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Understanding Prejudice and Racism

Civilized men have gained notable mastery over energy, matter, and inanimate nature generally, and are rapidly learning to control physical suffering and premature death. But, by contrast, we appear to be living in the Stone Age so far as our handling of human relationships is concerned.

—Gordon W. Allport (1954, p. xiii)

It is fitting to begin Chapter 1 of this book with this quotation from Gordon W. Allport, who in 1954 published *The Nature of Prejudice*, undoubtedly one of the most important books of the 20th century. In the more than 50 years since the publication of this classic work, hundreds of articles, books, films, and documentaries on the subject of prejudice and racism have appeared. Unfortunately, despite a worldwide focus on the topic, prejudice and racism remain as prevalent today as they did during Allport's lifetime (1897–1967).

The Problem of Hate

As we put the final touches on this book (August 2005), the world appears to be engulfed in violence and hatred. The seeds of this contempt toward one another are often found in differences in nationality, ethnicity, race, religion,

or sexual orientation. We term this focused violence *ethnoviolence*, which is defined as “an act or attempted act which is motivated by group prejudice and intended to cause physical or psychological injury” (The Prejudice Institute, n.d.). Group-level violence rages in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Northern Ireland, Spain, and parts of Africa, and individual acts of ethnoviolence are a daily occurrence in every part of the world.

The European Union’s Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia¹ reports an alarming new wave of anti-Semitism in European Union countries (Ehrlich, n.d.). In fact, anti-Semitism seems to be on the rise worldwide (see Rosenbaum, 2004). With regard to the United States, since September 11, 2001 (9/11—a day of mass ethnoviolence, when terrorists simultaneously attacked multiple cities in the United States using hijacked American air carriers), there has been a marked increase of violence directed against Muslim Americans (Kobeisy, 2004; Willoughby, 2003), with the Council of American-Islamic Relations logging more than 700 acts of discrimination against Muslims in the United States (Ali, Liu, & Humedian, 2004).

Looking more generally at the incidence of ethnoviolence in the United States, The Prejudice Institute (n.d.), in their systematic and ongoing research program, reports a 20% to 25% rate of such incidents. This translates into one out of every four or five adult Americans being harassed, intimidated, or assaulted for reasons of group affiliation. The greatest percentage of ethnoviolent incidents, generally, is based on racial differences, and the greatest percentage of violent, brutal, physical assaults is based on sexual orientation (The Prejudice Institute, n.d.). The Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC’s) most recent Intelligence Project report (March 2005) documented the existence of 762 hate groups and 468 hate Web sites active during 2004, numbers that were up slightly from the previous year.

As a microcosm of society at large, the college campus is a good place to look for rates of ethnoviolence. For the year 2001, the latest year where a complete data set is available, the FBI documented 286 hate crimes (note that *hate crime* is a specific form of ethnoviolence that has a legal definition and prosecutorial implications), although the U.S. Department of Education recorded 487 hate crimes. Both numbers are drastic underrepresentations, as many colleges throughout the nation and 20 specific U.S. states failed to report such crimes in 2001. Campus security experts estimate the number at roughly four times that which is reported to authorities (see Willoughby, 2003). Thus we can infer roughly 4×500 crimes, for a total of 2000 hate crimes committed on college campuses during 2001.

In most jurisdictions, the legal definition of *hate crime* focuses on attacks based on race, religion, and ethnicity but exclude gender as a target (The Prejudice Institute, n.d.). Thus emotional and physical violence toward women is not included in hate crime statistics. If we include violence toward women as a form of ethnoviolence and hate crime, we can see that the country is in a sorry state indeed, as abuse of women in various

forms (assault, domestic violence, harassment, date rape, and so on) is endemic to the fabric of society (DePorto, 2003).

Purpose and Focus of This Book

Psychological and physical violence toward persons based on prejudice represents a world tragedy. We all have to be involved in fighting prejudice, whether it is focused on racial or ethnic minorities (racism); women (sexism); gay, lesbian, or bisexual persons (homophobia and heterosexism); the elderly (ageism); or some other point of difference. Albert Einstein once wrote, “The world is too dangerous to live in—not because of the people who do evil, but because of the people who sit and let it happen” (cited in Sue, 2003, p. 14). This book is a call for counselors, psychologists, educators, administrators, and parents to take a more proactive stand in fighting prejudice. To equip you to take this stand, the book provides a comprehensive explanation of the nature, origins, manifestations, and impact of prejudice on both those who are targeted by it and those who perpetuate it, whether overtly (directly) or covertly (indirectly).

The topics of prejudice and racism are broad and complex and necessitate a focus for in-depth coverage in one volume. In this book, as in our first edition of *Preventing Prejudice*, we focus more on racial and ethnic prejudice than on other forms of prejudice, such as that directed at women; gays, lesbians, and bisexuals; religious minorities; the elderly; the disabled; and so forth. Our focus is reflected in our own expertise and research over the last four decades. In addition to our general racial and ethnic focus, we also focus particularly on the nature of *White* racism, for reasons that will be made clear in this and subsequent chapters.

Prejudice and racism transcend national boundaries and can be found worldwide. Our focus in this text is on prejudice and racism as widespread phenomena in the United States. Notwithstanding this focus, research and literature from other countries will be incorporated into our discussions when a more international perspective helps to clarify a relevant concept or position.

This book is written for counselors, psychologists, educators, administrators, those in leadership positions, and, most important, parents, who are the first to inculcate racial, ethnic, and gender attitudes, as well as empathy skills, in the nation’s youth.

Some Important Definitions

It is important to clarify and define key terms used throughout this book. This section on definitions examines the following terms: *race*, *ethnicity*, *culture*, *minority*, *majority*, and *racial and ethnic minority groups*.

