reproduces traditional segregation, and redlining (drawing boundaries and excluding low-income areas where a financial institution will not make mortgage loans), which purports to be about sound fiscal policy but in fact excludes Black people from home ownership. Wilson believes it is important to understand not only the independent contributions of social structure and culture but also how they intersect to shape different group outcomes. According to Wilson, those outcomes can result in inequality and prevent full integration of some minority groups into mainstream American society.

Exclusion Due to Differing Values

We may assume that the values that guide political decisions in the United States are the basic rights and freedoms found in the nation's Constitution. While these values might be the underpinnings of government action, government cannot justify and guarantee that these values will be upheld. Government depends on civil society to provide a moral foundation for these values and to demonstrate them in social practices. These social practices, then, guarantee and protect these values over time.

This chapter previously asked the question, “Does a prevailing social group have any responsibility to try to accommodate the needs, values, and attitudes of those joining it from another group?” If a particular country has no obligation to accommodate immigrants’ needs and values, how can people with different conceptions of what is right or wrong be treated equally? And how does society ensure that cultural differences do not translate into political disadvantages for members of minority groups?

Some claim that mainstream societies generally tolerate the cultural differences of minority groups but do not consider their views in political debates that involve **value judgments** such as those regarding abortion legislation or gay marriage. Value judgments are subjective assessments about the quality or worth of something, or whether something is good or bad, based on one’s own standards or priorities. Value judgments often implicitly involve issues of whether something should or ought to be done. Because they are subjective, they often refer to an individual’s opinion, which is formed to a certain degree by one’s belief system and one’s culture.

This chapter opened with the statement that all cultures develop a pronounced sense of how different they are from “others.” A society that compares itself to another can develop an ethnocentric view: that “we” are superior to “them” or in some way better than “they” are. These perceptions of others, particularly those whose values are considered inferior, can lead to prejudice and various other forms of discrimination against nonfavored groups.

Annotations for: 4.1 Forms of Societal Exclusion

Highlights

Yellow

1. immigrate

4.2 Bias, Generalization, Stereotype, Prejudice, and Profiling

Defining *bias*, *generalization*, *stereotype*, *prejudice*, and *profiling* can be a challenge. These terms often contradict one another, are used synonymously, and may include value judgments—fair and unfair—when applied to a person or situation. Consequently, any study of these concepts must develop a shared definition of terms that will enable students to communicate clearly with one another and with scholars in the diversity field.

The manner in which these terms are commonly used is often different from their meaning in the academic arena and among diversity practitioners. This text will examine these terms from the standpoint of the literature concerning culture and diversity, which may require adjusting some preconceived notions of the meaning of each term.

Bias as a Critical Element in Decision Making

In his book *The Anatomy of Bias: How Neural Circuits Weigh the Options*, neuroscientist Jan Lauwereyns (2010) suggests that the word **bias** should be "exonerated, polished, and used properly" (p. 14). For many, the term *bias* has a negative connotation: a form of evil and a synonym for prejudice that leads to discrimination. In fact, bias is a crucial element in discernment and plays a basic role in decision making. It can be viewed as a preference for or a leaning toward something based on one's values, beliefs, or experiences. From a scientific perspective, bias is the anticipatory processing of information—a prediction of an outcome on either the positive or negative side of neutral. As such, it is an important element in weighing options and analyzing the risks and rewards of certain behaviors.

Everyone has biases. Mechanisms of bias are a fundamental element in organizing an individual's perceptions and are so ingrained in human thought that it is possible to encounter them in many different guises and in a wide variety of contexts and situations, as a person tries to anticipate future results (Lauwereyns, 2010). Thoughts are an intrinsic part of human identity, a personal perspective that has been molded by genetics, environment, personality, culture, and language, and these thoughts are inevitably biased by a person's limited experiences. The biases each person holds help order the world and predict outcomes. According to Lauwereyns (2010), they represent rational, critical thinking and extensive information processing, often based on past experiences.

Suppose that you are at a crossroads where you have only limited time to make a decision. You must choose whether to continue your education or take a new career position that will require you to live in an isolated area without an Internet connection to continue your studies. You may have beliefs, expectations, values, hopes, and desires that factor into your thoughts about which path to choose, and these mental activities provide different degrees of meaning and truth to aid you in making a decision.

However, rational, critical thinking, in which you compare one belief or one value against another, balance one emotion against another, weigh your dreams and hopes for the future, and calculate the risks and rewards of the two options, represents the more extensive information processing that Lauwereyns (2010) describes. This type of rational thought enables you to evaluate positive or negative outcomes. It contributes to decision making by employing complex and more explicit forms of computation and strategies of informed choice. And, in Lauwereyns's words, "It is governed by the orientation—yes, bias—toward happiness, as all other forms of mental or behavioral activity" (p. 86).

