

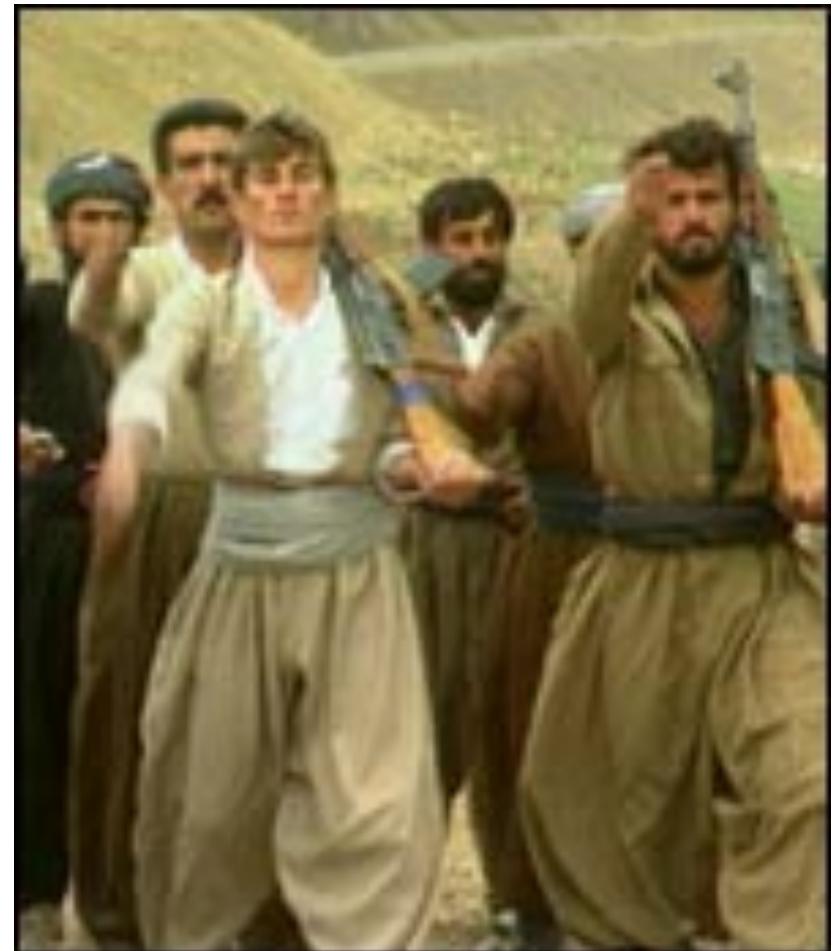
Lecture 4

Racial and Ethnic Inequalities



Ethnic and racial conflicts still explode around the world

- Around the world, genocidal bloodbaths kill thousands of people
- This has gone on for centuries, including the
 - genocidal effects of African slavery
 - the Armenian massacres of 1915-1918
 - the European conquest of North and South America
 - 19th and 20th century European efforts to exterminate Jews
- Ethnic and racial issues remain a problem today



A reminder: Habits of Inequality Theory

- All societies display social inequality of varying kinds
- These social inequalities are collectively imagined on the basis of a supposedly important natural difference (e.g., skin color)



Societies vary in Social Inequality



- Societies vary in the degree and kinds of social inequality they display.
 - The Scandinavian countries show least inequality
 - Canada falls somewhere near the middle of the pack

