# Sociology

Unit 5: Social Inequality

# Unit 5 Overview

**Unit EQ:**

How do social stratification, gender, age, race and ethnicity contribute to social inequality?

# You will need to be able to "Understand" the following:

- Many societies rank their members based on social stratification.

- The American class system is described through six class divisions.

- People living below the poverty line have fewer opportunities.

- Race, ethnicity, and minority groups help shape social structure.

- Understanding the concepts and causes of discrimination and prejudice are key to understanding patterns of minority group treatment.

- In many societies, gender roles lead to social inequality.

- As a society ages, the concerns of the elderly take on increasing importance.

# Unit 5 Outline

**Unit EQ:  How are culture and society related to human interaction?**

- Social Stratification
- Poverty
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Exam

# Social Stratification

**EQ 1: How is social stratification determined within societies?**

**EQ 2: What are the six class divisions within American society?**

## Vocabulary

- Social stratification
- Social inequality
- Cast system
- Class system
- Bourgeoisie
- Proletariat

- Social Class
- Wealth
- Power
- Prestige
- Socioeconomic status

# Activator

What factors contribute to the determination of ranks and classes of groups within society?

# Social Stratification

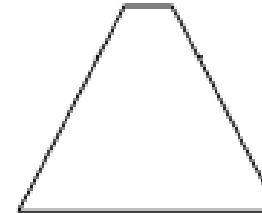**Definition:** the process of dividing societies into categories, ranks, or classes based on certain characteristics

*Those who are more powerful privileged and having advantageous life chances*
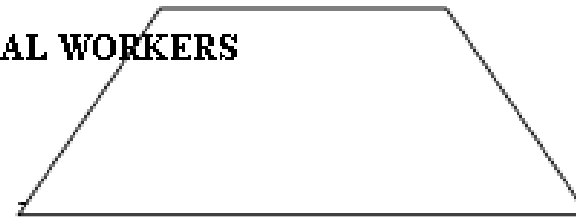
**UPPER MIDDLE CLASS**