Lauwereyns is not alone in his belief that happiness is a primary human goal. Other researchers have also found that happiness as a state of mind may be universal, though its meaning is subjective and

culturally bound. "Cultural values can be a major force in determining the conception of happiness and, consequently, in constricting its subjective experiences" (Luo, Gilmour, & Kao, 2001, p. 480).

Consider the differences between Eastern (Asian) and Western (European/North American) concepts of happiness. Researchers have found that Western happiness correlates consistently with the Western value of individualism, whereas collective welfare, social integration, and human-heartedness—reflecting interpersonal benevolence, group harmony, hierarchy, stability, and homeostasis—are paramount in the Eastern concept of happiness and represent a more collectivist viewpoint (Luo et al., 2001).

Sound and Unsound Generalizations

A **generalization** is the application of a principle, theory, or statement from one particular situation to a broader context or a statement that is true in most situations. However, generalizations that are unsound or that have no statistical or factual basis are not on par with those that are sound or have empirical evidence to support them. Unsound generalizations are often spurious, while those that have a sound statistical basis can be important and valid tools for decision making.

Definitional, Universal, and Empirically Sound Generalizations

Generalizations usually take the form of "*x*'s are *y*" or "*x*'s do or do not contain *y*" where *x* is a noun and *y* is an attribute or behavioral tendency of that noun, such as "Bachelors are unmarried," "The planets in our solar system revolve around our sun," and "Swiss cheese has holes."

Some generalizations are universal, meaning that all the *x*'s are/do contain *y*. In some of these instances, the generalization is a factual definition of the noun—a definitional generalization. For example, the statement "All bachelors are unmarried" is universal because it is part of the definition of a bachelor that he be unmarried. If someone is married, he cannot be a bachelor.

Other generalizations are universal, not because they are definitional, but for empirical reasons—they can be verified or proved by observation or experimentation. For example, for thousands of years people believed the Earth was at the center of the universe, with other heavenly bodies moving around it. However, no empirical evidence existed to disprove this geocentric viewpoint. Then in 1543 Copernicus published his heliocentric model of the universe, and subsequent publication of astronomical tables confirmed his work, so astronomers adopted the idea of the sun as the center of our solar system, and the fundamental concepts of astronomy were reformed. This example represents an empirically sound generalization: Copernicus's conclusion that planets orbit the sun was based on observable data.

Statistically Sound Generalizations

Everyday language is imprecise, often lacking qualifying words such as *most* or *many*, and generalizations are a common result. Even without qualifiers, generalizations are usually statistically sound when they portray the traits of a majority of the members of a particular class: "Swiss cheese has holes." It is possible to find some Swiss cheese without holes, but random samples of Swiss cheese will usually have a hole of some size or another. It is therefore statistically possible to justify applying the statement "Swiss cheese has holes" from one particular situation to a broader context because the generalization accurately portrays the traits of a majority of samples of Swiss cheese (Schauer, 2003).

Generalizations are also statistically sound when they accurately portray the members of a class as having a greater prevalence of a trait than a larger class of which it is a part. The Swiss cheese example

also meets this requirement for a sound generalization. The significance of the statement "Swiss cheese has holes" also lies in the fact that Swiss cheese generally has holes and most other kinds of cheese generally do not.

Empirically and Statistically Unsound Generalizations and Stereotypes

Although definitional, empirically sound, and statistically sound generalizations are valid tools for decision making, most generalizations do not fall into these categories. Consider the generalizations "Pit bulls are vicious" and "German-built automobiles are the best." These generalizations do not fit the criteria for empirically or statistically sound generalizations. Instead, they are examples of a **stereotype**—a commonly held but oversimplified generalization about a group based only on belief and not on any knowledge. Generalizations like these are widely used in everyday speech.

If the trait of viciousness could be shown to appear in pit bulls to a greater degree by nature or to a greater degree than it appears in the dog population as a whole, then the generalization would be sound. However, research has shown that pit bulls do not bite or show aggression at rates higher than other dog breeds, and therefore insufficient evidence exists to make a statistically sound judgment that pit bulls are vicious (American Temperament Test Society, 2013).

Another clear indication of an unsound generalization is the inclusion of opinion or subjective value judgment into the statement. Such is the case with the statement "German-built automobiles are the best." The word *best* represents a subjective perspective or belief that cannot be objectively verified.

Many stereotypes are negative, such as "Women are bad drivers" or "Irish people are heavy drinkers." However, stereotypes can be positive as well. For example, you may have heard that "Asians are good students." Although such a statement is related to a positive trait, it is equally inaccurate and based on a widely held but unverified belief.