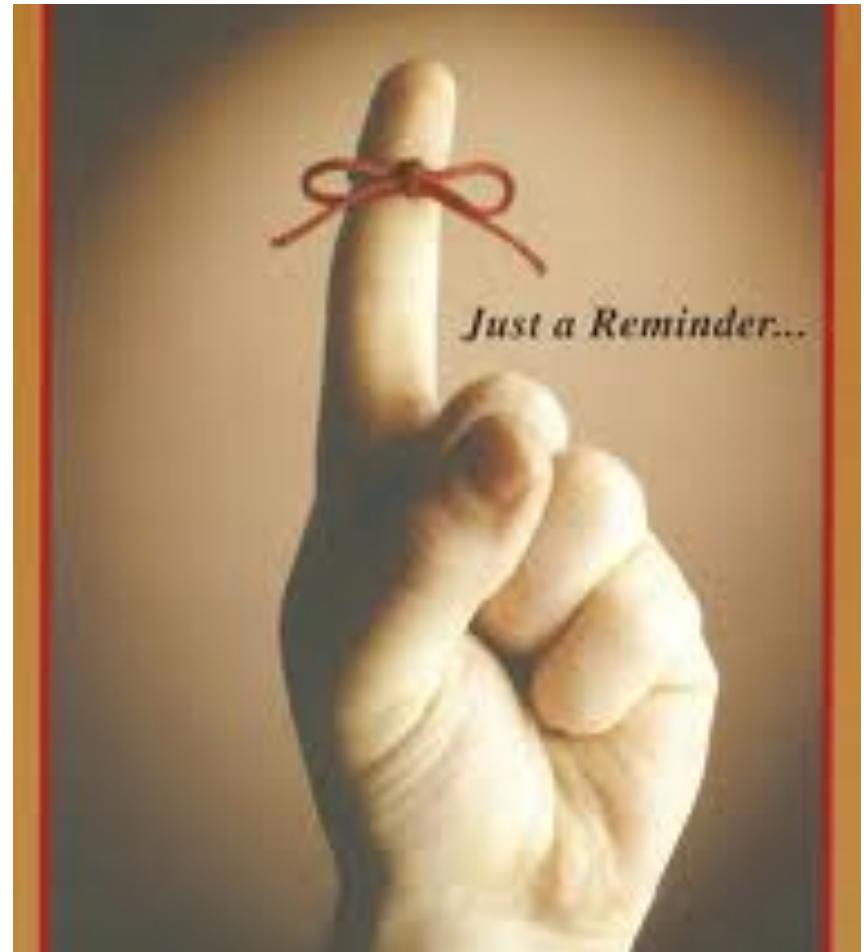
The Cultural Habits: S-N-P-N-S

- All types of social inequality display similar patterns or cultural “habits” that include the following (S-N-P-N-S):
 - Social differentiation
 - Narratives of blame
 - Practices of oppression
 - Narratives of validation
 - Strategies of resistance

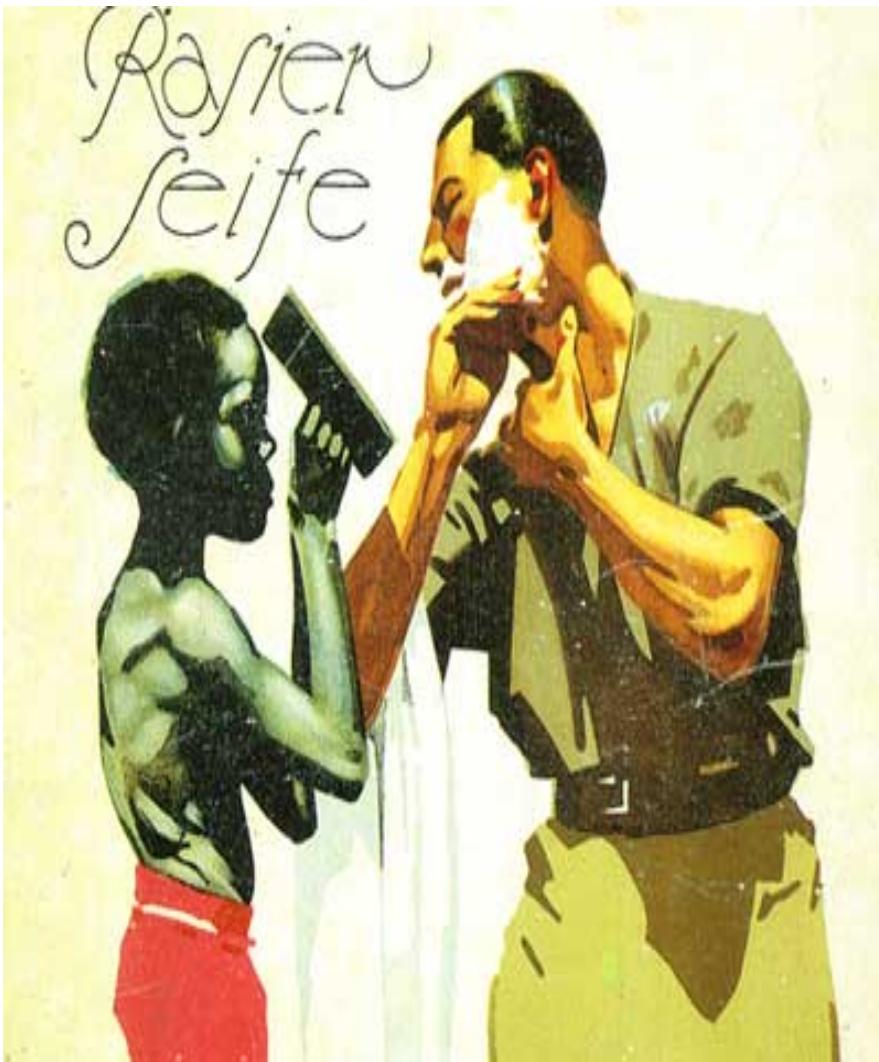


Suggestion

- You might look for SNPNS in the assigned Reading Sociology articles
- This may help you remember what they have to say