Race

Race—this four-letter word has wreaked more havoc on people in the world than all the four-letter words banned by censors of the U.S. airwaves. Race divides human beings into categories that loom in our psyches. Racial differences create cavernous divides in our psychological understandings of who we are and who we should be. (Jones, 1997, p. 339)

James M. Jones, a social psychologist at the University of Delaware, is a world authority on the study of race and racism. His words, quoted here, capture well the social implications embedded in the popular term *race*. In this section, we briefly explore the definition of this term. Our presentation is brief and summative, and for more in-depth discussion we refer interested readers to Jones's (1997) *Prejudice and Racism*, a definitive book on the study of racism.

Perhaps the most popular definitions of race have had a biological and genetic basis. For example, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2004) defines race in a number of different ways, including "a family, tribe, people, or nation belonging to the same stock," "a class or kind of people unified by shared interests, habits, or characteristics," and "a category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits" (p. 1024). Krogman's (1945) definition is often cited in the literature and states that race refers to "a sub-group of people possessing a definite combination of physical characteristics, of genetic origin, the combination of which to varying degrees distinguishes the sub-group from other sub-groups of mankind" (p. 49).

Simpson and Yinger (1985) summarize commonly recognized physical characteristics that distinguish one race from another: skin pigmentation, nasal index and lip form, and the color distribution and texture of body hair. Commonly recognized racial types are Caucasoid (White Americans), Mongoloid (Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans), and Negroid (Black Americans) (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1998; Sue, 2003).

Despite the popularity of biologically based definitions of race, there are myriad problems with defining race in biological terms. First, there is a great deal of overlap between recognized racial types, and there are certainly more genetic similarities across all people than there are differences. As a species, humans are very much alike. The U.S. Department of Energy's groundbreaking Genome Project, which has successfully mapped the entire human genome sequence, has found that this genome sequence is 99.9% exactly the same in all human beings. Each human being has an estimated 30,000 genes, and if we all have 99.9% shared gene variance, that means we all match on 29,970 out of 30,000 genes (see Bonham, Warshauer-Baker, & Collins, 2005, and the U.S. Department of Energy Genome Programs Web site at <http://www.ornl.gov/hgmis>). Second, in addition to shared genetic similarity across all races, there are also myriad nongenetic differences (e.g., language, religion, customs, values) within any one racial category because of cultural

differences. Researchers often comment that there are more differences within racial groups than between them (e.g., Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1998; Sue et al., 1998).

It is fair to say that at this point, many biologists have abandoned the notion of race as a useful classification construct.² In Jones's (1997) comprehensive treatise on race and racism, he quotes a distinguished panel of scientists, who state, "From a biological viewpoint the term race has become so encumbered with superfluous and contradictory meanings, erroneous concepts, and emotional reactions that it has almost completely lost its utility" (p. 345).

The most current scholarship on race indicates that the term is more of a socially constructed concept than a biologically legitimate one (Eberhardt, 2005; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Despite its lack of biological validity, the term *race* is probably here to stay because of its implied social implications (Carter & Pieterse, 2005; Sue, 2003). In the United States, race is associated with social meaning that people cannot easily give up because they have been conditioned to use race to organize their thinking about people and the groups to which they belong (Jones, 1997). Jones cites numerous social or social constructionist definitions of *race*, including that by Omi and Winant (1986):

Race is indeed a pre-eminently sociohistorical concept. Racial categories and the meaning of race are given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they are embedded. Racial meanings have varied tremendously over time and between societies. (p. 60; cited in Jones, 1997, p. 348)

What people believe about race has profound social consequences as they come to accept as "social fact" the myriad stereotypes about a group of people based solely on their skin color, facial features, and so forth (see Carter & Pieterse, 2005; Helms & Cook, 1999). Clearly, in the United States, the concept of race has been used as a political pawn by the power-dominant group (i.e., White males) to maintain the oppression of minority groups (Sue, 2003). A good example of this oppression is in the association of intelligence with racial characteristics: Blacks and other racial and ethnic minority groups have been labeled as less intelligent than Whites (Anderson & Nickerson, 2005; Sue et al., 1998). We say more about this topic in Chapter 2.

We have noted the complexity of the concept of race and suggest that readers keep this in mind as they read subsequent chapters. For our present purposes, racial groups include White Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans. Hispanics can belong to any of the aforementioned groups. Although our classification system is rather simplistic and does nothing to solve the terminology dilemmas just reviewed, it does allow us to integrate past research on *race* into our current discussion.

Ethnicity

The terms *race* and *ethnicity* are often used interchangeably in U.S. society, but there are important distinctions between constructs. First, race has long included biological aspects, and second, the socially constructed nature of race has been more values laden than has ethnicity (Helms & Cook, 1999; Jones, 1997). Ethnicity can be considered a group classification of individuals who share a unique social and cultural heritage (e.g., language, customs, religion) passed on between generations (Rose, 1964). Our preferred definition and the one we rely on in this book is that presented by Yinger (1976), who defines *ethnic group* as

A segment of the larger society whose members are thought, by themselves and/or others, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients. (p. 200)

Using this definition, we can demonstrate the differentiation of the terms *race* and *ethnicity*. Using the Jewish people as an example, Jews, given their shared cultural, religious, and social heritage, are an ethnic group rather than a race. Understandably, Jewish people are represented among all racial groups, and yet they share a particular ethnic heritage.

Culture

The word *culture* has also been used interchangeably with the terms *race* and *ethnicity*. Once again, however, there are important distinctions between these terms. For example, the White American racial group is composed of many different ethnic groups, such as Irish, Polish, Jewish, Italian, and so on. Within these ethnic groups lie a diversity of cultures predicated on such factors as length of time living in the United States, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, geographic locale, and so on. Given this diversity between and within human groups, we prefer the broad definition of culture put forth by Linton (1945): “the configuration of learned behavior whose components and elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society” (p. 32).