Stereotypes are often pervasive throughout a particular culture and can result in social exclusion. An example of a statistically unsound generalization in Japan and, more recently, in China, concerns a widely held belief that personalities are connected to blood types. As a result of this unsound generalization, people in those countries are sometimes not hired for jobs for which they are qualified because of their blood type, despite the absence of any scientific evidence of the relationship between blood type and personality (Schauer, 2003).

Generalizations and Stereotypes as Preambles to Prejudice and Profiling

When applied to groups of people, stereotypes and empirically and statistically sound or unsound generalizations can become prejudices or can result in profiling. **Prejudice** refers to an unsubstantiated belief that results in a preconception or prejudgment of someone because of his or her membership in a group. When either sound or unsound generalizations or stereotypes are used to predict someone's behavior or to suspect or target a person in a given situation, they are known as **profiling**.

Possible examples of generalizations and stereotypes used in decision making include the following:

- The Internal Revenue Service uses complex algorithms to determine whose tax returns to audit.
- TSA personnel single out certain people for pat-downs at U.S. airport security checkpoints.
- Customs officers select specific individuals for additional luggage searches as they enter a country.

- A police officer decides to stop and question a pedestrian.

It is important to remember that even when generalizations or stereotypes are statistically sound, they may not be factual in individual cases. For example, the percentage of ex-convicts who commit subsequent crimes is much greater than the percentage of the population at large who commit crimes (as cited in Schauer, 2003). So someone who expresses a prejudice against ex-convicts or refuses to hire them simply because they have been in prison is relying on a sound statistical basis. However, because a trait applies to most people in a particular group, it does not necessarily apply to all members of that group. Thus, to condemn or distrust all ex-convicts on the basis of characteristics of some group members—or even most group members—is a value judgment based on profiling.

One researcher (Schauer, 2003) suggests that rules and laws are a form of decision making by generalization, similar to decisions based on probabilities, stereotypes, profiles, and approximations. In today's world, whereas the terms *probabilities* and *approximations* are usually acceptable as scientific methods, the term *stereotype* usually has a negative connotation, and the terms *prejudice* and *profiling* are even more negative. Nonetheless, people make decisions every day using these methods.

The teenage boy who causes his family's automobile insurance premiums to increase when he acquires a driver's license is experiencing prejudice based on decision making by generalization. Insurance company actuaries are specialists in generalization and prejudice, since they base decisions about rates on certain characteristics attributed to an entire category of drivers. If the teenage male (or any member of his family) acquires a sports car, he becomes encumbered with the risk-taking driving attributes of other sports car owners—attributes that he may not share. The teenager may complain about the unfairness of the system, but unless the system is applied disproportionately along racial, age, or geographic parameters, most people generally accept such risk-assigning methods as valid.

Like insurance companies, individuals often operate on an actuarial basis more frequently that most would like to acknowledge. Employers, for example, generalize when they associate college degrees and good grades from a prestigious university with traits that predict job success.

Many people dislike the idea of "painting with a broad brush," "one size fits all" thinking, or stereotyping. Even so, practices of generalizing, stereotyping, or even prejudice or profiling cannot be dismissed as necessarily morally wrong. They can be important decision-making tools. The key to using generalization effectively and ethically is to understand and clearly differentiate between when beliefs are sound and moral and when they are not.

Exploring Stereotypes

Stereotypes and bias can be quite strong. We are often surprised at our own worldview. Consider the following scenarios and imagine the look of the perfect person in each one. What is that person's hair color, skin color, height, weight, and general appearance?

You are a passenger on an airplane. Who would you hire to fly the plane? What would the flight attendant look like?

You have been diagnosed with a terrible disease and need to see a doctor. What would that person look like?

You are in a new job. What do you think the perfect boss will look like?

You are getting your hair done tomorrow by a very expensive stylist. What does that person look like?

You are about to meet the captain of a cruise ship, a navy jet, a fishing excursion, or a captain in the military. What does this person look like?

Did you think of the sexual orientation of the doctor? The pilot? The flight attendant? The boss? The hair stylist? The captain? Which sexual orientation did you think of and why? Or was sexual orientation not part of your imagined ideal?

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What were your initial thoughts? Even though we all know that anybody can fit these roles, we each have preconceived notions of the perfect candidate.
2. How might impressions affect your behavior if you are interviewing candidates for a new job? What about if you are teaching a class? If you are counseling or coaching a client?

Project Implicit®—Social Attitudes

In 1998 scientists Mahzarin Banaji from Harvard University, Tony Greenwald of the University of Washington, and Brian Nosek of the University of Virginia partnered to explore the "dissemination and application of implicit social cognition" (Project Implicit™, 2011). Their initiative set out to research how individuals thought and felt about occurrences outside of the conscious selves. Project Implicit™ has become an international tool used by educators and others to evaluate their unconscious perceptions of others, including hidden biases or preferences toward particular social groups.