**Upper class**
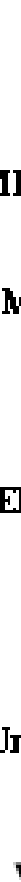
**Middle class**

**LOWER MIDDLE CLASS**

**SKILLED MANUAL WORKERS**

**Working Class**

**UNSKILLED MANUAL WORKERS**
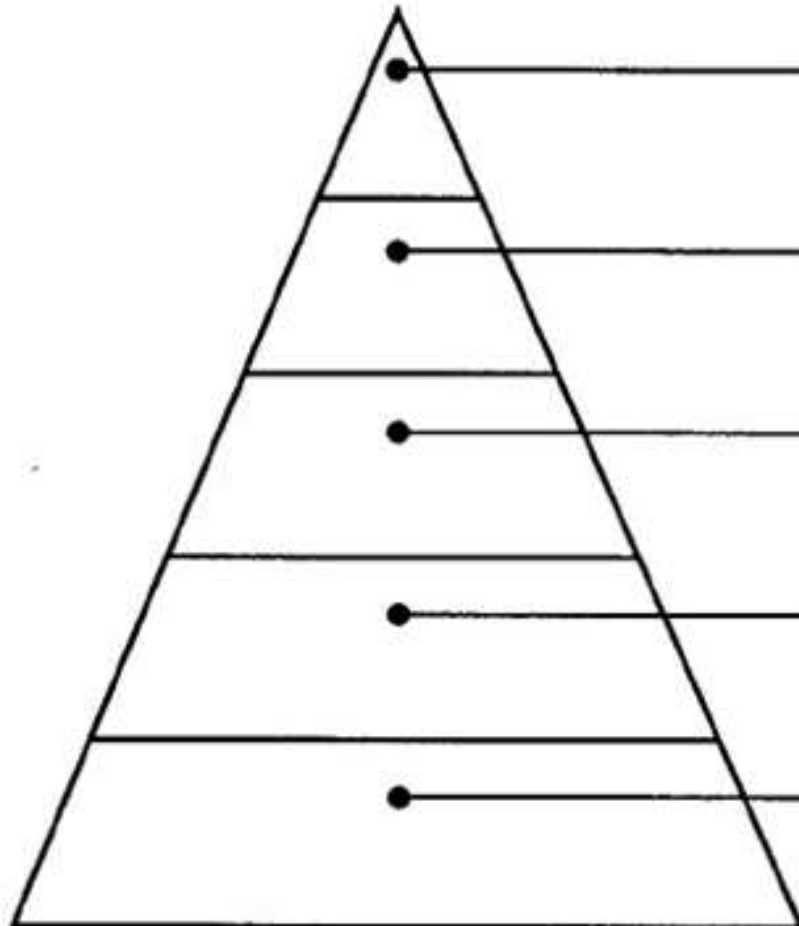
**The Poor/Underclass**

# Social Inequality

Definition: the unequal sharing of scarce resources and social rewards

# Caste System



**BRAHMINS**
Priests

**KSHATRIYAS**
Warriors and rulers

**VAISYAS**
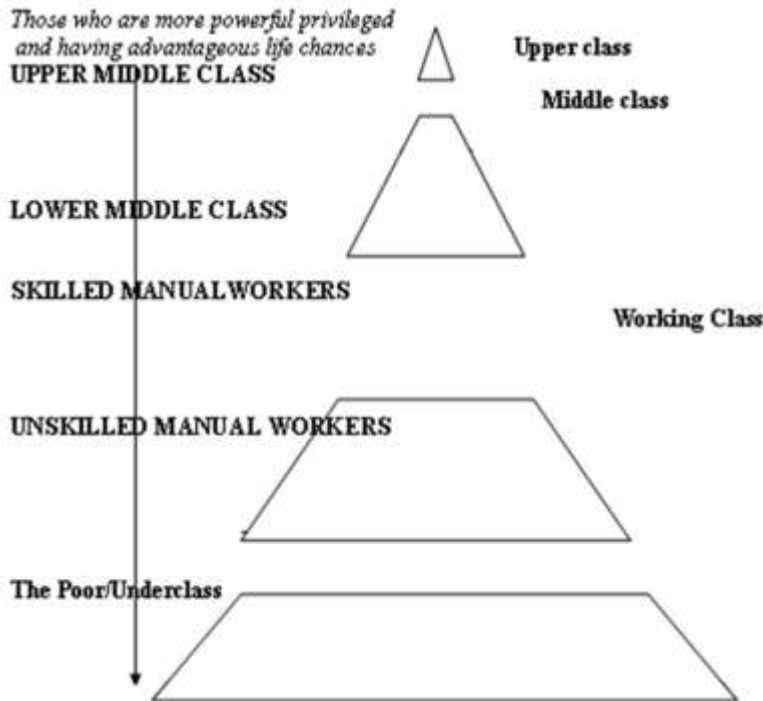Skilled traders, merchants, and minor officials

**SUDRAS**
Unskilled workers

**PARIAH**
"Harijans"
Outcastes, "Untouchables," "Children of God"
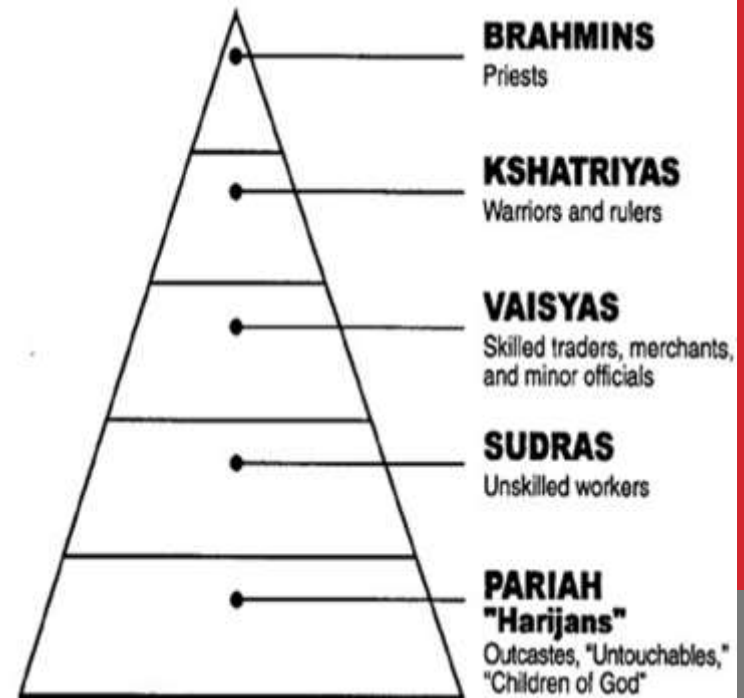
# Caste vs. Class

- Using pgs. 187-188, differentiate between the caste and class system. In short, how does the class system differ?



VS.

# Weber's Dimensions of Stratification

| WEALTH | POWER | PRESTIGE |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

# Theories of Social Stratification

**Conflict Theory:**

1. Competition for scarce resources
2. Group gains power
3. Shapes public policy and opinion to own advantage

**Functionalist Theory:**

1. Certain roles must be maintained
2. High reward ensure jobs will be fulfilled
3. More skill needed the higher the reward

# *Social Stratification Around the World*

- Read p. 191 and complete the *Thinking Critically.*

**READ WITH A PURPOSE**

# Social Stratification

**EQ 1: How is social stratification determined within societies?**

**EQ 2: What are the six class divisions within American society?**

## Vocabulary

- Social stratification
- Social inequality
- Cast system
- Class system
- Bourgeoisie
- Proletariat

- Social Class
- Wealth
- Power
- Prestige
- Socioeconomic status

# Class Determination Techniques

- **Reputational method**
  - Community members rank other members
- **Subjective method**
  - Individual determine their own social rank
  - Most people choose middle class
- **Objective method**
  - Defined by income, occupation, and education
  - Choosing different factors brings different results

# American Social Class



## Social Classes in the United States

### Upper Class

**Percent of U.S. Population** 1%

**Education** prestigious universities

**Occupations** owners and executives of large businesses; investors; heirs

### Upper Middle Class

**Percent of U.S. Population** 14%

**Education** college or university

**Occupations** business executives; professionals

### Lower Middle Class

**Percent of U.S. Population** 30%

**Education** high school, some college

**Occupations** lower-level managers; skilled craftsworkers; supervisors

# American Social Class



## Working Class

**Percent of U.S. Population** 30%

**Education** high school

**Occupations** factory workers; clerical workers; lower-level salespeople

## Working Poor

**Percent of U.S. Population** 22%

**Education** some high school

**Occupations** laborers; service workers such as gardeners and house cleaners

## Underclass

**Percent of U.S. Population** 3%

**Education** some high school

**Occupations** undesirable, low-paying jobs; unemployed; on welfare

# Social Mobility

- **Definition:** the movement between or within social classes.
- **Horizontal mobility**: movement within a social class
- **Vertical mobility**: movement between social classes
- **Intragenerational mobility** (within a person's lifetime)
- **Intergenerational mobility** (several generations of one family)

# Causes of Upward Mobility

- Individual effort
- Technological change
- Change in merchandising patterns
- Increase in population's general educational level

# Causes of Downward Mobility

- Personal factors such as illness, divorce, or retirement
- Technological change altering the demand for labor
- Overall economic health

# Assignment: Social Class Simulation

- In this simulation you will glimpse what some of the American social classes look like from within using three imaginary families.

- Create a budget for your assigned family.

- Chart the budget in a pie graph.

- What were some of the most challenging decisions you had to make?

- Did you have to sacrifice anything? If so, what?

# Poverty

**EQ: How does poverty affect opportunity?**

## **<u>Vocabulary</u>**
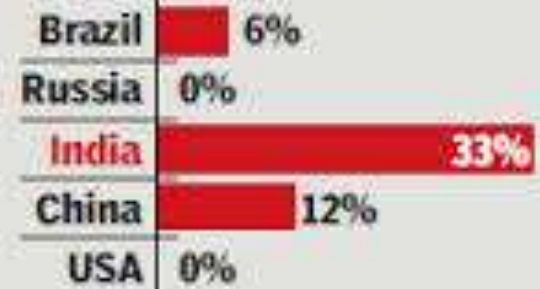
- Social mobility
- Poverty level
- Life Chance

# Poverty

- **Definition:** a standard of living that is below the minimum level considered adequate by society.

*What one society sees as poverty might be seen as adequate by another society.

**POVERTY ACROSS THE WORLD**

Share of population with daily income below $1.25

| | |
|---|---|
| Brazil | 6% |
| Russia | 0% |
| India | 33% |
| China | 12% |
| USA | 0% |

**Poverty level (line)** is the minimum income needed by a family to survive, calculated as the cost of an adequate diet.



| POVERTY LEVEL BY FAMILY SIZE, 2007 | QUICK FACTS |
|---|---|
| **Family Size** | **Poverty Level** |
| 1 person | |
| Under 65 years | $10,787 |
| 65 years and over | $9,944 |
| 2 persons | |
| Householder under 65 years | $13,884 |
| Householder 65 years and older | $12,533 |
| 3 persons | $16,218 |
| 4 persons | $21,386 |
| 5 persons | $25,791 |
| 6 persons | $29,664 |
| 7 persons | $34,132 |
| 8 persons | $38,174 |
| 9 persons or more | $45,921 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Statistically Speaking...

## Poverty in America

Poverty affects Americans of all races, ethnicities, and age groups. However, because of a history of discrimination and many other factors, certain groups suffer from greater percentages of poverty. As you can see in the table at right, the poverty rate for whites averages 2 percentage points lower than the rate for the overall population. African Americans and Hispanics, on the other hand, have poverty rates that are almost twice that of the nation as a whole.