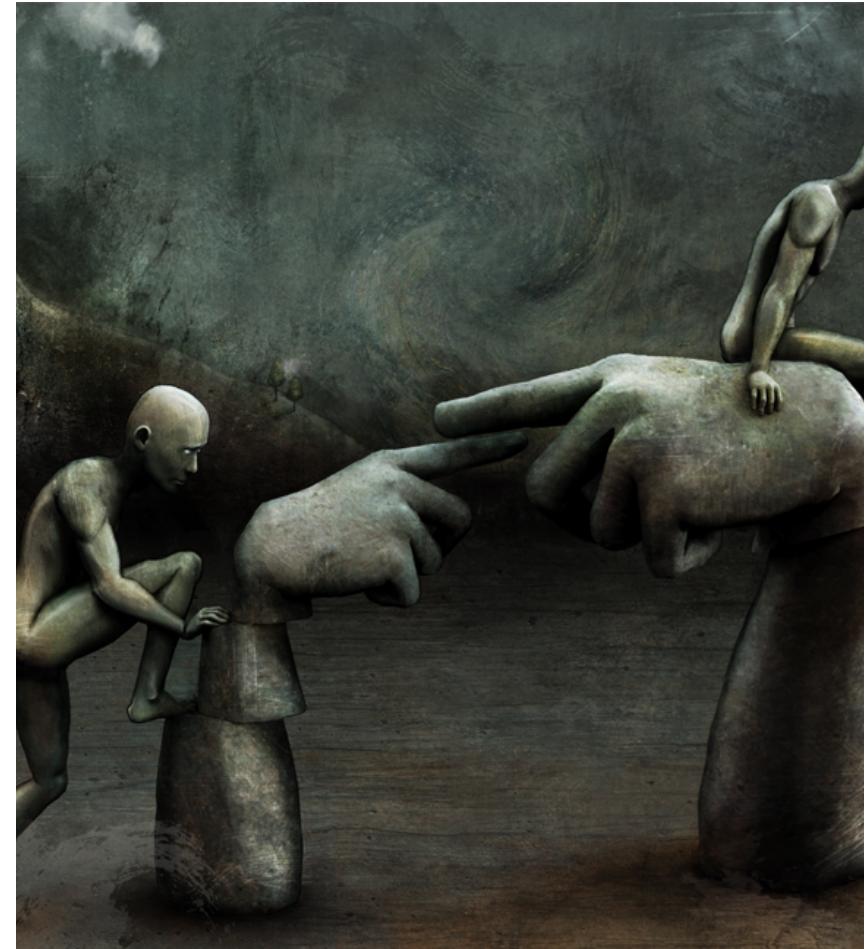
S = Social Differentiation



- *Social differentiation* is the practice of identifying different “kinds” of people who are assumed to be essentially and unchangeably different
- This transforms natural differences into socially important differences and inequalities

N = Narratives of Blame

- *Narratives of blame* are socially constructed accounts that attach social or moral qualities to different groups to explain why advantaged people are advantaged



P = Practices of Oppression



- *Practices of oppression* comprise a variety of economic and non-economic behaviors
- These practices of oppression may follow the creation of narratives of blame, or may precede them

N = Narratives of Validation

- *Narratives of validation* are socially constructed responses to narratives of blame.
- They may take various forms:
 - E.g., deny any choice, guilt, or control over the actions for which blame narratives hold them responsible.