The Implicit Association Tests are designed to show individuals their attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes toward others. Visit the Project Implicit™ website (**https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html** (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html)), take three tests from the list, then answer the following questions.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Where you surprised by any of the results? If so, were they more or less inclusive of your conscious beliefs?
2. Do you think that being part of the test group influenced your results? For example, if you took the Native American "Native–White American" test, which required you to delineate between Native American and White faces, did being part of one of those cultural groups help you respond more quickly or slowly?
3. Did you find implicit or explicit stereotypes in your results? Why do you think this is?

4. Does having slight preferences in a particular test automatically mean that you do not have stereotypes or biases toward those groups? Why or why not?
5. Describe the steps people could take to change their perceptions of others.

4.3 Factors Influencing Discriminatory Practices

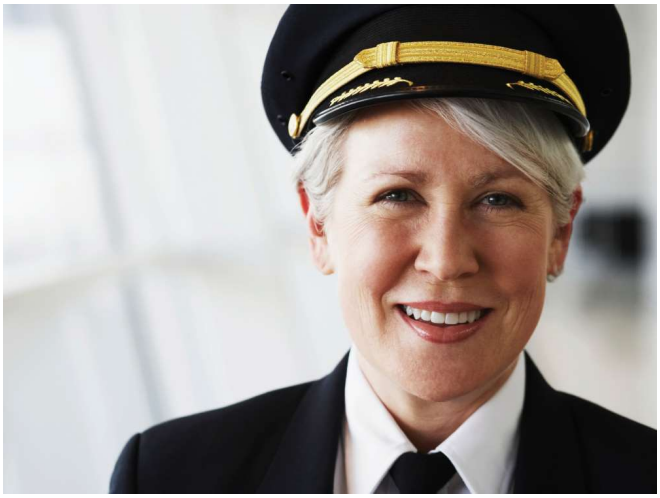
If *bias*, *generalization*, *stereotype*, *prejudice*, and *profiling* can have a legitimate place in decision making, when do they become problematic? In the opinion of many, these practices cross into bigotry and unfairness when they manifest themselves in behavior toward others that discriminates based on factors other than individual merit.

Discrimination via Actuarial Calculations

As Americans we regularly discriminate against individuals in our own and in other cultures by using actuarial calculations, or information such as age or gender statistics, to discriminate against people. This type of discrimination often seems, on the surface, to be justifiable. However, statistics can be misinterpreted, and fallacies or inappropriate application of statistics can imply correlations or cause-and-effect relationships when, in fact, no such relationship exists. For example, applying concepts such as statistical averages to an individual situation can result in discriminatory practices. Examples of this type of discrimination are discussed below.

Age Discrimination

U.S. commercial airline pilots are required by the Federal Aviation Administration to retire at age 60. Because the consequences of pilot error are often catastrophic, this rule is an exception to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. The exception was justified as necessary for passenger safety in commercial air transport.



Corbis/SuperStock

Some argue that mandatory retirement based on age is discriminatory and instead support physically testing pilots who are over age 60. However, others regard such testing itself as discriminatory.

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 states that "the setting of arbitrary age limits regardless of potential for job performance, . . . may work to the disadvantage of older persons" (Sec. 621 [Section 2] (a) (2)). Commercial pilots have argued for decades, to no avail, that the age-60 rule's basic flaw is that it is arbitrary. Underlying this rule is the premise that certain physical faculties such as the speed of reflexes, hearing, and vision are necessary for commercial airline pilots and that these faculties all decline noticeably after age 60, while the risk of sudden and unexpected incapacitation from stroke or heart attack increases (Schauer, 2003).

However, even if available empirical evidence shows a slowing of certain physical faculties in many or most people after age 60, not all people are affected; a wide range of individual variation is found. Thus, an actuarial generalization can be statistically sound and still be under- or overinclusive. It is against this empirical background that mandatory retirement age, driving tests for senior citizens, and other proposed age-related rules and legislation are debated (Schauer, 2003).

As an alternative to mandatory age-related restrictions, some have suggested individual testing for pilots over age 60. However, such testing is itself discriminatory. Requiring testing solely on the basis of age

puts a burden on a group of people that is not borne by others. It also puts those tested at increased risk of job loss (Schauer, 2000).

Others have suggested that a more equitable alternative would be to test all commercial pilots annually, regardless of age. Because physical issues such as reflexes, hearing, and vision vary from individual to individual, we may find that some 35-year-old pilots should no longer be flying, whereas some 65-year-old pilots are perfectly capable of continuing to fly commercial planes.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination has been debated for decades, if not centuries. Guttentag and Secord (1983) theorized that men have historically and culturally possessed greater structural power in societies (control over important social, political, and economic institutions), while women have been viewed as possessing significant dyadic power (power due to men's dependence on women as wives, mothers, and romantic partners and women's influence over the nature and direction of intimate personal relationships). Generalizations formed the basis of cultural and legislative practices that often relegated women to particular social roles and limited their opportunities.