Although the poverty level is uniform across the country, the percentage of people below the poverty level varies by state. In Mississippi—the state with the most residents living in poverty—21.3 percent of the population is below the poverty level. In contrast, only 7.5 percent of New Hampshire residents are below the poverty level. Economic factors such as the strength of local industries or education programs can cause these variations. Cost of living, a local measure, may also play a role. For example, urban areas tend to have high costs of living. In New York City the cost of living is among the highest in the nation, and one in five people there live below the poverty level.

**Skills Focus** **INTERPRETING MAPS** What region suffers the most from poverty? Why do you think this is so?

### PERCENT OF POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL BASED ON SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, 2005

| Age | All Races | White | African American | Hispanic American |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Population | 12.6 | 10.6 | 24.9 | 21.8 |
| Under 18 | 17.6 | 14.4 | 34.5 | 28.3 |
| 18 to 24 | 18.2 | 16.1 | 28.1 | 23.2 |
| 25 to 34 | 12.6 | 10.8 | 22.4 | 19.2 |
| 35 to 44 | 9.7 | 8.6 | 16.6 | 18.3 |
| 45 to 54 | 8.2 | 6.7 | 16.7 | 12.8 |
| 55 to 59 | 8.1 | 6.9 | 17.7 | 14.5 |
| 60 to 64 | 9.6 | 8.0 | 22.2 | 17.0 |
| 65 and over | 10.1 | 8.7 | 23.3 | 19.9 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, 2006

### POVERTY LEVELS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES



Legend:
- 9.9% and under
- 10.0% to 12.9%
- 13.0% to 15.9%
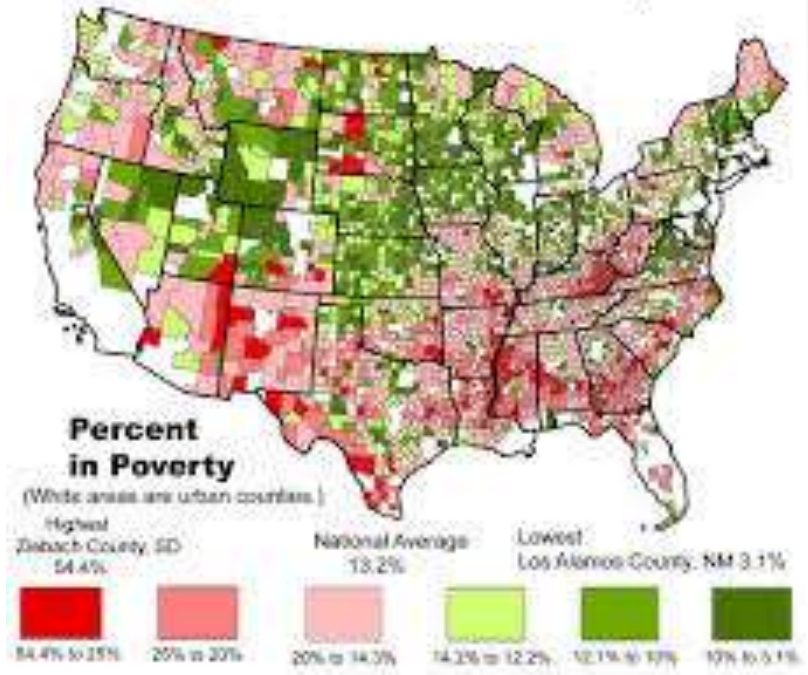- 16.0% and over
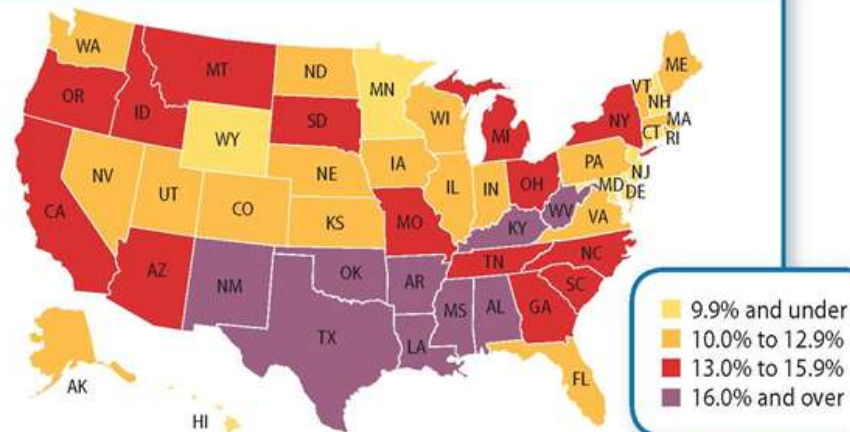
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey

# Rural Poverty

- Most Americans equate poverty with images of the urban poor

- 20 percent of poor Americans live in rural areas.

- Poverty rates are much higher among rural minorities than among rural whites.

- Little access to government services, and the shift to a service economy has hit them especially hard.
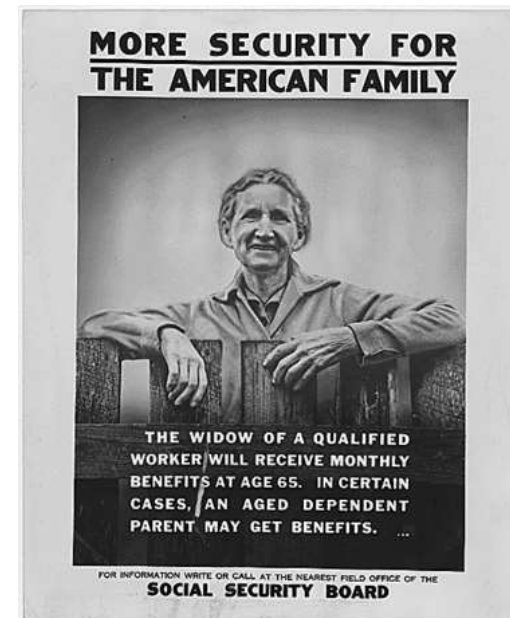


Poverty in Rural America, 2008

Percent in Poverty
(White areas are urban counties.)

Highest Ziebach County, SD 54.4%

National Average 13.2%

Lowest Los Alamos County, NM 3.1%

54.4% to 25% | 25% to 20% | 20% to 14.3% | 14.2% to 12.2% | 12.1% to 10% | 10% to 3.1%

# Effects of Poverty

- Results in decreased **life chances.**
- **Life chances** define the likelihood that an individual will share in the opportunities and benefits of society.
- **Life chances** include health, length of life, housing, and education.
- Divorce rates are higher among low-income families.
- Crime rates are higher in poor communities.

# FDR's New Deal

- **Social Security Act of 1935**
  - Retirement pensions
  - Unemployment insurance
  - Welfare benefits for the handicapped and needy
- **Public Housing Act of 1937**
  - Replace slums with public housing
- **Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938**
  - 44 hr. work week & minimum wage
- **Food Stamps Plan** (1939-1941, re-established in 1961)
- Variety of work programs to address massive unemployment.



FOR A NEW DEAL



MORE SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN FAMILY

THE WIDOW OF A QUALIFIED WORKER WILL RECEIVE MONTHLY BENEFITS AT AGE 65. IN CERTAIN CASES, AN AGED DEPENDENT PARENT MAY GET BENEFITS. ...