Minority

One of the most popular and controversial terms heard in everyday language today is *minority*. This term has direct relevance to our discussions throughout this book, and our usage of the term parallels the definition of *minority* presented by Wirth (1945):

A group of people who, because of physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. . . . Minority status carries with it the exclusion from full participation in the life of the society. (p. 347)

A key component of Wirth's definition is the lack of economic, political, and social power and influence faced by certain groups in American society. It is important to note that the focus of this definition is *not* on numerical representation. For example, females in the United States constitute 51% of the total population (see U.S. Census Bureau, 2005) and therefore represent a numerical majority; however, by our definition, women are clearly a minority group, given the level of social, economic, and political power and influence they hold relative to men. Furthermore, when taking a global perspective, it is important to acknowledge that people of color are indeed the numerical majority relative to White persons, who represent the numerical minority.

Despite its popularity in the lexicon of the English language, the term *minority* is controversial. The term minority can imply "less than" in the minds of people, and persons of color do not see themselves as less than anyone. For some Americans of color, the term minority can be offensive (see Helms & Cook, 1999, and Sue et al., 1998). In our use of the term throughout this text, we rely on Wirth's (1945) conceptualization that it acknowledges a group singled out by the power-dominant group for unequal and oppressive treatment. In no way do we see any ethnic or racial group as "less than" any other in value.

Majority

To speak of a *minority group* implies by its very nature the existence of a contrasting group—the *majority group*. The majority group (sometimes referred to as the dominant or mainstream group) is that group that holds the balance of power, influence, and wealth in society. The majority group in the United States consists of the White population generally and, more specifically, White middle and upper class males (see Sue et al., 1998).

Derald Wing Sue (2003), in his recent groundbreaking contribution *Overcoming Our Racism: The Journey to Liberation*, presents evidence of White male power dominance in the United States when he notes that although White males only represent 33% of the total U.S. population, they hold approximately

- 80% of tenured faculty positions in colleges and universities
- 80% to 85% of seats in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives
- 92% of the Forbes 400 chief executive officer positions

- 90% of public school superintendencies
- 99.9% of professional athletic team ownerships
- 100% of U.S. presidencies (and vice presidencies) (p. 9)

Sue (2003) asks his readers: “Where are the persons of color? Where are the women?” (p. 9). Speaking to the point of White persons as the reference marker for immigrants, Gordon (1964) noted the following:

If there is anything in American life that can be described as an overall American culture that serves as a reference point for immigrants and their children, it can be described . . . as the middle-class patterns of largely White Protestant Anglo-Saxon origins. (cited in Markides & Mindel, 1987, p. 14)

Our present usage of the term *majority group* incorporates not only White, Anglo Saxon Protestants but also White ethnic groups. A rationale for this grouping is provided by Ponterotto and Casas (1991), who note that although most White immigrant groups were confronted with prejudice and oppression when they first arrived in the United States, their experience in this country has been qualitatively different from the experiences of non-White people. These authors point out that because of their more Angloloike features (mainly their white skin), White ethnics were allowed eventually (sometimes by changing their last names to sound more Angloloike) to assimilate and become part of “mainstream” America. This was not the case, however, for people of color, who, because of their physical differences, have been blocked from fully participating in the “land of opportunity.”

Our position that all White Americans, regardless of ethnic or cultural background, belong to the majority (or dominant) group is further supported by Pettigrew (1988), who speaks to the unique experience of Blacks in America:

In a significant way, European immigrants over the past century and Blacks face opposite cultural problems. The new Europeans were seen as not “American” enough; the dominant pressure on them was to give up their strange and threatening ways and to assimilate. Blacks were Americans of lower caste; the pressure on them was to “stay in their place” and not attempt assimilation into mainstream culture of the privileged. (p. 24)

Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups

This book focuses on the differential power-influenced relationship between the majority group in the United States (i.e., White Americans) and racial and ethnic minority groups (i.e., African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans).

For the purposes of accuracy and clarity, the term *racial or ethnic minority* group is the term that best captures this collective grouping. *Racial* incorporates the biological and heredity classifications; *ethnic* incorporates classifications of individuals who share a unique social and cultural heritage; and *minority* reflects the lower economic, political, and social status conferred on specific groups by the White majority (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991).

We want to again remind the reader that there are limitations in our selection of terminology and that other scholars prefer different terms. For example, two noted researchers in the field of multicultural counseling, Janet E. Helms and Donelda A. Cook, prefer the acronyms VREG (visible racial ethnic group) or ALANA (African, Latino(a), Asian and Pacific Islander, and Native American) to refer to racial and ethnic minority groups collectively (see discussion in Helms & Cook, 1999; Sue et al., 1998).

Understanding Prejudice

This book is about preventing prejudice. In reality, it is quite difficult to prevent prejudice, because as you will read shortly, prejudice occurs naturally in the human species. Certainly, however, the prevalence of negative ethnic prejudice can be reduced. In this section on understanding prejudice, we first define the term and then discuss the nature and expressions of prejudice.

Defining Prejudice

Allport (1954, 1979) provides a thorough and clear conceptualization of the term *prejudice*. Historically, the word prejudice stems from the Latin noun *praejudicium*, meaning a precedent or judgment based on previous decisions and experiences. According to Allport (1979), prejudice can be defined using a unipolar (negative) component, as in “thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant,” or incorporating a bipolar (negative and positive) component, as in “a feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or thing, prior to, or not based on actual experience” (p. 6). Both of these definitions include an “attitude” component and a “belief” component. The attitude is either negative or positive and is tied to an overgeneralized or erroneous “belief.”