As far back as the 19th century, many U.S. states had passed labor laws that were originally designed to protect women by prohibiting them from working more than an 8-hour day, working at night, or lifting anything that weighed more than 10 or 15 pounds. However, rather than protect them, many of these laws were used to prevent women from advancing into management positions that might require overtime or nighttime work. The laws also barred them from jobs that required manual labor. Employers were known to argue that a woman might have to lift something exceeding the weight limits, even though such a situation was highly unlikely and was not a material function of the job (Freeman, 1995).

During the 1960s and 1970s, U.S. public policy toward women changed dramatically from a view of protection to one of equal opportunity, with the passage of several laws that mandated equal pay for men and women in the same jobs, as well as legislation that prohibited discrimination in other aspects of employment. Chapter 7 will discuss this legislation in more detail.

Applying Tests Broadly to Avoid Discrimination

One way to avoid discrimination based on factors such as age or gender is to apply tests and other proficiency requirements to all people who perform certain functions or roles. In the case of airline pilots, a means of avoiding the arbitrary nature of the age-60 rule would be to administer individual reaction, hearing, and vision tests to all pilots—regardless of age.

Such testing might reveal that quick reflexes, acute hearing, and keen vision vary among people of all ages. Some 35-year-olds would likely score lower on reflex, hearing, and vision tests than their 65-year-old counterparts. Other types of tests have demonstrated exactly such results. This way, all pilots who fail to measure up to these physical standards, whether they are 35 or 65, would be excluded from the cockpits of commercial airliners. It is important to remember that actuarial calculations and statistical information often create distortions when applied to individual situations. Statistics can also be based on unproven assumptions or faulty premises that overtly or subtly result in discriminatory practices.

Ethnocentrism and Racism

Chapter 3 discussed the fact that the term *race* is recognized among scholars as a socially constructed category that has no biological basis. The term **racism**, however, is widely used in academic literature. The meaning of *racism*, however, is as controversial in scholarly works as it is in contemporary conversation.

Racism is often used synonymously with *ethnocentrism* and defined as a set of beliefs about the inequality between people of different races or ethnicities. Ethnocentrism can be viewed as a failure to separate oneself from one's cultural background. From this perspective, to a greater or lesser degree, we are all ethnocentric, and judging others according to standards that predominate in one's own culture can be useful in helping persons conform to a community norm. Given this definition, ethnocentrism could be either a positive or a negative view of a certain race relative to other races.

For many people, however, the term *racism* is always negative; it is motivated by ideology and refers to specific, negative actions against a racial group or its members. They are reluctant to use the term *racist* to refer to a positive attitude toward the group or members. Instead, they prefer the terms *racial pride* or *racial recognition* to express such an attitude (Gracia, 2010). According to this commonly held view, ethnocentricity is a natural connection to those who are in one's community and is largely unconscious, but those who are racist hold a conscious and unconscious belief of superiority over others outside their culture. Thus, in this view, everyone is ethnocentric, but not everyone is racist.

Others believe that for inequality to be considered *racism*, it must be related to power structures within a society. They argue that, similar to structural inequities, racism results when systemic social patterns, policies, practices, or structures by powerful institutions within a society impose oppressive or other negative conditions on specific groups on the basis of race or ethnicity. Under this definition, the inequality is known as **institutional racism**. Thus, those who lack power, even if they act negatively toward members of a certain race, are not racist.

An often-cited example of *institutional racism* is the racial disparity in the U.S. criminal justice system. The Pew Research Center last analyzed incarceration rates in America by race in 2010. At that time the incarceration rate under local, state, and federal jurisdictions was 678 inmates per 100,000 White men in the population and 4,347 per 100,000 per Black men in the population. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Black men were more than 6 times as likely as White men to be incarcerated in 2010 (Pew Research Center, 2013).

In the 1960s, when civil rights became a national issue, racism against Blacks was frequently cited as a reason why society needed to change. However, these changes resulted not only in changes in the perception of Black people among White people, but also in the manner in which Blacks perceived themselves. The slogans "Black is beautiful" and "Black power," prevalent at the time, were reflections of the adoption of positive attitudes and increased self-esteem by many Black people. The terms often promoted kinship and provided the impetus for Blacks to fight for policies that benefited them (Gracia, 2010).

Some have argued that a positive emphasis on Black culture and efforts to favor Black people over White people in employment hiring or college admissions is a form of **reverse discrimination/reverse racism**. To favor Blacks over Whites, they say, is not different from favoring Whites over Blacks. To many people, "the answer to negative racism—racism *against* certain races—is not a form of positive racism—racism *for* certain races—but the eradication of race as a source of social identity, preferential treatment, and policy" (Gracia, 2010, para. 2).