FOR INFORMATION WRITE OR CALL AT THE NEAREST FIELD OFFICE OF THE

SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

# Great Society & *War on Poverty*

- President Lyndon Johnson's *War on Poverty* - **The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964**
  - Job Corps and VISTA
- **The Food Stamp Act of 1964**
- **Social Security Act of 1965**
  - authorized Medicare (elderly) and Medicaid (Welfare recipients)
  - Welfare
- **Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965**
  - Headstart
- **Public Broadcasting Act of 1967**





PBS
PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE

# Welfare State



- **Definition:** a concept of government in which the state plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens.

- Based on Principles of
  - equality of opportunity
  - equitable distribution of wealth
  - public responsibility for those unable to provide for themselves.
- **Transfer payments** redistribute money within society by funneling a percentage of tax revenues to groups that need public assistance.

# Criticism of the Welfare State

- **Karl Marx:** [Welfare State is]...<u>merely bribes</u> that would only temporarily make the situation of working classes tolerable and in the long run would <u>weaken the revolutionary consciousness</u> needed to achieve a socialist economy.


- **Milton Friedman:** [Welfare State] <u>reduces the incentive for workers</u> to seek employment, both by <u>reducing the need to work</u>, and by <u>reducing the reward of work</u> through higher taxes and taking away benefits already rewarded.
    - Member of President Reagan's Economic Policy Advisory Board
    - "the most influential economist of the second half of the 20th century...possibly of all of it." – The Economist

# Race and Ethnicity

**EQ: How do race and ethnicity shape individual identity, social structure, and human interaction?**

## <u>Vocabulary</u>

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Ethnic group
- Minority group
- Dominant group

# Race

- Many people think that humankind can be sorted into <u>biologically distinct groups</u> called races.

- Biologists, geneticists, and social <u>scientists reject </u>this view of race.

- All people belong to the human species.

- There are greater differences within racial groups than between racial groups.

- **In sociological terms, "race" is a category of people who share <u>observable physical characteristics</u> and whom others see as being a distinct group.**

# Ethnicity

- **Definition:** set of cultural characteristics that distinguishes one group from another group.

  - People who share a common <u>cultural background</u> and a common <u>sense of identity</u> are known as an **ethnic group**.

  - Ethnicity is based on characteristics such as national origin, religion, language, customs, and values.
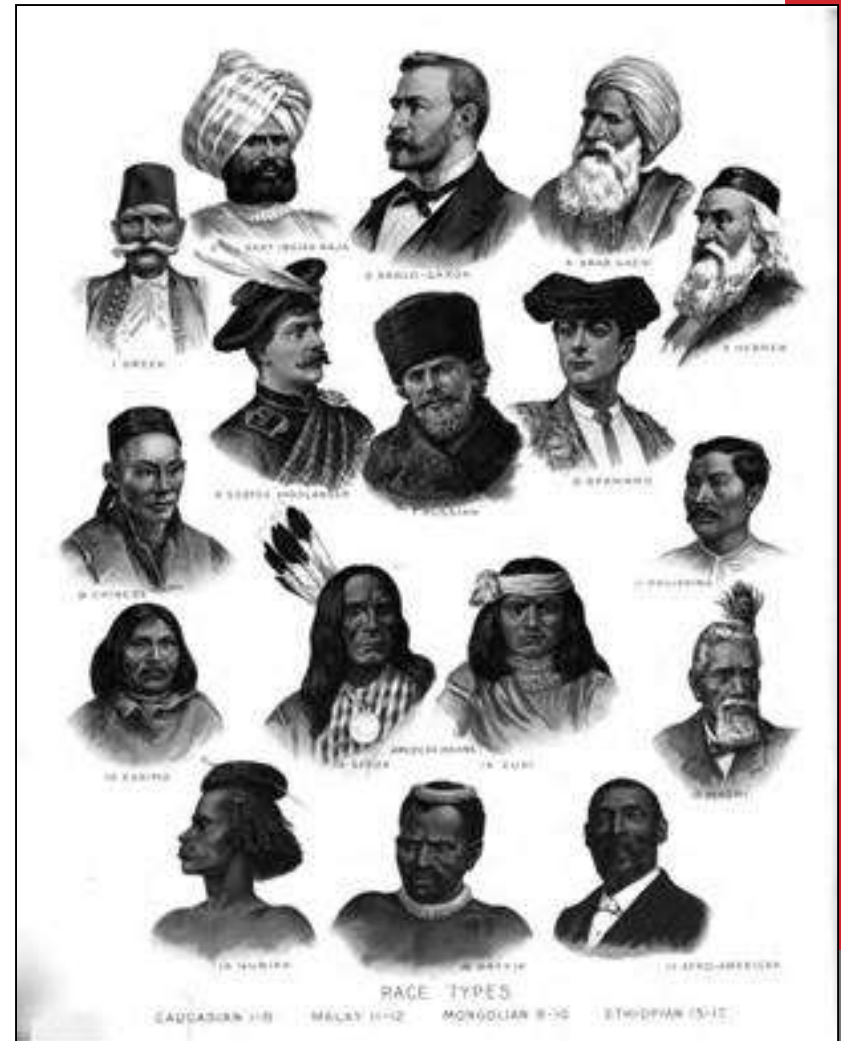
# Common "Racial" Stereotypes

- Whites don't have rhythm.
- Hispanics can't speak English very well.
- African Americans are good at basketball
- Asians are very smart
- Whites are racist
- Asians know martial arts.
- Hispanics are here illegally
- Arabs hate Americans
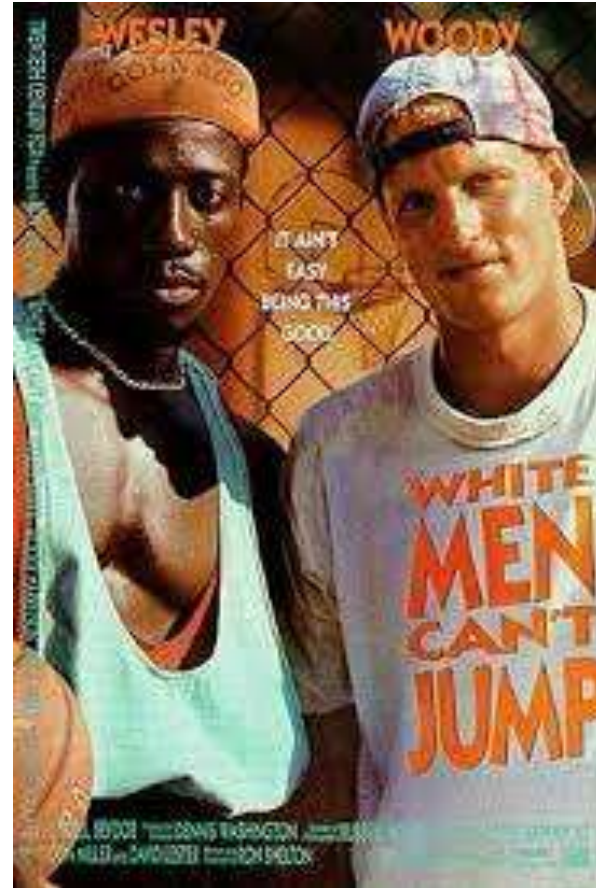


Why do you think offensive stereotypes continue to exist?