Although prejudice can hold either a positive or negative valence, racial and ethnic prejudice in the United States has taken on primarily negative connotations (Allport, 1979). Our emphasis in this book is on prejudice as a negative phenomenon. Our usage of the term *prejudice* parallels Allport’s (1979) often-cited definition for *negative ethnic prejudice*: “Ethnic prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group” (p. 9).

This definition contains three key components worth specifying. First, prejudice is negative in nature and can be individually or group focused. Second, prejudice is based on faulty or unsubstantiated data. Third, prejudice is rooted in an inflexible generalization (Ponterotto, 1991). This last point is particularly important because the inflexible nature of a prejudice makes it highly resistant to evidence that would contradict it. For our purposes, prejudice includes internal beliefs and attitudes that are not necessarily expressed or acted on. Racism, on the other hand, as we discuss later, has an “action” or behavioral component.

The Nature of Prejudice

Allport (1979) argues convincingly that human beings have a natural propensity toward prejudice. Prejudicial views result quite easily from an interaction of three factors: our tendency toward ethnocentrism, our lack of meaningful intergroup contact, and our inclination to organize information into predeveloped categories.

Ethnocentrism

It is natural for people to cling to their own values and personal views and to hold them in high esteem. It is also common for people to prefer their own “in-group”—family, religious group, ethnic group—to “out-groups.” Certainly, there are positive aspects to prejudice. People develop a sense of security and affiliation by identifying with a particular in-group. This can be seen in the teenager who joins a particular gang; a high school student who affiliates with a certain school clique, such as a tech-savvy group; or the high school or college athlete who associates almost exclusively with other athletes. Having a positive prejudice toward one’s own in-group gives one a sense of belonging, identity, pride, and comfort.

Prejudice toward one’s group can also serve as a survival mechanism. Groups that have been historically oppressed have had to rely on one another to cope with harsh and oppressive conditions. Consider the Jews throughout Europe in the late 1930s and early 1940s; they often could not trust non-Jewish neighbors and friends for fear they might report their identity and whereabouts to Nazi authorities. In the United States, Native Americans could not trust European settlers. Many promises (treaties) were made by White male settlers to the Native peoples of America, and most were broken (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991). A positive prejudice toward their own tribal group and a concomitant distrust of the European settlers constituted, therefore, a healthy and justified coping response. Similar scenarios with other American minority groups, such as African Americans in slavery and Japanese Americans in internment camps, also serve as relevant examples.

Often, however, and without sufficient warrant, people exaggerate the virtues of their own group. Allport (1979) uses the term “love prejudice” to

refer to people's tendency to overgeneralize the virtues of their own values, family, and group. Love prejudice toward one's own group can lead to antagonism toward outside groups and thus serve as the foundation for ethnocentrism. Aboud (1987) defines ethnocentrism as "an exaggerated preference for one's group and concomitant dislike of other groups" (p. 49). Ethnocentrism serves as a building block for negative racial prejudice (Ponterotto, 1991).

Lack of Significant Intergroup Contact

Separation between human groups is common throughout the world. People often prefer their "own kind" as a matter of convenience. Allport (1979) asks, "with plenty of people at hand to choose from, why create for ourselves the trouble of adjusting to new languages, new foods, new cultures, or to people of a different educational level?" (p. 17). This preference to associate primarily with "like-minded" individuals leads to a form of cultural ignorance among many people. Without significant intercultural contact, people's perceptions of individuals representing other racial and ethnic groups is more often than not based on faulty information.

Here in the United States, we have what we term "the illusion of integration." This nation is becoming increasingly diverse culturally, yet clearly the level of meaningful intergroup contact and dialogue is not keeping pace with the rapid demographic shifts in process. The title of Beverly Daniel Tatum's (1997) popular book "*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*" *And Other Conversations About Race* captures well the reality of true segregation within the illusion of integration. In high schools, colleges, workplaces, and cities, we see the continuation of racial and ethnic segregation in society. Segregation hinders the meaningful interracial contact that is necessary for increased racial harmony and a truly democratic society (Ehrlich, n.d.).

Relying on Ethnic Categorizations

As in-group preference and separatism among human groups is common, so, too, is the tendency to categorize and overgeneralize. To manage and cope with daily events in a highly technological, Internet-focused, stimulus-loaded environment, individuals must process and sort abundant amounts of information. To do so quickly and efficiently, people rely on predeveloped categorizations. Unfortunately, due to a lack of meaningful intergroup contact and knowledge, cognitive categorizations formed with regard to racial, ethnic, and religious groups are often based on stereotypical information. Stereotypes can be defined as "rigid and inaccurate preconceived notions that [one holds] about all people who are members of a particular group, whether it be defined along racial, religious, sexual, or other lines" (Sue, 2003, p. 25).

Therefore, by understanding the nature of ethnocentrism, separatism, and cognitive categorizations, it is easy to see how prevalent and natural

prejudice is. Combating negative prejudice entails reducing ethnocentrism through the development of a healthy racial and ethnic identity, increasing levels of meaningful contact with different types of people, and developing critical thinking and decision-making skills. These topics are addressed at length in Parts III and IV of this book.

Expressions of Prejudice

One of Gordon Allport's many lasting contributions to psychology was to delineate clearly the various forms and escalating expressions of prejudice. Specifically, Allport (1979) presented a five-phase model of "acting out prejudice." His model presents expressions of prejudice on a continuum from least to most energetic. The five phases or levels are named *antilocution*, *avoidance*, *discrimination*, *physical attack*, and *extermination*.

Antilocution is the mildest form of prejudice and is characterized by prejudicial talk among like-minded individuals and the occasional stranger. This is a rather controlled expression of antagonism that is limited to small circles. As an example, a group of White neighbors may express fear that the neighborhood is becoming too integrated and not only will their property values go down, their children will be more likely to be exposed to aggressive peers. As another example, we turn to the high school setting. A group of White students sitting together at lunch comment negatively about a group of Asian American students who sit together, stating, "Look at those Asian Americans all sitting together at that table; they always do that at lunch; they are so antisocial."

