

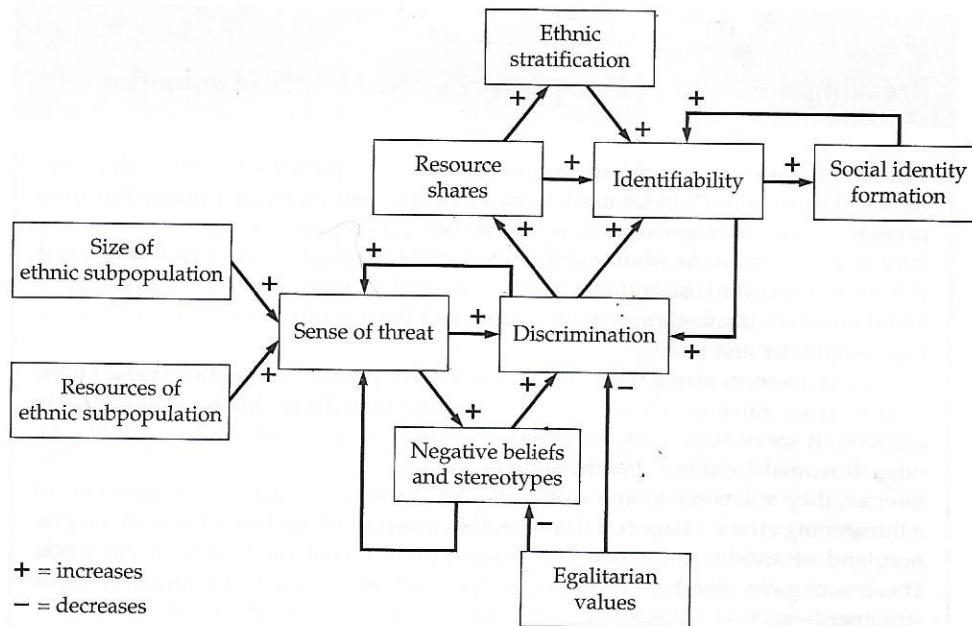


FIGURE 2.3 A general model of ethnic relations.

beliefs that, along with the fear that threat generates, pushes people to discriminate against an ethnic minority. As discrimination occurs, members of ethnic groups are denied resources and are generally segregated, forcing them to live with and marry "their own kind." As a result of their shares of resources that confine them to a given stratum in the stratification system as well as their high rates of interaction and intermarriage, both biological and cultural patterns are sustained, thereby making an ethnic group more identifiable and, hence, an easier target of discrimination.

As can be seen with all of the positively signed arrows, these dynamics, once unleashed, are self-reinforcing. Each one sets the others into motion, and it is for this reason that it is often difficult to break these vicious cycles revolving around discrimination. In American society, however, there has been one force working against discrimination and negative stereotyping: powerful **egalitarian values**. The arrow coming up from the bottom of Figures 2.2 and 2.3 emphasizes this important force that can act to reduce discrimination and stereotyping. Americans believe that people should be treated equally and be given equal opportunities, and these core values have always stood in opposition to ethnic discrimination. Obviously, Americans have often been willing to live with this contradiction between their values and their acts of discrimination, but the existence of these values has served historically as a rallying point for civil rights movements designed to eliminate discrimination (see Box 2.1).

The model in Figure 2.3 will guide our organization of each chapter on an ethnic group. We will begin by asking about the *resource shares* of an ethnic group. Are they overrepresented in poverty? What kinds of jobs do they have?