Racial Inequality
Race and Ethnicity

- **Race:**
  - A socially constructed category of people
    - Who share biologically transmitted traits that a society defines as important
  - Sociologists view racial categories at best as crude and misleading
    - And at worst as a harmful way to divide humanity

- **A racial group is:**
  - A category of people who have been singled out
  - Seen as inferior or superior than other groups
  - Determined by subjectively defined physical characteristics
    - Such as skin color, hair texture, eye shape

- **An Ethnic Group is:**
  - A group distinguished from others.
  - Seen as inferior or superior.
  - Distinguished on the basis of cultural or nationality characteristics.
Dominant and Subordinate Groups

- **Dominant Group:**
  - Advantaged compared to other groups in society
  - Have superior resources and rights in a society
  - Can be determined by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or other factors
  - In the U.S. the dominant group is associated with white-skin privilege.

- **Subordinate Group:**
  - Are disadvantaged compared to other groups
  - Face unequal treatment, prejudice, or discrimination
  - See themselves as objects of discrimination
Racism and Prejudice

• Racism:
  o Systemic and Structural Beliefs and practices which justify unequal treatment of racial and ethnic groups
  o White racism is present in the U.S. and denies people of color opportunities

• Prejudice: negative attitude toward a particular group
  o Based on faulty generalizations
  o Stems from ethnocentrism (assumption one’s group is superior)
  o Also influenced by stereotypes
    • Overgeneralizations about all members of a group
Discrimination

• Individual Discrimination:
  o One on one acts against subordinate group by dominant group
  o Generally stems from prejudice

• Institutional Discrimination:
  o Involves day to day practices of institutions
  o Harmful impact on subordinate group
Minorities

- Category of people, identified by physical/cultural traits, subjected to disadvantages

- Characteristics:
  - They share a distinctive identity
  - They tend to be disadvantaged
  - About one-third of the people in the U.S. fall into a minority racial or ethnic category

- Genocide – the systematic killing of one category of people by another

- Segregation – the physical and social separation of categories of people
Contemporary Racism

- Systemic inequality
  - Criminal Justice
  - Education
  - Income and Wealth
  - Health and life expectancy
  - Immigration
Racism and Poverty

• Intergenerational transmission of wealth – likelihood of inheriting social and economic capital from ancestors
• Racism and limited access to jobs, quality education etc.
• Internalized and community racism
  o Buying your own bad press
Poverty by Race

[Graph showing percentage of poverty by race from 1959 to 2011, including data points for Hispanic (any race), Black, Asian, and Non-Hispanic White races.]
Racism and Education

- Racial identity is strongly connected to educational attainment
- Whites and Asian American/Pacific Islanders are much more likely to complete all levels of education than other groups
  - Education is linked to income, health, happiness and positive life outcomes
Racial Profiling refers to the use of an individual’s race or ethnicity by law enforcement personnel as a key factor in deciding whether to engage in enforcement (e.g. make a traffic stop or arrest).
Racism and Crime

• Racism - In 1998, nearly one out of three Black men between the ages of 20-29 were in prison or jail, on probation or parole on any given day.

• Over Half of all Crime in the US is committed by offenders who are categorized by their victims as “white” but approximately 70% of those incarcerated are “non-White”
The War on Drugs

Bar chart showing:

- % of Illicit Drug Users in America
- % of Drug War Prisoners in America

Bar heights for:
- White
- Hispanic
- Black
- Other

Sources:
*Source: SAMHSA 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse
**Source: The Sentencing Project
Racism and Immigration: Myths

- **Immigrants don't pay taxes.**
  - Immigrants pay taxes, they pay the same property, sales, and income taxes native born. (90-140 b/yr).
  - Undocumented immigrants pay about 20b/yr

- **Immigrants just live off welfare**
  - Immigrants earn about $240 billion a year, pay about $90 billion a year in taxes, and use about $5 billion in public benefits.

- **Immigrants are a drain on the U.S. economy.**
  - The net benefit of immigration to the U.S. is nearly $10 billion annually. 70% of immigrants arrive in prime working age.
    - Cost of education $0
    - Tax and social security contribution
Racism and Immigration: Myths

- Immigrants take jobs and opportunity away from Americans.
  - The largest wave of immigration to the U.S. since the early 1900s coincided with our lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth.

- Most immigrants cross the border illegally.
  - Only about 25% of immigrants are undocumented in the US.

- There are more immigrants than ever here
  - About 13% of people in the US are foreign born, since 1860 the rate of immigrants has been between 10-15%
  - How is racism tied to current attitudes toward immigration?
## General Health Status among US Adults*, by Race or Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race or Ethnicity</th>
<th>Excellent/Very Good Health Status</th>
<th>Good Health Status</th>
<th>Fair/Poor Health Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Black</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American+</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Aged 18 years or older, ^Pacific Islander, +Includes American Indians and Alaska Natives
Heath by Race

- Infant mortality by race
  - African American have twice as high an infant mortality rate as do whites
- Life Expectancy
  - Whites: 78 years,
  - Native American: 75 years,
  - African American: 72 years

Who has health coverage?
Percent of Americans with health coverage, by race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Coverage Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans or blacks</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indians and Alaskan Natives</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages for Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and American Indian and Alaskan Natives is based on 2005-2007 data, all other percentages based on 2009 data.