Avoidance occurs when the individual moves beyond just talking about certain groups to conscious efforts to avoid individuals from these groups. The individual expressing avoidance behavior will tolerate inconvenience for the sake of avoidance. Thus, for example, instead of getting off at bus stop z and walking one block to work, this individual will get off at bus stop y and walk six blocks to work just to avoid the people around bus stop z. Back to our high school example: White students may avoid studying in a particular part of the school library where the Asian American or African American students commonly study. A third example would be a White family who moves out of their neighborhood because more and more minority families are moving in. It is important to emphasize that the inconvenience is self-directed, and the individual takes no directly harmful action against the group being avoided.

During the *discrimination* phase, the individual takes active steps to exclude or deny members of another group access to or participation in a desired activity. Discrimination practices in the past (and currently) have led to segregation in education, employment, politics, social privileges, and recreational opportunities (see D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, and Jones, 1997, for specifics). Thus a White member of a cooperative housing board

may vote against a Mexican American family attempting to secure housing in the co-op building. Families in a particular neighborhood may pressure the local real estate agent not to show houses to families of color. Qualified job candidates of color may be turned down in favor of less qualified White candidates. In the United States, discrimination based on race, gender, religion, ethnicity, age, and so forth is illegal; nonetheless, it happens every day.

The fourth phase in Allport's (1979) model of prejudice expression is *physical attack*. Under tense and emotionally laden conditions, or even under peer pressure, it does not take much for an individual to move quickly from the discrimination stage to physical confrontation. On any given day in any city newspaper, you are likely to read of race- or religious-based destruction of property or of an actual physical confrontation. From the high school grounds to the college campus to the city streets, we seem increasingly to hear of race- and religious-influenced confrontations and attacks (see The Prejudice Institute, n.d.; Willoughby, 2003).

Extermination marks the final phase of Allport's (1979) five-point continuum. As the term implies, extermination involves the systematic and planned destruction of a group of people based on their group membership. Allport cites lynchings, pogroms, massacres, and Hitlerian genocide as the ultimate expression of prejudice. Examples of attempted genocides fill an entire book (see Michael Mann's 2005 *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*), and unfortunately, genocide is not just a human catastrophe of past generations. Most of our readers are familiar with the attempted Nazi destruction of the Jewish people, during which 6 million Jews were murdered. Most are familiar with the mass destruction of millions of African people during their forced enslavement. Many are also familiar with the story of the American Indians in the lower 48 states, whose population was reduced from as many as 9 million during the time of Christopher Columbus's invasion³ to only 2 million today (Herring, 1999).

Fewer readers are likely to be aware of the similar destruction of the Native Hawai'ian people, who numbered between .4 and 1 million in 1778 when Captains James Cook and George Vancouver and their men invaded the island. By 1822, there were only 200,000 pure Hawai'ians left alive; by 1878, only 48,000; by 1922, only 24,000; and in 2003, only 5000 pure Hawai'ians remained alive⁴ (Noyes, 2003). These Native peoples were murdered directly by White male settlers or died of various diseases brought over by the invaders that the Native peoples had no experience with and therefore no natural immunity to (see Trask, 1999).

As noted earlier, genocide is unfortunately not just a reality of the past. Recent ethnic-based mass destruction efforts in Eastern Europe (Bosnian Serbs versus Bosnian Muslims) and Rwanda (e.g., clashes between the Tutsis and Hutu) are relatively current events (see reviews in Mann, 2005; Jones, 1997). It is probable that by the time this book reaches publication,

early in the year 2006, we will be reading of yet another attempt at ethnic destruction.

It is important to emphasize that individuals at one particular phase in Allport's sequence may never progress to the next. However, increased activity at any one level increases the likelihood that an individual will cross the boundary to the next. Allport (1979) provides a poignant example:

It was Hitler's antilocution that led Germans to avoid their Jewish neighbors and erstwhile friends. This preparation made it easier to enact the Nurnberg laws of discrimination which, in turn, made the subsequent burning of synagogues and street attacks upon Jews seem natural. The final step in the macabre progression was the ovens at Auschwitz. (p. 15)

Understanding Racism

Racism continues to tear at the soul of America (Sue, 2003). Understanding the definition and impact of racism is critical to all citizens of this country, from parents to educators to politicians. This section defines racism, describes its manifestations, and points out those who need to be most involved in the fight against racism—White Americans.

Defining Racism

According to Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) the term *racism* became popular in the American lexicon after its use in the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). This well-known report cited racism by Whites as a factor in the disadvantaged plight of many Blacks in America. Since the publication of this report, numerous scholars have elaborated on the term racism. Jones (1972) defined racism broadly as follows: “[Racism] results from the transformation of race prejudice and/or ethnocentrism through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior, by individuals and institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire culture” (p. 117).