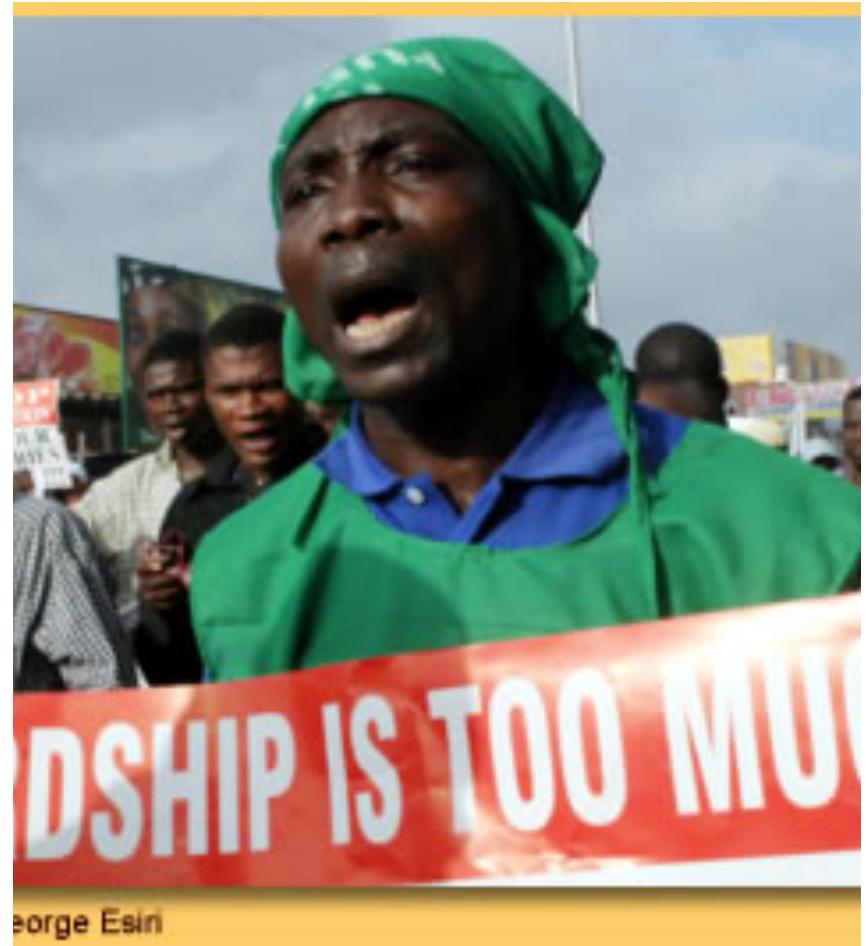
S = Strategies of Resistance



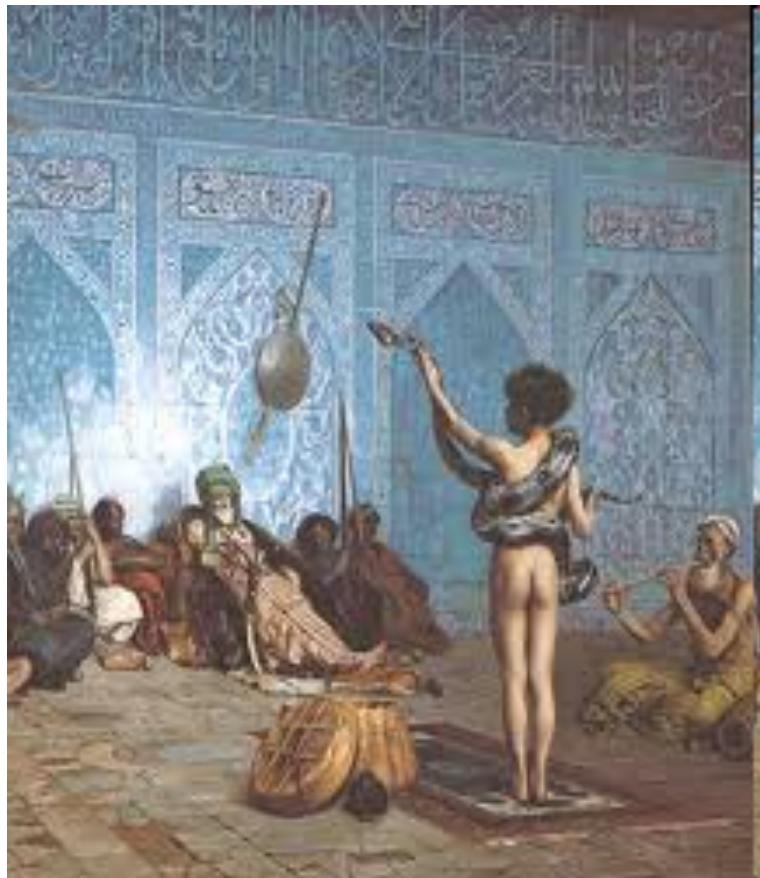
- *Strategies of resistance* include collective (social) actions that combat practices of oppression, reduce inequality, or ameliorate the effects of inequality.
- They may take various forms:
 - institutional completeness: the formation of self-sufficient communities
 - legal challenges to oppression, through the courts

Continuing Struggle

- Under continuing conditions of inequality, there will be a continuing struggle between practices of oppression and strategies of resistance



Differentiation and orientalism



- Sociologists want to know *which* differences become inequalities, and why?
- They also want to know **how and why** differentiations (or social distinctions) arise historically
- One good place to start is with political theorist Edward Said and his book, *Orientalism*

The Oriental is “The Other”

Paraphrasing E. Said,

- Westerners see the Orient (including the Middle East) as separate, eccentric, backward, silently different, sensual, and passive.
- The Orient is always “The Other,” the conquerable object of fantasy, and the inferior party in any negotiation



“The Oriental” is strange



- In Said's analysis, the “Oriental” is a sweeping generalization
 - a stereotype that crosses cultural and national boundaries.
- But it is a *thematic* stereotype:
 - Note all the sexual fantasizing
- The Oriental man is widely depicted as feminine, weak, yet strangely dangerous because he poses a threat to white, Western women
- The Oriental woman is both eager to be dominated and strikingly exotic

Perhaps the imagery of the oriental harem is key



Orientalist-art.co.uk

This stereotyping reveals Western prejudices



- “Orientalism” imagines a typical, even universal Oriental
- It builds on previously unspoken notions of “the Other”
- These stereotypical notions are taken as foundations for both ideologies and policies developed by the West

Mythologies (e.g., orientalism) support inequality

- The subjection of subordinate groups is *always* accompanied by mythologies (= fanciful narratives)
- Mythologies say (or hint) that the “Others” are fundamentally different from “Us”
- Often, they use images, figures of speech, or “tropes” to suggest this



What is the intended “meaning” of this cover?



- “Tropes” are images a writer can reasonably expect to find present in the audience’s mind
 - they can easily be set in motion
- Often, they operate subconsciously

Sexual fantasies – including lust and fear -- play a part in racialization



Racialization



- The social process of identifying and stressing racial or ethnic differences is called “racialization”
- This term highlights the social imagining, construction, and performance of physical differences

Ethno-racial differences may reflect economic inequalities



- Distinctions between races and ethnic groups may reflect class differences
- People of different racial and ethnic groups may be streamed into different occupational or income groups; for example,
 - Canada pre-1965 – “The Vertical Mosaic” (J. Porter)
 - India pre-1948 – The Caste System

Defining race and ethnic group

However, not all racial and ethnic inequalities can be reduced to class inequalities. Nor are race and ethnicity the same:

- A *race* is a set of people with physical or genetic characteristics that are deemed to produce identifiable differences in appearance.
- An *ethnic group* is a set of people who consider themselves to share common characteristics that distinguish them from other groups in a society.