Jorge Gracia, known for his groundbreaking work on race and ethnicity, proposes a broad definition to encompass many of these viewpoints. He defines the term *racism* as "an attitude toward individual members of a racial group or toward the racial group as a whole, merely in [by] virtue of the race, and a racist is someone who has this attitude" (Gracia, 2010, para. 8). This definition allows for the fact that racism can be self-directed or directed by others and can be either positive or negative.

Note that the terms *prejudice* and *racism*, often used synonymously, should not be confused with each other (Wellman, 1977). Whereas prejudice is an unsubstantiated belief that results in a preconception or prejudgment of someone, racism is a complex system of advantage afforded to a racial group. Commenting on this perspective, clinical psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum (2003) writes that on every social indicator in the United States, from salary to life expectancy, the systematic advantages in this society accrue to being White. Often referred to as **White privilege**, the advantages of being White or light skinned, when combined with social power—in the form of access to social, cultural, and economic resources—lead to the institutionalization of racist policies and practices and inequities that are an integral part of the society's structure.

Peggy McIntosh has authored many influential articles on women's studies and systems of racial and gender privilege. She is best known for her 1988 article "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies," in which she used the phrase *White privilege*, characterized it as a form of oppression against non-Whites, and listed 46 ways in which one woman experienced White privilege in her life. McIntosh theorized that this particular oppression takes two forms: an active form that can be seen and an embedded form that members of the dominant group are taught not to see and often deny. These denials, in her view, protect privilege from being fully recognized, acknowledged, lessened, or ended.

Jennifer Holladay (2000) of the Southern Poverty Law Center explains White privilege in this manner: "White privilege is not something that white people do, create, or enjoy on purpose; it is a transparent preference for whiteness that saturates our society" (para. 4). White privilege creates perks and advantages that only White people enjoy, and many Whites have not considered that these advantages are not available to non-Whites. Holladay cites as examples "flesh-colored" Band-Aids that match or approximate the color of White people's skin and "nude" pantyhose or stockings that look nude on the skin of Whites, but not on the skin of people of color. If a White person forgets his or her shampoo when traveling, the hotel supplies complimentary shampoo that is appropriate for the hair of Whites, not Blacks.

Holladay (2000) comments that these issues might seem trivial and benign. However, White privilege is so pervasive in American culture that if White people were to find a bottle of Pink Oil Conditioning Shampoo for Black hair in their hotel room, many would be shocked or indignant.

Holladay also notes that White privilege encompasses more than just Band-Aids and shampoo; it also means never having to assume that when a police officer pulls someone over while driving that it is because of the person's skin color; never having to wonder if people make assumptions about a new job or a promotion because of race or if skin color will prove a burden in securing a job, an apartment, or a loan. It also provides Whites with an education in American history, literature, music, and art that touts the contributions of White Americans and often omits those of Black Americans. In short, it results in Whites experiencing the world quite differently than do people of color. McIntosh (1988) theorized that people who enjoy such privileges have "an invisible pack of unearned assets which [they] can count on cashing in each day, but about which [they were] 'meant' to remain oblivious" (p. 3). As these discussions illustrate, the term *racism* encompasses a variety of viewpoints. Whereas McIntosh and Holladay

associate it with oppressive and often exclusionary practices, Gracia's broader definition allows for a more neutral application of the concept.

Of course, similar forms of discrimination occur when examining prejudice against older people or with regard to gender, religion, socioeconomic class, and physical abilities. And, as the next section explores, sexism and male privilege have been widely documented with regard to the way men and women experience the world differently or are viewed and/or treated differently in American society.

Sexism, Privilege, and Cultural Norms

Sexism can be broadly defined as a belief that men and women should be treated in different ways and are suited to different types of jobs and different positions in society. A formidable body of literature has investigated sexism toward both men and women, but studies predominately focus on beliefs concerning women.

This chapter previously discussed gender discrimination based on actuarial calculations. *Sexism* represents a broader form of discrimination than the assessment of statistical risks. Early research tended to concentrate on sexism as antipathy toward women or the disregard of women in positions of social and political power. More recent research, similar to findings on racial prejudice, suggests that contemporary forms of sexism exist in blatantly negative ways as well as in more subtle and seemingly positive forms (Christopher, Zabel, & Miller, 2013).

In 1988 Peggy McIntosh wrote that her work in Women's Studies at Massachusetts's Wellesley College had made her aware that men were often unwilling to concede that they were overprivileged, although they may have been willing to grant that women were disadvantaged. McIntosh believes that entrenched male privilege, like White privilege, has been underrecognized and underacknowledged in American society. This fact, in her view, has impeded the rate of change of this societal bias. McIntosh believes the 46 ways in which she identified White privilege apply equally to male privilege.

