

## Ethnicity and Race

- Ethnic groups and ethnicity
  - Ethnic groups
    - Share beliefs, values, customs, and norms because of their common background
    - May define themselves as different based on language, religion, historical experience, geographic isolation, kinship, or "race"
    - Markers may include collective name, belief in common descent, sense of solidarity, and association with a specific territory
  - Ethnicity – identification with, and feeling part of, an ethnic group and exclusion from certain other groups because of this affiliation

## Ethnicity and Race

- Ethnic groups and ethnicity
  - Status – the various positions that people have in society
    - All people occupy multiple statuses
    - Ascribed vs. achieved statuses
  - Status shifting
    - Some statuses (particularly ascribed ones) are contextual
    - Can adjust or switch status in different social contexts

## Ethnicity and Race

- Ethnic groups and ethnicity
  - Status shifting
    - Ascribed statuses may be associated with positions in a social hierarchy
      - Minority groups have less power and less secure access to resources than do majority groups
      - Ethnic groups often are minorities

## Ethnicity and Race

- Race
  - Race – an ethnic group assumed to have a biological basis
  - Racism – discrimination against a "racial" group
  - **Race is a cultural category** rather than a biological reality

## Ethnicity and Race

- Cultural construction of "race" in the United States
  - In the United States, "race" is most commonly ascribed to people at birth, although not necessarily on the basis of heredity or genotype
  - Hypodescent
    - In the United States, children of a union between members of different groups are automatically placed in the minority group
    - Hypodescent rule is rare outside of the United States
  - Growing number of interracial, biracial, or multiracial individuals who do not identify with only one racial identity

## Ethnicity and Race

- Cultural construction of "race" in Brazil
  - Less exclusionary categories allow individuals to change their racial classification
  - Brazilian racial classification recognizes, attempts to describe phenotypical variation in the population
    - More than 500 distinct racial labels
    - Individuals' racial labels may change along with their phenotypical characteristics
    - Racial labels that people use to describe themselves or others can vary from day to day
  - No hypodescent rule ensuring that whites and blacks (and other "races") remain separate

## Ethnicity and Race

- Ethnic tolerance and accommodation
  - Assimilation
    - A minority group adopts the patterns and norms of a dominant host culture to such an extent that it no longer exists as a separate cultural unit
    - May be forced

## Ethnicity and Race

- Multiculturalism and ethnic identity
  - The view of cultural diversity in a country as something good and desirable
    - Opposed to assimilationism – expectation that minorities will abandon their cultural traditions and values, replacing them with those of the majority population
  - Increasing multiculturalism in the United States
    - Large-scale migration – increasing ethnic variety in host nations
    - Ethnicity-based organizations striving to enhance groups' economic and political competitiveness and combating discrimination

## Ethnicity and Race

- Roots of ethnic conflict
  - Prejudice – devaluation of a group because of its assumed behavior, values, capabilities, or attributes
  - Stereotypes – fixed, often unfavorable ideas about what the members of a group are like
  - Discrimination – policies and practices that harm a group and its members
    - *De facto* discrimination – practiced but not legally sanctioned
    - *De jure* discrimination – part of law

## Ethnicity and Race

- Aftermaths of oppression
  - Ethnocide – destruction of an ethnic group's culture
  - Forced assimilation – forcing an ethnic group to adopt the culture of a dominant group
  - Ethnic expulsion – removal of groups that are culturally different from a country
    - May create refugees – people who have been forced (involuntary refugees) or who have chosen (voluntary refugees) to flee a country, to escape persecution or war

## Ethnicity and Race

- Aftermaths of oppression
  - Colonialism – political, social, economic, and cultural domination of a territory and its people by a foreign power for an extended time
    - Frontiers imposed by colonialism usually did not reflect preexisting cultural units
    - Colonial nation-building frequently resulted in ethnic strife
  - Cultural colonialism – internal domination by one group and its culture/ideology over others (e.g., former Soviet empire)