Survival of ethnic groups



- Some ethnic groups simply disappear
 - E.g., Dutch Canadians
- Other immigrant communities purposely maintain their ethnic distinctiveness
 - E.g., Ukrainian Canadians
- Historian Benedict Anderson coined the term “imagined communities” to describe people who group together around a common history and culture, to keep their ethnicity alive

Ethnic groups are imagined communities

- Western conquest and colonization encouraged (but did not invent) distinctions between ethnic and racial groups
- Even pre-colonized and post-colonized groups have tribal distinctions
- In all case, they are imaginary groups – i.e., socially constructed and socially performed



Totems and communal imagination



- Ethnic solidarity is based on blood and kinship
- Symbolically, it is also based on rituals and ritual objects Durkheim called “totems.”
- According to Durkheim, in (preliterate) tribal rites, anything could serve as the basis for group solidarity (e.g., a bird, an animal, a rock)

Cultural (totemic) objects have different meanings for different groups

e.g., Bohdan Chmielnicki
(or Khmelnytsky)

- a famous Ukrainian-Cossack hero of the 17th century.
- Also led the largest mass murder of Jews in history – an estimated 100,000 murdered -- prior to the Nazi holocaust.
- One group's hero is another group's villain!



Ethnic communities create and preserve boundaries



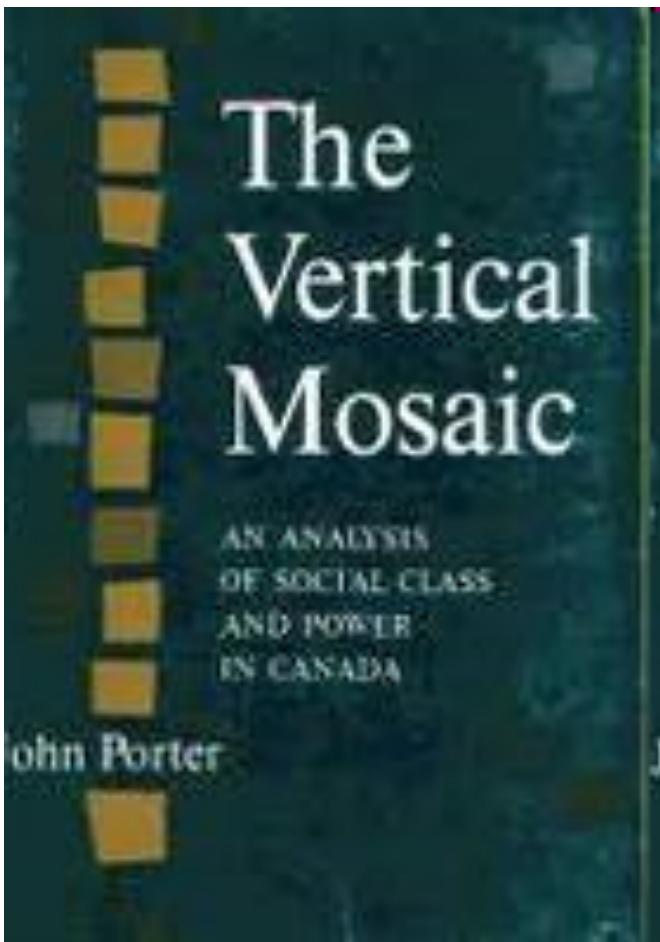
- An ethnic community is a *bounded group* of interacting people with the same ethnic background, often in a defined geographic location
- Membership means adopting shared norms and associating mainly with other group members
- Often, communication with non-members is limited to a few areas of common understanding

Ethnic groups compete with other ethnic groups



- Weber noted that ethnic groups practice closure (exclusion) and usurpation (capture) to maintain themselves
- The elites of the dominant ethnic groups dominate the society