# Media: Ethnic Stereotypes

| Group | Media Roles Identified |
|---|---|
| African American | Athlete, gang member, police officer |
| Arab American | Terrorist, convenience store clerk |
| Asian American | Physician, lawyer, CEO, factory worker |
| Hispanic American | Gang member, factory worker |
| Irish American | Drunkard, police officer, factory worker |
| Italian American | Crime boss, gang member, restaurant worker |
| Jewish American | Physician, lawyer, CEO, teacher |

Source: Zogby 2001

# Power Structures

- A **minority group** is a group of people who—because of their physical characteristics or cultural practices—are singled out and treated unequally.

- **Dominant group** is the group that possesses the ability to discriminate by virtue of its greater power, privilege, and social status in a society.

- Minority group has nothing to do with group size, but with the unequal standing in society in relation to a dominant group.

# Discrimination



**Definition:** the prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a certain group
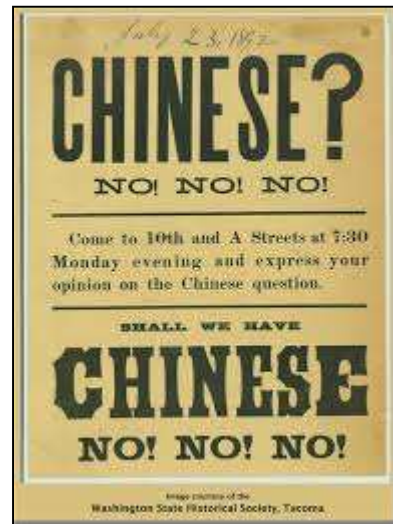
# Film Analysis: Dr. Seuss: *Sneetches*



1. What general commentary is Dr. Seuss making on race and ethnicity?

2. More specifically, who/what does the merchant represent?

# *A Class Divided*

**Clip 1**

- What gives the physical difference (blue vs. brown) any meaning? In short, why do the brown eyed students believe they are inferior?

- How were the students emotionally impacted by their group assignments?

**Clip 2**

- How did the perception of the students impact performance?

- What institutions within society are represented by the teacher?

# Race and Ethnicity

**EQ: How do race and ethnicity shape individual identity, social structure, and human interaction?**

## Vocabulary

- Discrimination
- Prejudice
- Legal discrimination
- Institutionalized discrimination
- Stereotype
- Self-fulfilling prophecy

- Racism
- Scapegoating
- Cultural pluralism
- Assimilation
- Segregation
- Subjugation

# U.S. Slavery: Liberation

- **Dred Scott vs. Sanford** (1857)
  - African Americans aren't citizens
- **Emancipation Proclamation** (1863)
- **Thirteenth Amendment** (1865)
  - Abolished Slavery
- **Fourteenth Amendment** (1868)
  - Equal treatment under the law
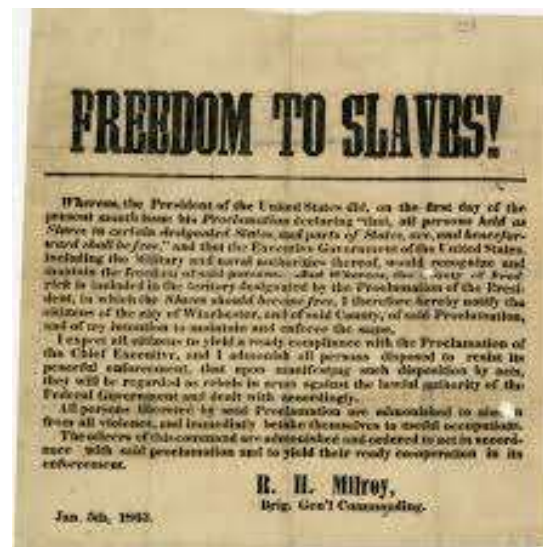
# Activity: The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow

Use the PBS Website *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*  to complete the question sheet provided.

# Segregation & Jim Crow

- **Plessy vs. Ferguson** (1896)
  - "Separate but Equal"
- **Jim Crow Laws**
  - Segregated through law in the U.S. South.
  - Systematized a number of economic, educational and social disadvantages
- **Northern States**
  - *De facto* (in practice) Segregation
  - Patterns of segregation in housing enforced by covenants, bank lending practices, and job discrimination.

# Racial Civil Rights: A Brief History

- **NAACP Formed** (1909)
- **Truman-Executive Order 9981** (1948)
  - Integration of Military
- **Montgomery Bus Boycott** (1955)
- **Browder v. Gayle** (1956)
  - Bus segregation was unconstitutional
- **Brown vs. Board of Education** (1956)
  - School segregation unconstitutional
- **Civil Rights Act of 1964**
- **Fair Housing Act** (1968)
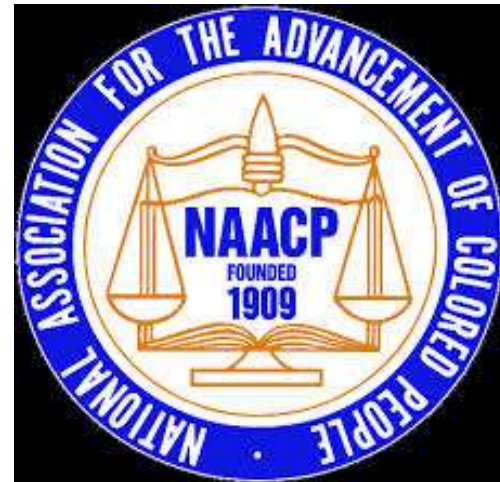
# Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Ended unequal application of voter registration requirements
- Ended racial segregation in schools, at the workplace and by facilities that served the general public





Johnson Signs Civil Rights Bill Into Law in Ceremony at White Hous
JOHN H AVERILL
Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File); Jul 3, 1964;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1987)
pg. 1

## Civil Rights Bill Becomes Law

### Johnson Signs Civil Rights Bill Into Law in Ceremony at White House

# "Black Power"



- Represented a variety of tendencies including:
  - Militancy
  - Black nationalism
  - Revolutionary socialism
  - Black separatism

- Conflicted with the mainstream Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King Jr.'s policy of non-violent civil disobedience and moderation.

# Notable Race Riots



- Chicago (1919)
- Harlem (1935)
- Harlem (1943)
- Detroit (1943)
- L.A. - Zoot Suit (1943)
- L.A. - Watts (1965)
- The Long Hot Summer (1967)
- Post King Assassination (1968)
- L.A. – Rodney King (1992)

# Race and Ethnicity

**EQ: How do race and ethnicity shape individual identity, social structure, and human interaction?**

## **Vocabulary**

- Segregation
- Subjugation
- Genocide
- Ethnic cleansing
- White ethnics
- Anti-Semitism

# INTERGROUP RELATIONS

QUICK FACTS

The patterns of intergroup relations can be seen as a continuum of behavior and treatment that ranges from acceptance to rejection.

