

# Social inequality and race

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Running head: SOCIAL INEQUALITY & RACE Social Inequality and Race  
Markus Nehlsen ETH/125 Megan Burke April 21, 2012 Identified Group To  
choose an ethnic or racial group which I belong to can be easy for those who  
see my physical appearance but it can be difficult for me to decide. The  
racial group I have always claimed and identified with is White non-Hipic or  
Caucasian. To determine my particular ethnic group is unclear because I was  
adopted; however, I was raised by a German mother and Caucasian father,  
so I can categorize myself in with German-American ethnic group.

As I take look at the choices I can best associate with, I believe the best  
selection for me is White non-Hipic or Caucasian racial group. Interactions It  
is difficult to pinpoint how races interact with each other. Historically in the  
past and present discrimination and prejudices have occurred against minority  
groups, like African Americans, Hipics and Native Americans. According to  
Eitzen (2000), the critical feature of the minority group's status is its inferior  
social position, in which its interests are not effectively represented in the  
political, economic, and social institutions of the society.

In this viewpoint Whiteness is the normal or a natural condition. Eitzen  
(2000) further explains that this is a false picture of race. In reality, the racial  
order shapes the lives of all people, even Whites who are advantaged by the  
system. Just as social classes exist in relation to each other, races are  
defined, compared, and judged in relation to other races. Social Inequalities  
There are some people that will argue that social inequalities do exist  
because of race. Eitzen (2000) stated that the United States now faces  
serious new racial problems.

These problems include the increasing isolation of minorities in central cities, growing minority unemployment, and other forms of economic dislocation. The American Prospect (2007) stated that poor African Americans were depicted as especially dysfunctional and undeserving of assistance, with an emphasis on violence, poor choices, and dependency. It further explains that the black underclass appears as a menace and a source of social disorganization in news accounts of black urban crime, gang violence, drug use, teenage pregnancy, riots, homelessness, and general aimlessness.

For instance, minorities are over-represented in prison cells compared to white people. Not necessarily in numbers, but proportionally. This is argued, that it's because the White race is more protected, they can afford better lawyers, receive preferential treatment by judges, and that the minority groups are often targeted in drug busts and gang membership arrests more often than Whites. Schaefer (2012) points out that inner-city drive-by shootings have come to be seen as a race-specific problem worthy of local officials cleaning up troubled neighborhoods.

Yet, schoolyard shootouts are viewed as a societal concern and placed on the national agenda Racial Prejudice Causes According to Schaefer (2012), racial prejudice is often used to justify keeping a group in a subordinate economic position. Conflict theorists, in particular, stress the role of racial and ethnic hostility as a way for the dominant group to keep its position of status and power intact. Competition is a huge factor in the causes of racial prejudices.

Let's say that one Black nurse and one White nurse are competing for a supervisor position, this competition could lead to racial hostility if one

perceives the other being hired before them because of race. It could be that more education gives a broader outlook and makes a person less likely to endorse myths that sustain racial prejudice. If people are in competition, as already noted, contact may heighten tension.

However, bringing people together to share a common task has been shown to reduce ill feelings when these people belong to different racial, ethnic, or religious groups. The key factor in reducing hostility, in addition to equal-status contact, is the presence of a common goal. (Schaefer, 2012)

Conclusion According to Marti (n. d. ) the majority of White Americans will overlook the distinctive experiences of other racial and ethnic groups because they tend to believe discrimination is no longer an issue.

They feel that America is a firmly established meritocracy because prominent African Americans are successful in sports and entertainment and because the outright denial of access to jobs, housing, and public accommodations is now illegal. Race is a social construction, and this process benefits the oppressor, who defines who is privileged and who is not. The acceptance of race in society as a genuine category allows the racial pecking order to emerge to the advantage of the dominant races. (Schaefer, 2012)

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