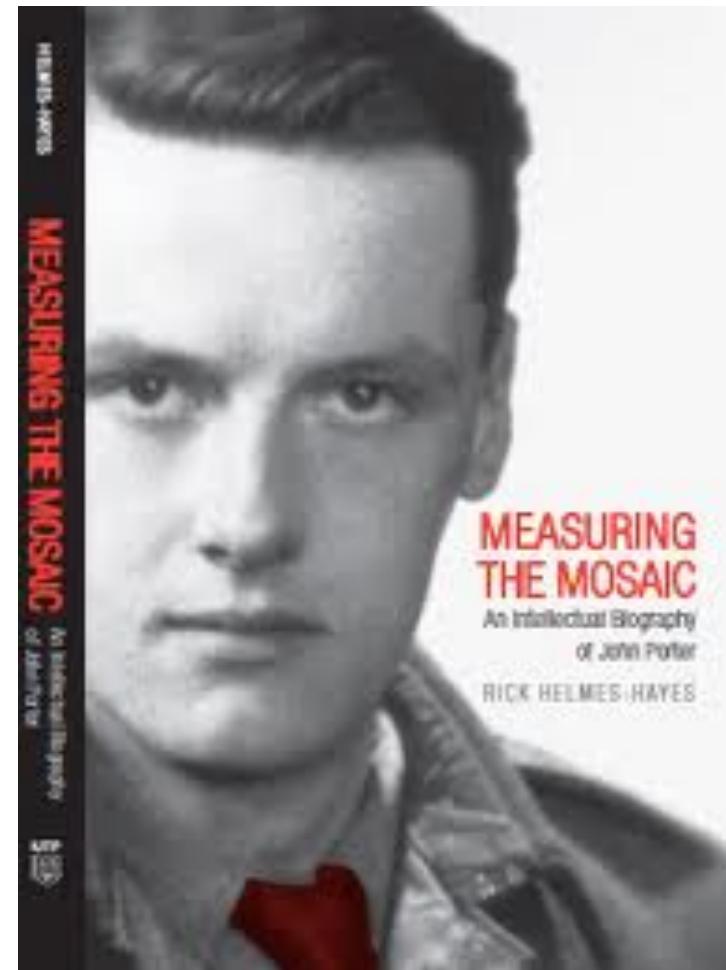
The link between ethnicity and class



- In a 1965 classic, John Porter uses the term “*Vertical Mosaic*” to remind us that Canada is hierarchical and ethnically unassimilated
- In the 1950s and 1960s, Canadian elites were mainly people with a WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) background, though a few elites had a French background.
- Ethnic minorities had employment patterns that separated immigrants from non-immigrants, and WASPs from non-WASPs

The need for education and upward mobility

- The non-WASP groups were locked into inferior economic positions after migration
- Charter groups (English- and French-Canadians) preserved their advantage by monopolizing opportunities for higher education
- To remedy this, Porter called for a transformation of the educational system, so the most able people could advance occupationally and economically



The result

- Today, there is no correlation between ethnicity and occupation (or class)
 - However, some correlation of income with race remains
- Today, there is less hindrance to upward mobility through education
 - However, some correlation of education with income remains



The continuing role of institutional completeness

- To survive, ethnic communities still rely on *institutional completeness*:
 - “a set of institutions -- stores, schools, churches, and newspapers, etc. -- that help people maintain their traditional culture, social connections, language, and religious beliefs.” (R. Breton)
- All disadvantaged people benefit from institutional completeness
 - Ethnic groups do it better than classes – why?



Institutional completeness also helps with problems of assimilation

- Between 1918 and 1920, Thomas and Znaniecki published their multi-volume work *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*
- It studies the social life of Polish peasants and the social and economic disorganization experienced in the early twentieth century
- These immigrants had a hard time trying to survive socially and economically in the North American culture



Expectations were unfulfilled



- Many peasants immigrated to America expecting easy success.
- After arriving, many immigrants failed to alter their social customs
- Immigration to N. America demands great change from the immigrant
 - The changes are hard to make
 - So the immigrants try to *advance themselves* communally

Family problems erupt

- The authors found that Polish immigrant families experienced a significant disruption to traditional patriarchal relations
- Suddenly, wives were challenging husband and children were challenging parents for a say in the household
- We know now that this happens in every immigrant community



Why does institutional completeness persist?

- Ethnic institutions maintain themselves via schools, churches
- Patterns of in-choosing (e.g., friends, mates, language) persist
- Multiculturalism funds this



Communal boundaries = social distance



- Ethnic communities put boundaries around themselves and experience the boundaries that other communities have created
- Emory Bogardus invented and popularized the *Social Distance Scale* (1925).
- The Bogardus scale measures the extent to which respondents would accept members of a certain racial or ethnic (or other) group into relationships of varying closeness

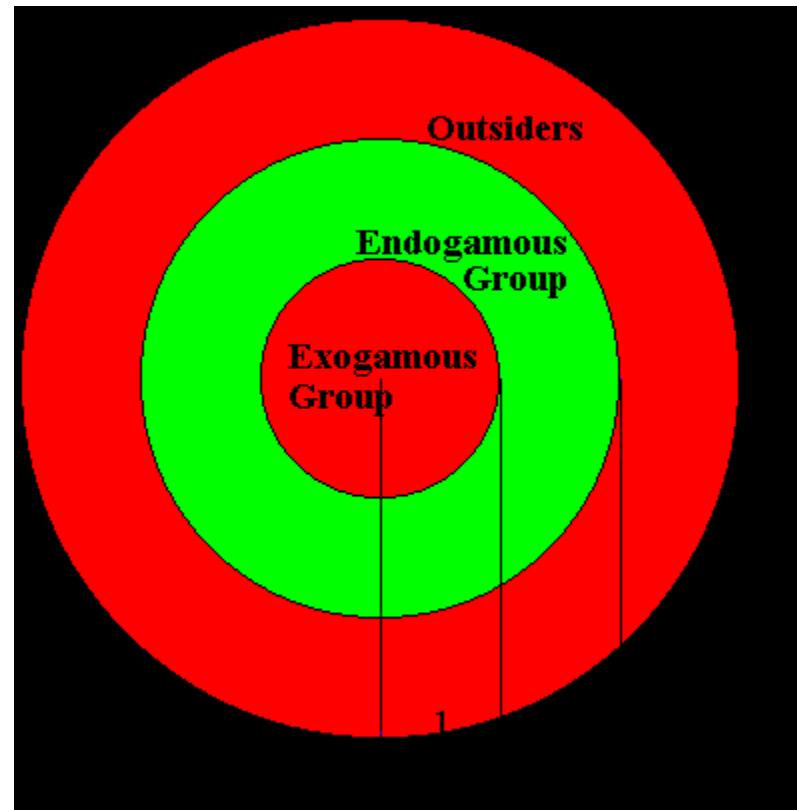
How the scale is scored

The scale asks respondents how willing they would be to accept a member of a specified group....
(e.g., Ukrainian, Jamaican, Chinese, etc.)

