Section II provides students with information about these groups to give you a better understanding of the experiences of these memberships.

MACRO/MACRO LEVEL DIFFERENCES

In terms of economic, social, and political power, all societies have what are considered to be dominant (or agent) and nondominant (or target) groups. The distinction between the two groups is socially constructed (i.e., dependent on time and place), and not necessarily related to numerical minority status. Dworkin and Dworkin define nondominants as being identifiable because of some characteristic(s), having less power than the dominants, experiencing more discrimination, and being aware of their nondominant status in society. In contrast, dominants can blend into society better, hold more of the power in society's institutions, are less apt to experience being the targets of discrimination, and are often unaware of their dominant status (i.e., privileges) in society (1999).

> Harassment, discrimination, exploitation, marginalization and other forms of differential and unequal treatment are institutionalized and systemic. These acts often do not require the conscious thought or effort of individual members of the agent group but are rather part of business as usual that becomes embedded in social structures over time
>
> (Hardiman & Bailey, p. 17).

When a nondominant group member excels at something (Barak Obama), he is often seen as an exception. When one performs poorly (Carley Fiona of Hewett Packard), the failure can reflect on all group members (e.g., generalizing that women are not capable of leading large corporations).

SOCIALIZATION AND SALIENCY

Through our developmental experiences with the social institutions of society such as families, education, religion, cultures, workplaces, etc., we learn what are considered acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Additionally, we may experience this socialization process differently because of our subgroup memberships. In most societies there are different expectations, roles, norms, etc., for many of the groups to which we belong, such as being young or being old, being female or being male, etc. We learn these ways of thinking, evaluating, and acting in subtle ways through our life experiences.

An individual's **social identity** is his/her "self-concept that derives from his or her membership in a particular social group and the value and emotional significance attached to that group membership" (Tatum, 1997). For example, if you identify strongly with your Jewish heritage and religion, it will be salient (i.e., important) to whom you are, how you behave, and how you experience the world. On the other hand, if you were born into the Jewish religion but your family did not practice the religion, follow the customs and traditions, etc., and this really doesn't matter much to you, your social identity as Jewish may be less important to you as an individual than it is to other Jews. However, in spite of the fact that individuals experience a wide range of influence in terms of the saliency of their social identities, people who know that you are "Jewish" may generalize their expectations, prejudices, and stereotypes, (positive, negative, or neutral), based on social identity group memberships.

An additional factor to consider is that most workers have memberships in multiple social identities. A white male coworker is a member of two dominant groups in terms of race and gender. However, he may also belong to nondominant groups because of his age (50), physical ability (lack of mobility), and sexual orientation (gay)—all social identities that still experience considerable systemic discrimination and inclusion issues in the workplace.