Jones delineates the complexity of racism by unpacking three forms of racism reflected in this more general definition. *Individual racism* is conceptualized as a person's race prejudice based on biological considerations and involving actual behavior that is discriminatory in nature. Specifically, Jones (1997) defines the *individual racist* as

one who considers the black people as a group (or other human groups defined by essential racial characteristics) are inferior to whites because of physical (i.e., genotypical and phenotypical) traits. He or she further

believes that these physical traits are determinants of social behavior and of moral or intellectual qualities, and ultimately presumes that this inferiority is a legitimate basis for that group's inferior social treatment. An important consideration is that all judgments of superiority are based on the corresponding traits of white people as norms of comparison. (p. 417)

Jones specifies a second form of racism, *institutional racism*, which includes the intentional or unintentional manipulation or toleration of institutional policies (e.g., school admission criteria, taxes) that unfairly restrict the opportunities of targeted groups. Specifically, Jones (1997) defines *institutional racism* as

those established laws, customs, and practices which systematically reflect and produce racial inequalities in American society. If racist consequences accrue to institutional laws, customs, or practices, the institution is racist whether or not the individuals maintaining those practices have racist intentions. Institutional racism can be either overt or covert (corresponding to de jure and de facto, respectively) and either intentional or unintentional. (p. 438)

Jones's third form of racism is *cultural racism*, which is the more subtle form of racism and the most pervasive and insidious. This form of racism includes the individual and institutional expression of the superiority of one race's cultural heritage (and concomitant value system) over that of other races. Specifically, Jones (1997) defines *cultural racism* as comprising

the cumulative effects of a racialized worldview, based on belief in essential racial differences that favor the dominant racial group over others. These effects are suffused throughout the culture via institutional structures, ideological beliefs, and personal everyday actions of people in the culture, and these effects are passed on from generation to generation. (p. 472)

A more counseling- and education-focused discussion is provided by Ridley (1989, 1995, 2005). Ridley (1995) defines racism as "any behavior or pattern of behavior that tends to systematically deny access to opportunities or privileges to members of one racial group while perpetuating access to opportunities and privileges to members of another racial group" (p. 28). Ridley emphasizes the terms *behavior* and *systematic* in his definition. Behavior implies human action that is observable and measurable.

Ridley (1995, 2005) distinguishes between individual and institutional racism. His distinctions are similar to those outlined by Jones (1972, 1997) and reviewed a bit earlier in this chapter. Individual racism involves the

harmful behavior of one person or a small group of individuals. Institutional racism involves the harmful effects endemic to institutional or social structures or social systems. These categories can be further broken down into smaller units of analysis based on whether the behavior is overt or covert and whether it is intentional or unintentional. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 (adapted and expanded from Ridley, 1995, 2005) present a matrix depicting these distinctions in the contexts of counseling and education.

Table 1.1 Varieties of Racism in Counseling

| | <i>Individual Racism</i> | <i>Institutional Racism</i> |
|---------------|--|---|
| Overt | | |
| Intentional | Counselor believes that racial and ethnic minorities are more challenging to work with and, on this basis, refuses to accept them as clients | Counseling agency openly denies services to racial and ethnic minority clientele |
| Covert | | |
| Intentional | Counselor assigns a racial or ethnic minority client to a student intern because of social discomfort but claims to have a schedule overload | Counseling agency deliberately sets fees above the affordable range of most lower income and middle income minority families, thus effectively excluding them from counseling |
| Unintentional | Counselor misinterprets a minority client's lateness or lack of eye contact and a firm handshake as resistance to the counseling process | Counseling agency uses standardized psychological tests without considering the relevance and validity of test scores to culturally diverse clients |

SOURCE: Reprinted and adapted from Ridley (1995, p. 37), with the permission of the publisher.

In examining these tables, the reader will note that overt acts of racism are always intentional—the intentionality is defined by the behavior. Covert racism, by contrast, can be intentional or unintentional. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 provide specific examples of each form of racism.

On a more general level, one operationalization of both institutional and cultural racism is in the intentional or unintentional imposition of the dominant White societal cultural value system onto others whose worldviews may be anchored in different value systems. Table 1.3 presents a comparison of the White middle and upper class value system with value systems

Table 1.2 Varieties of Racism in Education

| | <i>Individual Racism</i> | <i>Institutional Racism</i> |
|---------------|--|---|
| Overt | | |
| Intentional | An elementary school teacher believes minority students are less motivated and, therefore, intentionally assigns these students to the less desirable and challenging classroom activities | The administration of an elite private college believes minority students would ultimately detract from the school's "prestige" and therefore discourages its college recruiters from visiting high schools with large minority student enrollments |
| Covert | | |
| Intentional | A high school assistant principal assigns a majority of African American students to the most disliked teachers because she or he believes these students cannot really be taught, anyway | An elite high school deliberately sets tuition fees above the affordable range of most lower and middle class minority families, thus effectively excluding them from the school |
| Unintentional | An elementary school teacher misinterprets a (recently immigrated) Mexican American student's nonassertiveness and lack of eye contact as an indication of the student's noninterest in school | A doctoral program in counseling psychology uses a high score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) as an admission cutoff score without considering cultural influences in standardized testing |

SOURCE: Adapted from Ridley (1995, p. 37), with the permission of the publisher.

more common to certain subgroups (e.g., those less acculturated) of other racial and ethnic groups. Column 1 lists key values often associated with European-descended White American culture, while column 2 presents values often found in subgroups of Native American Indians, African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. For example, institutional racism may be reflected in a high school or college that promotes and rewards *individualism* (e.g., individual assignments, tests, projects) over *collectivism* (e.g., working together in teams or groups in which members have equal power and share a common goal). Such an educational practice gives White middle class students an advantage over less-acculturated minority groups, such as Native American or Mexican American students (see Ponterotto & Casas, 1991, and Sue et al., 1998, for more discussion on value systems).