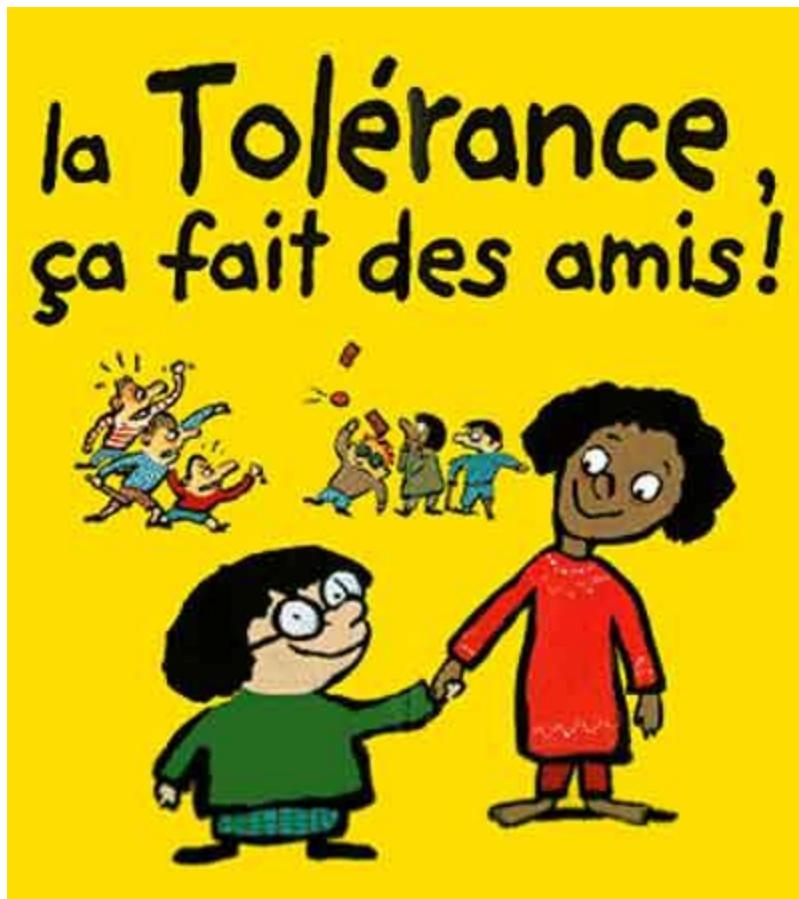
- As a close relative by marriage (score 1.00)
- As a close personal friend (2.00)
- As a neighbor on the same street (3.00)
- As a co-worker in the same occupation (4.00)
- As a citizen of our country (5.00)
- As a visitor in our country (6.00)
- Would exclude from our country (7.00)

Some trends in social distance

- some ethnic groups are deemed less acceptable than others, and people crave more distance from these groups
- some ethnic groups are less accepting than others
 - their average distance scores are higher than the average distance scores generated by other groups
- tolerance is generally increasing over time
 - as shown by decreased social distance scores



A case of social distance: Why the two solitudes in Canada?



- As a study in social distance, consider *French Canada in Transition* (1943), written by American sociologist Everett C. Hughes
- English-French relations in Canada have been troubled since the 1760s, when an English army defeated a French army on the Plains of Abraham
- Friction continues today between Quebec and the other 9 provinces

What caused the English-French conflict in Canada?

- *French Canada in Transition* foresaw this continuing friction
 - See the chapter titled “Quebec Sees a Villain.”

The town Hughes studied

- “Cantonville” (Drummondville)
 - was located halfway between a traditional rural parish and metropolitan centre

- The book documents a battle between lifestyles and traditions, expressed in the conflict of classes and ethnic groups



modernization + exploitation



- Hughes described “French-Canadians, [as] a self-conscious and sensitive people”
- Even in 1963, Hughes felt French Canada was still in transition
- He continued to believe the problem grew out of a deep-seated conflict between innovative (and exploitative) outsiders and traditional locals

Like communities in the southern US...