**Acceptance**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Cultural Pluralism** | Ethnic, religious, and racial variety encouraged (Example: Switzerland) |
| **Assimilation** | Culturally distinct groups blended into a single group with a common culture (Example: United States) |
| **Legal Protection** | Minority rights protected by law (Example: United States after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) |
| **Subjugation** | Dominant group controls every aspect of minority group life through force (Example: South Africa under apartheid) |
| **Segregation** | Minority group physically separated from the dominant group (Example: United States until the 1960s) |
| **Population Transfer** | Dominant group moves minority group to new locations within or outside of the country (Example: Relocation of Native Americans to reservations) |
| **Extermination** | Dominant group attempts to destroy minority group (Example: The Holocaust) |

**Rejection**

**Cultural pluralism** is a policy that allows each group within society to keep its unique cultural identity

– Switzerland is an example with three official languages

**Assimilation** is the blending of culturally distinct groups into a single group with a common culture and identity

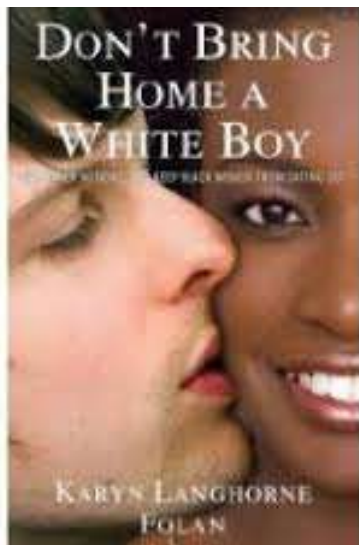– American idea of "melting pot"

– Can happen informally or by force

# Legal Protection - The rights of minorities are protected by law

- The United States is an example
- Includes affirmative action laws

**Segregation** is a policy that physically separates a minority group from the dominant group

- "De jure" segregation is based on laws.
- "De facto" segregation is based on custom and informal norms.



IMPERIAL LAUNDRY CO.
WE WASH FOR WHITE PEOPLE ONLY



DON'T BRING HOME A WHITE BOY

KARYN LANGHORNE FOLAN



EXTRA — By Executive Order
PRESIDENT TRUMAN WIPES OUT SEGREGATION IN ARMED FORCES

2nd Order Sets Up FEPC In All Government Jobs

Chicago Defender

Under 'States' Rights'
Posse, Bent On Lynching, Searches Woods For Prey

Aubrey Williams Bids Dixie Demos Farewell: 'Get Out And Stay Out'

**Subjugation** is a practice whereby dominance is maintained by force

- Most extreme form is slavery.
- South Africa's system of apartheid is an example.

**Population Transfer** is the Separation of groups by transferring the minority population to a new territory

- "Indirect" transfer occurs when the dominant groups makes life for minorities so miserable that they leave.

- "Direct" transfer involves using force to move people to new locations.

# **Extermination** - Most extreme; goal is elimination

- **Genocide** is the goal of complete destruction of a minority group.
    - Holocaust and Rwanda are examples
- **Ethnic cleansing** is the combination of extermination and transferral.
    - Serbia and Sudan are examples



## U.N.:'Ethnic cleansing' a Bosnian Serb policy

# Gender

**EQ 1: What factors contribute to the formation of gender roles and identity?**
**EQ 2: What are the effects of gender inequality**

## Vocabulary

- Gender
- Gender roles
- Gender identity
- Patriarchy

- Sexism
- Suffrage
- Wage gap
- Glass ceiling

# Gender

- **Gender** is the behavior and psychological traits considered appropriate for men and women.

- **Gender roles** are the specific behaviors established by society for men and women.

- **Gender identity** is the awareness of being masculine or feminine as defined by society.

# Gender: Environmental Influences

- Margaret Mead studied expectations across three cultures and found differences.

- Babies are given different toys.

- Expected behavior, interests, and strengths are different for young boys and girls.

- Expectations are learned early.

# Assignment: Gender in Advertising

## Gender in Advertising

During adulthood, mass media play an important role in gender socialization. Advertising is a medium that most Americans confront on a daily basis. How do advertisements in various publications represent and reinforce established gender roles in American society?

Quick Lab

### PROCEDURE

1. Flip through a variety of magazines and look at the advertisements. Make sure that you have magazines directed at male, female, and gender-neutral audiences. You may look at Internet ads if you cannot access any magazines.

2. Choose 10 advertisements to examine in detail. These ads should represent a range of products and audiences.

3. Analyze the ads for their portrayal of gender roles. Which products are geared toward each gender? Do advertisers use different techniques to sell their products to men as opposed to women? Record your observations.

### ANALYSIS

1. Compare the advertisements that you selected with the ones chosen by your classmates. Discuss your observations.

2. How do the advertisements represent traditional American gender roles? Are certain roles more commonly addressed than others?

3. Do you think that advertising helps to perpetuate, or prolong the existence of, specific gender roles? If so, what are the possible consequences of this situation?

# The Women's Movement

- Three Waves
  - Dealing with political, social, & financial concerns
- Areas of concern
  - Suffrage
  - Divorce
  - Domestic Violence
  - Reproduction
  - Equal Pay
  - Sexual Harassment
- Officially begun in 1848 with the *Declaration of Sentiment*.

# The Women's Movement

- **1920 - 19ᵗʰ Amendment**
  - Women's right to vote
- **1941 – WWII**
  - Females enter the work force in mass
- **1963 – *Feminine Mystique***
  - Criticism of women's limits on women
- **1964 – Civil Rights Act of 1964**
  - Prohibited discrimination
- **1972 – Title IX**
  - Increase athletic opportunity
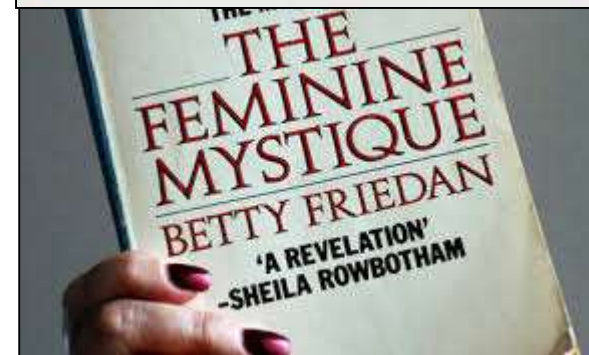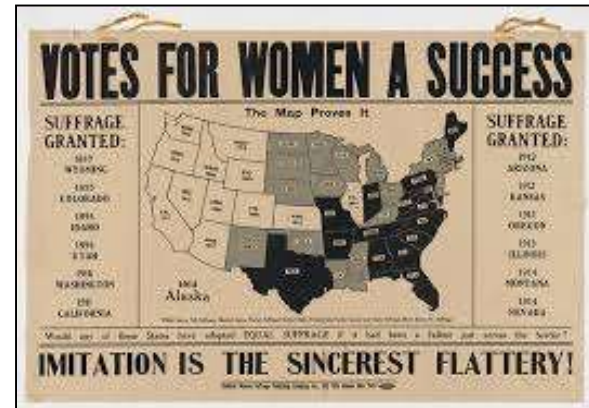
# Activity: Perspectives on Gender

- Utilizing a laptop computer and the advanced organizer, you are to view the *Big Think* video assigned and summarize the major points.