Table 1.3 Value Systems (Worldviews) in Human Behavior

| <i>European American Value System</i> | <i>Non-European American Value Systems</i> |
|---|---|
| Dominant cultural value system; White middle and upper class value system | Systems common to segments of racial and ethnic minority groups |
| <p>Individualism Individual is most important; self-expression, assertiveness, autonomy, and individuation valued; individual achievements and accomplishments highly prized; self-esteem important</p> <p>Competition Considered valuable and healthy; promoting competition to isolate individual successes deemed important</p> <p>Nuclear family Parents and children considered the primary family unit; parents make decisions for children</p> <p>Linear time Time is considered to be linear, limited, and a commodity that should not be wasted; sense of time urgency</p> <p>Nonverbal behavior Example—Direct eye contact and firm handshakes seen as a sign of competence and confidence: During a job interview, it is best to look the interviewer in the eye and shake hands firmly</p> <p>Written tradition The written word or contract is preferred; “get it in writing”; quantitative research methods highly valued</p> | <p>Collectivism Group, family, tribe is most important; individual success and accomplishments are secondary to group or family achievement; family, group, or tribal esteem is primary</p> <p>Cooperation Valued over individual competition in activities; working together in teams or groups with shared power and common goals deemed valuable</p> <p>Extended family Family includes grandparents, godparents, cousins, community elders, all of whom are central to family functioning; extended family is involved in decisions regarding children</p> <p>Circular time Time is seen as circular and plentiful as day and seasonal cycles repeat; less time rigidity and urgency</p> <p>Nonverbal behavior Example—Firm handshakes and direct eye contact seen as aggressive and disrespectful: During a job interview it would be polite to look down when the interviewer addresses you and shake hands softly as a sign of respect for the interviewer’s authority and status</p> <p>Oral tradition Oral history and traditions seen as critical to family legacy and learning; spoken word highly valued; “my word is my bond”; qualitative research methods given equal weight with quantitative methods</p> |

| <i>European American Value System</i> | <i>Non-European American Value Systems</i> |
|---|---|
| <p>Future oriented Past seen as disconnected from present and future; emphasis is on preparing for the future</p> | <p>Past oriented Past seen as intimately connected to present and future; past history, legacy, and traditions anchor present and future plans and behavior</p> |
| <p>Spirituality-psychology disconnected Spirituality is unrelated to psychological processes and functioning; individuals and groups are separate and not interconnected</p> | <p>Spirituality-psychology interconnected Spiritual connectedness is an essential component of healthy psychological functioning; all individuals and groups are interconnected in a higher-order, spiritual way</p> |

SOURCES: Katz (1985), Ponterotto & Casas (1991), Sue et al. (1998).

As another example, we turn to the fifth value listed in Table 1.3, *non-verbal behavior*. If a corporate manager expects a firm handshake and eye-to-eye contact during a discussion with a colleague or subordinate, then employees who represent cultural value systems in which a firm handshake is considered aggressive and looking in the eyes of a superior is considered a sign of disrespect will be at a marked disadvantage when the manager needs to make decisions about career advancement and promotions.

In a final example, we will examine the value pair of *nuclear family* and *extended family*. If a teacher or counselor expects only the nuclear family to come in for a teacher-parent conference or a family counseling or therapy session and neglects to invite extended family, such as grandparents or godparents, many families adhering to traditional Native American and Hispanic worldviews may feel insulted.

The Prejudice-Racism Distinction

Our general usage of the term *racism* throughout this book parallels that of Ridley (1989, 1995, 2005). We are concerned with the effects and consequences of harmful behaviors directed toward certain racial and ethnic groups. Our conception of prejudice focuses on an attitude or belief that is negative and based on a faulty and inflexible generalization about a person because he or she is a member of a particular group. Race-based prejudice often leads to racist behaviors—but not always. A person can have race-based prejudice but not act on it (see Schutz & Six, 1996). Racism, on the other hand, involves intentional or unintentional actions that oppress others.

Who Can Be Racist?

The three authors of this book travel extensively, nationally and internationally. One question that is often posed to us by students, parents, community groups, politicians, and others is “Can anyone be racist, or is racism really the responsibility of White people?” Before we give you our response to this question, let us review some of the varied reactions of other racism researchers who study racism primarily in the United States.

James M. Jones, the social psychologist whose work we rely heavily on throughout this book, has a section in the second edition of his classic book, *Prejudice and Racism* (1997), titled “Whose Problem Is It Anyway?” In this brief section, Jones emphasizes that

the problems posed by prejudice and racism belong to all of us. Problematizing one group or another is a hindrance to finding solutions to the discord wrought by prejudice and racism. By framing the issue in terms of the total cultural fabric, we see clearly that we cannot solve a problem this complex and ingrained in society by singling out a particular group—whether the group be white men, say, or Latina immigrants. (p. 531)

Charles R. Ridley (1995), a counseling psychologist and expert on racism, maintains that members of all racial groups can be racist, because racism is determined by the consequences of one’s actions. He notes that minority groups can be racist against other minority groups, and in the few cases when a minority group has power over a White person, there can be anti-White racism. However, Ridley (1995) acknowledges that power (the ability to control) is needed to subjugate or oppress others, and given that the majority of power in the United States is in the hands of White people, they are the major perpetrators of racism.

The noted and pioneering counseling psychologist Derald Wing Sue has been the most direct at tackling the issue of who can be racist. Sue (2003) is careful to distinguish between *racial discrimination* (“acting on one’s prejudice such as any action that differentially treats individuals or groups of color based on prejudice,” p. 29) and racism (“any attitude, action, or institutional structure or any social policy that subordinates persons or groups because of their color. . . . it involves the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices in a broad and continuing manner,” p. 31). He notes that members of any racial group can harbor prejudice and manifest racial discrimination toward members of other racial groups. However, Sue (2003) believes that only White people can be racist, because racism “is a pervasive and systematic exercise of real power to deny minorities equal access and opportunity, while maintaining the benefits and advantages of White Americans” (p. 31). Thus, Sue believes that because White Americans control the institutions and social policies that enforce their own cultural values and norms, only Whites can be racist.