Although the phrases *White privilege* and *male privilege* have become key terms in the study of diversity, McIntosh herself wrote that she considered the word *privilege* to be misleading. She stated, "We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned, or conferred by birth or luck. . . . [However] such privilege simply confers dominance, gives permission to control, because of one's race or sex" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 15).

Ambivalent Sexism

Traditional views of sexism assumed that it was a negative attitude or bias toward a specific gender. Researchers Peter Glick and Susan Fiske have written extensively about gender-based prejudice and, in 1996, developed a theoretical framework they called **ambivalent sexism** to distinguish between blatant and subtle sexist attitudes. Before the ambivalent sexism theory was suggested, the field of psychology considered only hostile forms of sexism relevant. Today, however, both types of sexism are considered equally detrimental (Christopher et al., 2013).

Glick and Fiske (1996) labeled the blatant form **hostile sexism** and defined it as a type of prejudice in which women are viewed in an openly negative manner, often as incompetent or inferior to men. Hostile sexism stems from a desire to maintain a hierarchy in which men are dominant and women are prevented from gaining power. Glick and Fiske labeled the subtle form **benevolent sexism** and characterized it as a view of women that is subjectively positive, yet stereotypical and gender role

reinforcing—for example, as needing protection. Benevolent sexism, although positive on the surface, discriminates against women in patronizing ways. It engenders beliefs that women are fragile and, thus, restricts women to subordinate roles through protective paternalism and chivalry (Jones, Dovidio, & Vietze, 2014).

Social institutions, such as religion and social class, and factors such as education level and job type (blue-collar versus white-collar employment) have been shown to play a role in either reinforcing or challenging sexist beliefs (Glick & Fiske, 2001). In traditional male–female relationships, a power difference generally coexists with a strong interdependence. Thus, sexist attitudes create considerable ambivalence on the part of each sex toward the other, and both hostile sexism and benevolent sexism are likely to occur. Hostile sexism might be exhibited as either antipathy or resentment toward women who are viewed as rejecting conventional gender roles and trying to "usurp" men's power. Benevolent sexism could encompass protective, affectionate, but patronizing attitudes toward women who conform to expected roles (as cited in Glick, Lameiras, & Castro, 2002).

Ambivalent sexism has its roots in patriarchal social structural control. This power imbalance in traditional heterosexual relationships—men hold superior status but must also assume provider responsibilities—together with conflict between stereotypical gender roles and desire for intimacy, create a unique combination. This intersection of conflict, expectation, and need breeds ambivalent, yet highly correlated, hostile and benevolent gender ideologies to maintain the status quo. One recent study showed that hostile and benevolent attitudes have a similar function: to promote the gender status quo and to uphold traditional gender roles by prescribing desirable characteristics in a traditional partner and proscribing characteristics that threaten conventional gender roles. The study showed:

> The enforcement of traditional roles occurs not just within the public sphere, such as the workplace, but also in the private sphere as well. Cultural ideals of who men and women "should be" powerfully shape heterosexual romantic partner preferences, linking romance with inequality. (Lee, Fiske, Glick, & Chen, 2010, p. 594)

Glick and Fiske (1996) produced an instrument titled the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory to test their theory. Subsequently, they developed the Ambivalence toward Men Inventory (AMI) that differentiates between women's hostile and benevolent prejudices and stereotypes about men. The AMI is strongly related to its sister scale, the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory, and to two other established scales of attitudes toward men. Only the AMI, however, distinguished between subjectively negative and subjectively positive beliefs about men. The two inventories have since been tested across 19 different cultures, and researchers have found empirical evidence for both forms of sexism toward both men and women (Glick & Fiske, 1999).

Cross-Cultural Studies

> By virtue of their higher income, higher status positions in employment, and other measures, men generally have greater power than women and are the dominant group in most societies. They also have the added advantage of exercising control through hostility in relationships (as cited in Lee et al., 2010). Women, on the other hand, are expected to be nice, never hostile, and they encounter backlash when they violate this prescription (Rudman & Glick, 2001).

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In some societies, such as that in Turkey, women occupy a lower status than men. This can influence the society's perceptions about acceptable behaviors in marital relationships.

Thus, hostile gender ideologies based on assumed, prescribed behaviors create a power struggle between heterosexual couples and hostility toward women. These ideologies can predict negative evaluations of women who threaten male power. Some concrete examples include giving negative appraisals to female candidates and positive recommendations for male candidates in management (Masser & Abrams, 2004) and negative assessment of career women (Lee et al., 2010).

In societies where women occupy a much lower status than men, specifically Turkey and Brazil, hostility toward women predicted people's approval of husbands using physical violence to control their wives (Glick et al., 2002) and men's willingness to coerce sex (Abrams, Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003).