- When directed, you will then meet in groups with others assigned the same video and discuss the major point.

- You will then gather into assigned groups and share-out.

# Workplace Inequality

- **The Glass Ceiling:** The invisible barrier that prevents women from gaining upper-level positions

- **Wage Gap:** The level of women's income relative to that of men

- The Debate: Truth or Myth???

- Contributing Factors
  - Part-time Work
  - Overtime
  - Type of Occupation
  - Career Interruption-Child birth

## The **bottom five**

Pa. counties ranked by their gender gap in pay.

| County | Women's average pay (cents per $1 earned by men) |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Indiana** | **54¢** |
| **Jefferson** | **54¢** |
| 2. **Butler** | **55¢** |
| 4. **Greene** | **56¢** |
| 5. **Monroe** | **57¢** |
| 6. **Lancaster*** | **59¢** |

*Tied with seven other counties: Armstrong, Bedford, Carbon, Elk, McKean, Mercer, Pike.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012 five year estimates.

**Chris Emlet** / Staff

# Assignment: Research Analysis

- Using *An Analysis of Reasons for the Disparity in Wages Between Men and Women* identify the contributing factors to a difference in wages.



**READ WITH A PURPOSE**

# Advances in the Workplace

- In 1970, about <u>43 percent</u> of women aged 16 and older were in the labor force; by 2007, over <u>59 percent</u> were in labor force.

- In 1970, only 17.9 percent of women aged 25 and older had gone to college; by 2000, almost half had gone to college; and by 2006 <u>one-third of the women</u> in the labor force held a college degree.

- In 2007, women accounted for <u>51 percent</u> of all workers in the high-paying management, professional, and related occupations.

- In 1970, the median usual weekly earnings for women working full-time was only 62.1 percent of those for men; by 2007, the raw wage gap had shrunk from 37.9 percent to just 21.5 percent.

*From the U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2010*

# College Gap

- Narrowing of the gender wage gap is largely due to narrowing of the gap in human capital development between men and women
- Since 1979, more women than men in college
- Women 33% more likely to earn a bachelors degree than men.

**Women Outpace Men In College Enrollment**

*Share of recent high school completers enrolled in college the following October*

| Hispanic | Women | Men | % point gap, women/men |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1994 | 52% | 52% | 0 |
| 2012 | 76 | 62 | +13 women |
| **Black** | | | |
| 1994 | 48 | 56 | +9 men |
| 2012 | 69 | 57 | +12 women |
| **White** | | | |
| 1994 | 66 | 62 | +4 women |
| 2012 | 72 | 62 | +10 women |
| **Asian** | | | |
| 1994 | 81 | 82 | +1 men |
| 2012 | 86 | 83 | +3 women |

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the October Supplement to the Current Population Survey. Note: % point gap calculated prior to rounding. White, black and Asian include the Hispanic portion of those groups. Due to the small sample size for Hispanics, blacks and Asians, a 2-year moving average is used.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Age and Disability

**EQ: What are the social impacts of an aging population?**

## Vocabulary

- Ageism
- Graying of America
- Baby-boom generation
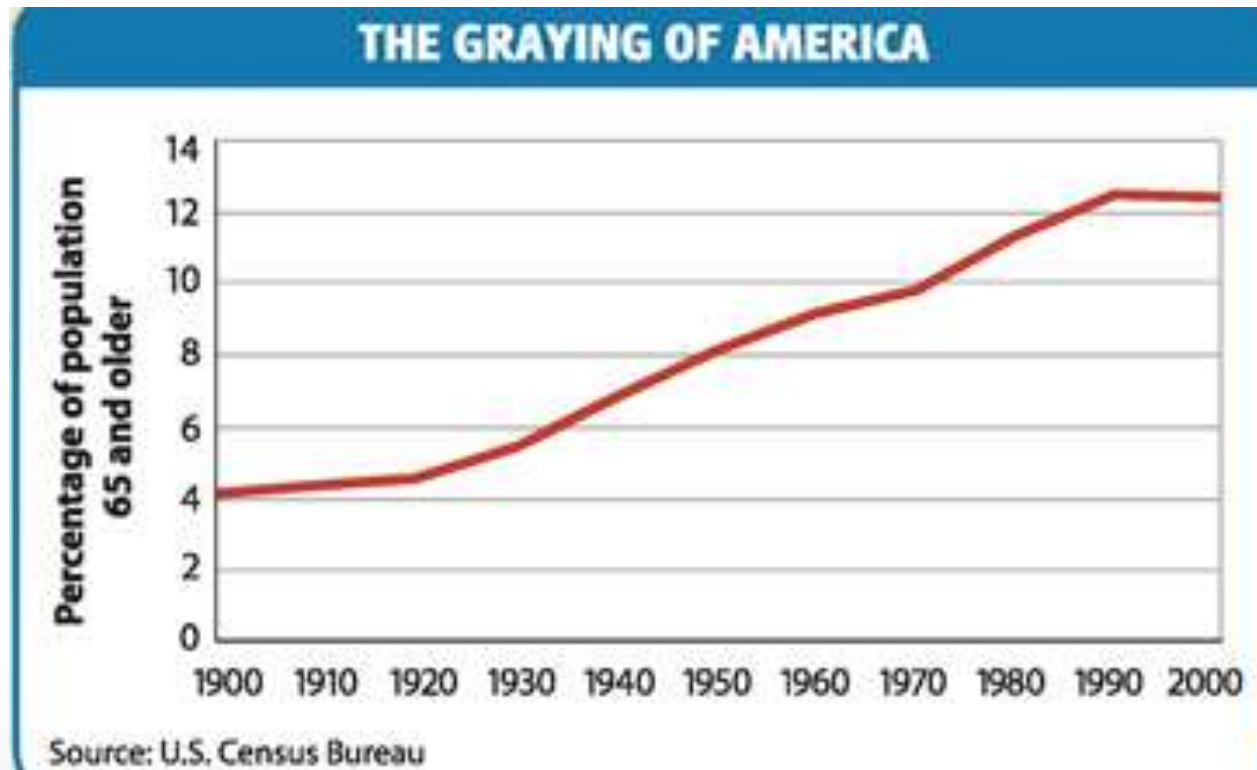- Dependency ratio
- Medicare
- Medicaid

# Ageism

- **Ageism** is the belief that one age category is by nature superior to another age category.