Racism Is a White Problem

Although the three renowned psychologists cited here differ to some degree in assigning the responsibility of racism to White people, a close reading of their books will show that they all agree that power in the United States is in the hands of White people, particularly White males, and given that power is central to the ability to exercise racism, racism is, de facto, chiefly and primarily the responsibility of Whites. Ridley (1995, 2005) and Sue (2003) are the most direct in tackling this question of responsibility for racism, and their differences in opinion stem in part from their definitions of racism. Ridley focused on defining racism through the consequences of action and believes that in certain contexts a group of minority members may hold power and thus possess the ability to act racist. Sue, on the other hand, emphasizes that racism involves the systematic exercise of power, a level of power that only Whites possess in the United States, and thus only Whites can exercise racism.

Our own view is a mixture of the positions of Ridley (1995, 2005) and Sue (2003). We use Jones's (1997) tripartite model of racism—individual, institutional, and cultural—as a context for our position. Individual racism, although usually the province of Whites, can be exhibited by members of any group in a context where they hold the power over another. Institutional racism is almost exclusively the province of Whites, as they run the majority of major institutions (government offices, corporations, universities, and so on) and possess the power to control others directly or indirectly. Finally, cultural racism is a function only of White society, given the predominant White “American” value system that dominates society (refer back to column 1 of Table 1.3). We do not see, for example, the Native American or Africentric value systems replacing the current dominant and empowered value system of the primarily White middle and upper class, and therefore we do not see that the responsibility for cultural racism can be placed upon anyone except White people.

Prevalence of Racism

We opened this chapter by emphasizing the significant prevalence of ethnoviolence throughout the world society. Now we address the prevalence of racism in the United States. In an often cited review focusing on White racism toward Blacks, Pettigrew (1981) found that roughly 15% of White adults are extremely racist, largely due to authoritarian personality needs. Approximately 60% of White adult Americans are conforming bigots, reflecting the racist ideology of the larger society. Finally, about 25% of White adults consistently support rights for Blacks and can be said to be antiracist in ideology and behavior.

These data are still quite disconcerting in that as late as the 1980s, only 25% of White people took an active stand against racism. Although only

15% of survey participants reviewed by Pettigrew were extremely racist, 60% of White Americans conformed to racist ideology in society. By not being part of the solution, this 60% was part of the problem (see discussions in Jones, 1997). Therefore, 75% of the White population, to some degree, promoted the status quo, which meant racial inequality. Pettigrew (1981) emphasized that White Americans increasingly rejected racial injustice in principle but remained reluctant to accept and act on measures necessary to eliminate the injustice.

The Pettigrew study is 25 years old. Is not the status and prevalence of White racism much improved in the year 2006? This question is somewhat debatable, and we address it further in the next chapter. Clearly the nature of racism has evolved over the past half century; "old-fashioned," overt racist views and actions have been replaced by "modern" racism and more subtle, yet equally insidious, forms of racist expression. Present-day racism researchers present convincing evidence that White racism is not only alive and well but thriving. Among these researchers are Derald Wing Sue of Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York and Michael D'Andrea and Judy Daniels at the University of Hawai'i. These researchers have been studying the incidence and manifestations of White racism for the past 20 years, using a variety of qualitative methods such as person-to-person interviews, field study techniques, and participant observations in a wide variety of settings. The results of their work can be summarized in part through the following quotes. First, we quote directly from Sue (2003), who speaks to the critical responsibility of White citizens to be active in fighting racism:

You do not have to be actively racist to contribute to the racism problem. Inaction, itself, is tacit agreement that racism is acceptable; and because White Americans enjoy the benefits, privileges, and opportunities of the oppressive system, they inevitably are racist by both commission and omission. As a result, it is my contention that White racism is truly a White problem and that it is the responsibility of my White brothers and sisters to be centrally involved in combating and ending racial oppression. (p. 99)

Next we quote from D'Andrea and Daniels (2001), who discuss the results of their 16-year study on racism, which sampled a broad spectrum of White Americans nationwide:

It is very important to understand that most of the racism that exists in the United States is perpetuated by millions of well-meaning, liberal-thinking White persons who react with passive acceptance and apathy to the pervasive ways in which this problem continues to be embedded in our institutional structures. From the results of our extensive research in this area, we have concluded that most of the racism that continues to be perpetuated in the United States is, in fact, fueled by broad-based passive acceptance

among the majority of White persons who unintentionally allow this social pathology to persist by their silent and complicit acceptance of various ongoing forms of institutional oppression and racism. (p. 294)

Although they wrote more than 20 years after Pettigrew's (1981) integrative review, Drs. Sue, D'Andrea, and Daniels join Pettigrew in the view that the major problem of White racism is not the small minority of Whites who are obviously and openly racist; it is the much larger percentage of Whites who are unintentionally racist and contribute little or nothing to the fight against racism.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has set the tone for the remainder of the book. We began by defining ethnoviolence and noting its prevalence worldwide. Then we moved to brief discussions of important terms that are used throughout the text and that should be familiar to parents, educators, and counselors. The chapter closed with in-depth discussions on the nature and manifestations of both prejudice and racism. The chief responsibility of White Americans in fighting racism was emphasized.

Notes

1. *Xenophobia* means "fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners."
2. However, the biologically and philosophically oriented reader may wish to read the recent work and debates of Andreasen (2004, 2005) and Kitcher (1999), who have conceptualized genealogically based theories of race.
3. We purposefully use the term *invasion* here to highlight the uninvited and unwanted arrival of Europeans on Native American lands. Columbus clearly did not "discover" a land that had been occupied for thousands of years by Native peoples. We use Webster's (2004) second definition for invasion, "the incoming or spread of something usually hurtful" (p. 658). Columbus and Cook may not have brought invading armies to the Americas, but as this chapter shows, their arrival led to mass destruction of many peoples and their cultures.
4. The final tally of 5000 refers, as noted, to pure Hawai'ians only; there are many part-Hawai'ian Natives alive today who are of mixed racial and ethnic heritage through intermarriage.