Among women in traditional heterosexual relationships, similar ambivalent sexist attitudes toward men were found to include hostility, because conventional stereotypes characterize them as powerful and arrogant, as well as a benevolence that acknowledges their traditional role of protector and provider. These male and female sexist attitudes justify and reinforce structural inequality in society; presumably, changing those attitudes is one key to achieving greater equality.

The changes are complex because a society is not monolithic but rather composed of many social institutions. Some of these tend to fortify and others to challenge the myths that legitimize the status quo. The educational system and religious organizations are two of the most important social institutions within a society, and they can work at cross purposes, with some religions justifying gender inequality and educational systems challenging traditional beliefs and generally giving students access to greater career opportunities, regardless of their gender (as cited in Glick et al., 2002).

Stereotypes and Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

The American public generally views lesbians and gay men more positively since the 1970s. However, negative stereotypes and substantial levels of institutional and personal hostility toward homosexuals persist. Felmlee, Orzechowicz, and Fortes (2010) cite numerous studies from existing scholarly literature on gay men and lesbians that document common stereotypes, including perceptions of gay men as gentle, passive, effeminate, and well-dressed and beliefs that gay men violate acceptable male gender roles. Common stereotypes of lesbians emphasize characteristics of excessive masculinity and a disinterest in traditional feminine pursuits and appearance.

In spite of evidence to the contrary, other stereotypes characterize homosexuals as sexually promiscuous, sexual predators, psychologically maladjusted, or as incapable of forming committed relationships. These prejudices extend across international borders, as cases of homophobic violence documented across Europe, Australia, and the Americas attest (as cited in Felmlee et al., 2010).

Sex, sexuality, and gender are often assumed to be congruent with one another and fixed over the course of one's life (Lorber, 1996, as cited in Felmlee et al., 2010). Beginning in infancy, individuals are classified as either male or female based on the physical appearance of external genitalia. Judith Butler

(1999), who has conducted groundbreaking work in the philosophy of gender, argues that this categorization gives rise to the association of the terms *masculine* and *feminine* as attributes of *male* and *female*. "In other words, our society associates gender and sexuality with biological sex and assumes that behavioral expectations align with one of the two gender categories to which one is assigned" (as cited in Felmlee et al., 2010, para. 3).

This categorization underlies a belief that in both same-gender and cross-gender relationships, the partners complement each other by one taking on a masculine role and one taking on a feminine role. However, these beliefs are not confirmed by research (Felmlee et al., 2010). In reviewing Butler's work, Angela McRobbie (2009) of the University of London cites Butler's argument that these beliefs are the basis for the creation of cultural norms of heterosexuality and result in sanctions or marginalization for those who do not or cannot comply. These beliefs also underlie the stereotypes of effeminate gay men and masculine lesbian women.

Sexism, Privilege, Values, and Cultural Norms

As the chapter has discussed, sexism and privilege in a society and the reinforcement of these beliefs reflect the beliefs and values concerning gender roles that are prevalent in the society. These beliefs and values, in turn, form part of the foundation of the society's culture.

Chapter 2 explored ways culture helps people establish their identity and is normative; it prescribes masculine and feminine gender roles in the society and establishes what are considered acceptable and unacceptable ways in which people behave with one another. For culture to change, underlying beliefs and values must change, and these changes are difficult to achieve.

The values people hold have cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. Many personal values have been passed down from parents or significant others, and people accept them for many years. Other people may adopt values because they are held by those in their social groups from church, neighborhood, extended families, or service organizations. Still other values may be consciously formed based on personal, self-chosen principles.

Those values that are freely and consciously chosen often reflect issues people have thought about, feel strongly about, and may even have supported with actions such as publicly advocating a particular position or making a life decision based on one of these values. Thus, strong values become guiding principles in an individual's life and help form a foundation for decision making and behavior. When others share similar values, those values are usually codified into laws, regulation, public policy, and cultural norms.

Values, however, have relative strength, and they often conflict. For example, someone might want to purchase an item that is high quality, available immediately, and inexpensive; however, rarely does the buyer obtain all three of these characteristics at the same time. A person must often prioritize what he or she values and make a decision based on only one of three factors, whichever is most important. The buyer might accept a lesser quality, for instance, to obtain a more inexpensive price or decide to forego a bargain in favor of buying exactly what is desired.

Because personal values are prioritized in this same manner, one way to change them is to consider them in the content of other values and to determine their priority. Sexism, privilege, gender roles, racial and ethnic discrimination, and ethnocentrism may have been part of a culture historically, but they need not determine the future. Global issues such as same-sex marriage, the importance of heterosexual marriage, interracial adoptions, same-sex adoptions, transgender challenges, and similar issues

challenge society to review and clarify its values. To do so involves determining which of them have been freely chosen, based on individual or societal reasoning, and prioritizing them among other values related to freedom, equality, and equity.