- The stereotype of elderly: unproductive, cranky, and physically or mentally impaired,

- Reality most people over 65 are self-sufficient, active members of society.

- Media uses youth to sell products and focuses on negative aspects of aging.
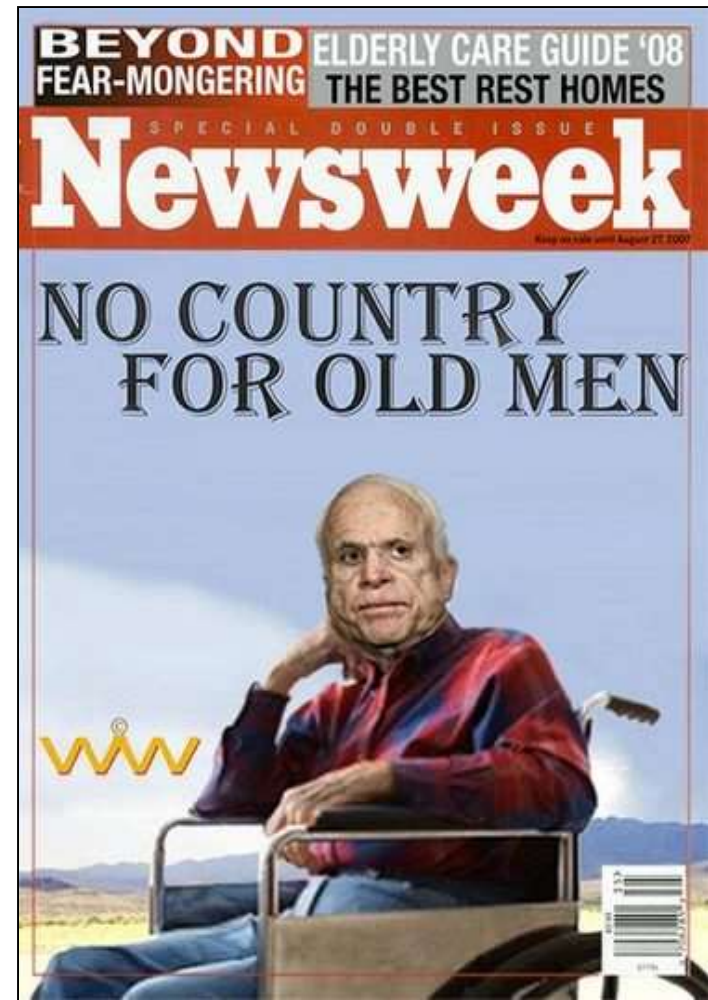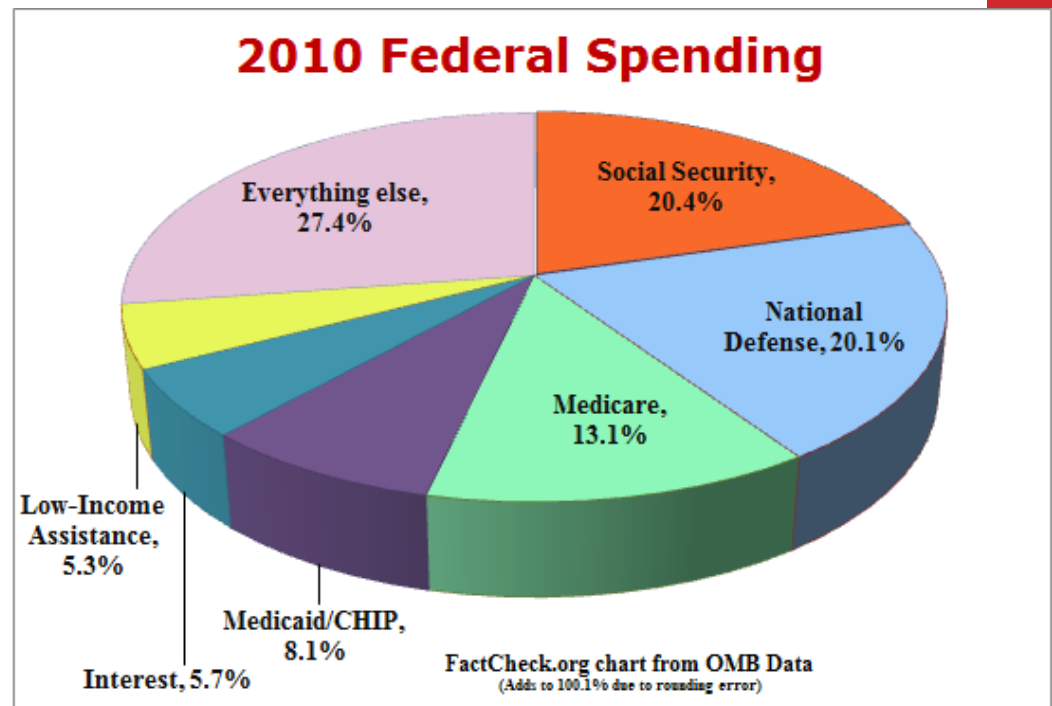
# An Ageing Nation

- The **"Graying of America"** is the phenomenon of an increasing percentage of Americans being 65 or older.
- Due to better healthcare, better living conditions, and low birth rates. Combined with the large numbers of the **Baby-boom generation**.



THE GRAYING OF AMERICA

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Challenges of an Ageing Nation

- One major concern is the Social Security system.

  - As baby boomers retire, the **dependency ratio**—the <u>number of workers for each person</u> receiving Social Security—decreases.

  - The <u>number of people receiving benefits is increasing</u>, and they are receiving benefits for a longer period of time, due to longer life expectancies.

**Medicare** (health insurance for elderly) and **Medicaid** (health insurance for low-income) are the sole source of insurance for about one-fourth of elderly Americans.

## 2010 Federal Spending



- Everything else, 27.4%
- Social Security, 20.4%
- National Defense, 20.1%
- Medicare, 13.1%
- Medicaid/CHIP, 8.1%
- Interest, 5.7%
- Low-Income Assistance, 5.3%

FactCheck.org chart from OMB Data
(Adds to 100.1% due to rounding error)

# Politics of Age



- As the number of senior citizens increases, their image has changed to one of a powerful voting bloc.

- AARP, National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Council on Aging, and the Gray Panthers are groups that bring attention to the needs of the aging.

- AARP is the largest special-interest group in the United States.

# Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 has perhaps brought the most sweeping changes.

- The ADA makes discrimination against people with disabilities illegal.
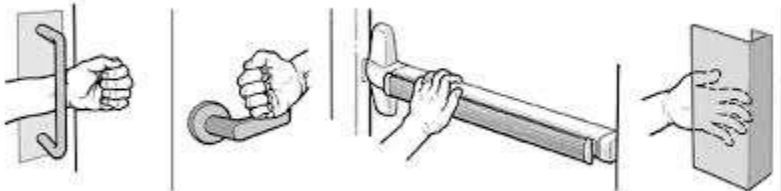
# Study for the Social Inequality Exam

# Lesson Activator

Any questions prior to the social inequality exam?