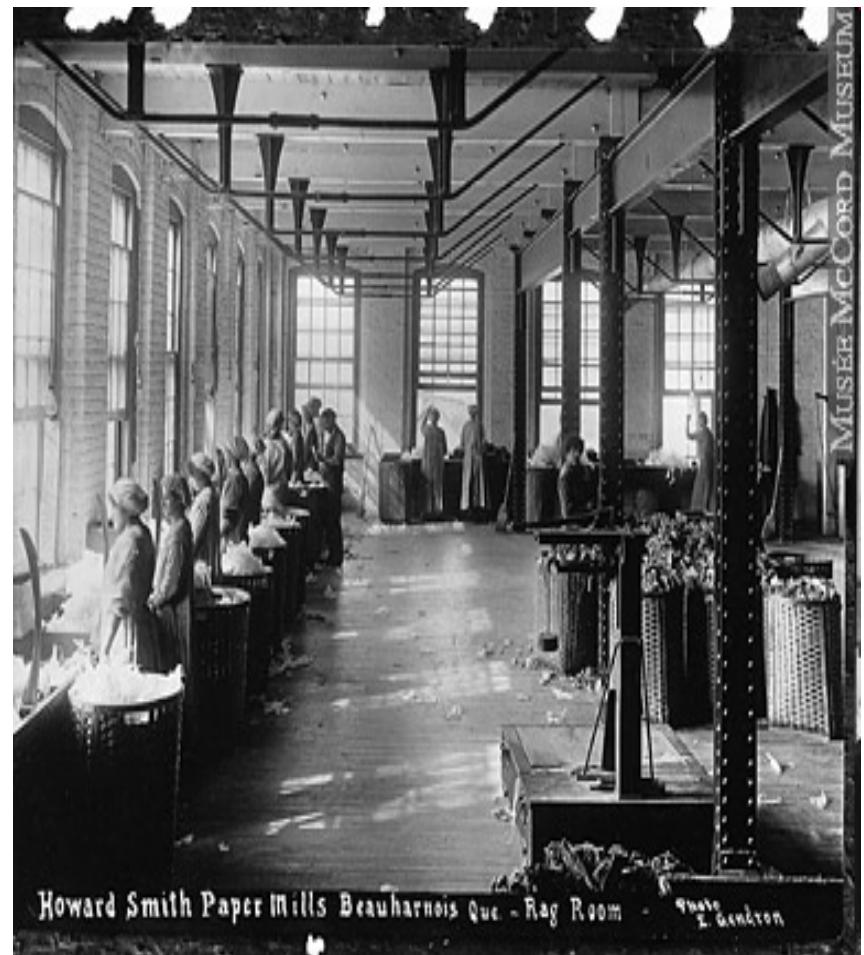
- Similar problems were documented in *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (1941).

That study posed a similar question:

- “How do people separated into distinct classes and castes live together in a small community?”
 - On a bigger canvas, how can black and white people live together in the USA

How related to sociology of work?

- Throughout his professional life, Hughes was especially interested in work and workplaces
- Hughes' main interest: the problems that arise when poorly educated peasants meet complex technology in factories owned by “foreigners”
 - i.e., the classic problem of modernization and colonization

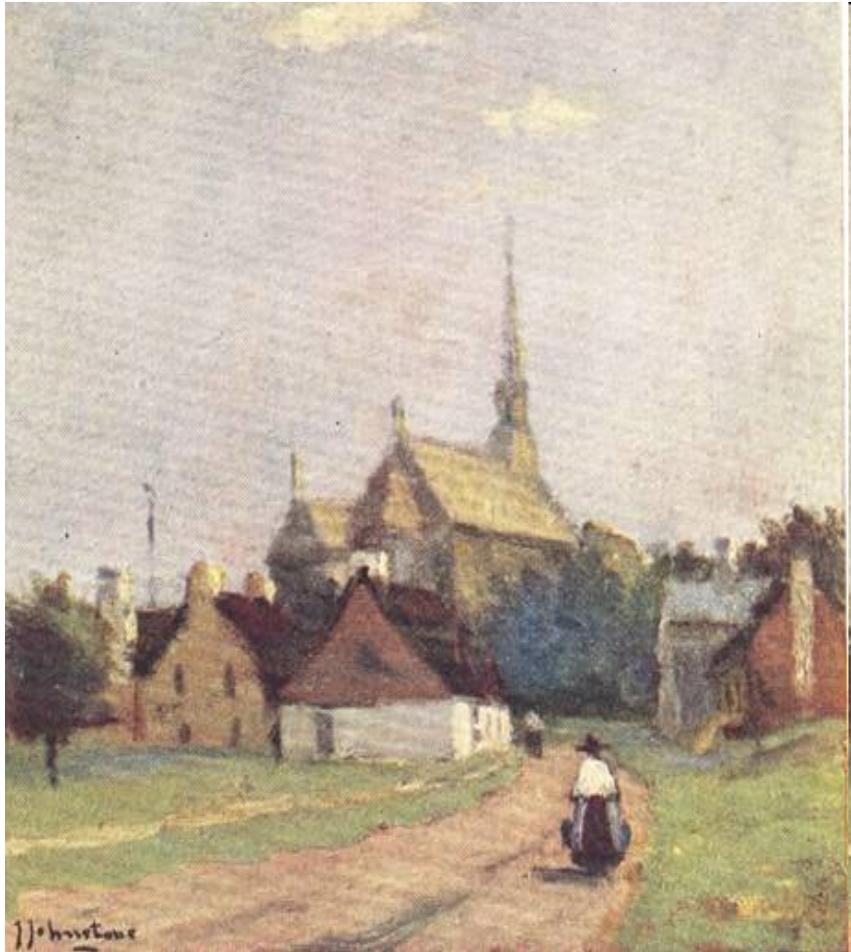


How related to Quebec separatism?



- In 1943, Hughes viewed the French-English conflict as being mainly about work (or class) relations
- After 1960, in the hands of Quebec sovereigntists, the French-English conflict came to be viewed as a matter of cultural survival and nationhood
- However, ethnic issues were always lurking in the background

French identity still matters!



- Today, 50+ years since the Quiet Revolution, French-Canadian nationalism has been channeled into an uneasy, constantly readjusting federalism
- French Canada is *still* in transition and it still matters to Canada which way they choose to go
- Symbolic issues around pride and memory are still rooted in the humiliation of forced modernization under the control of others

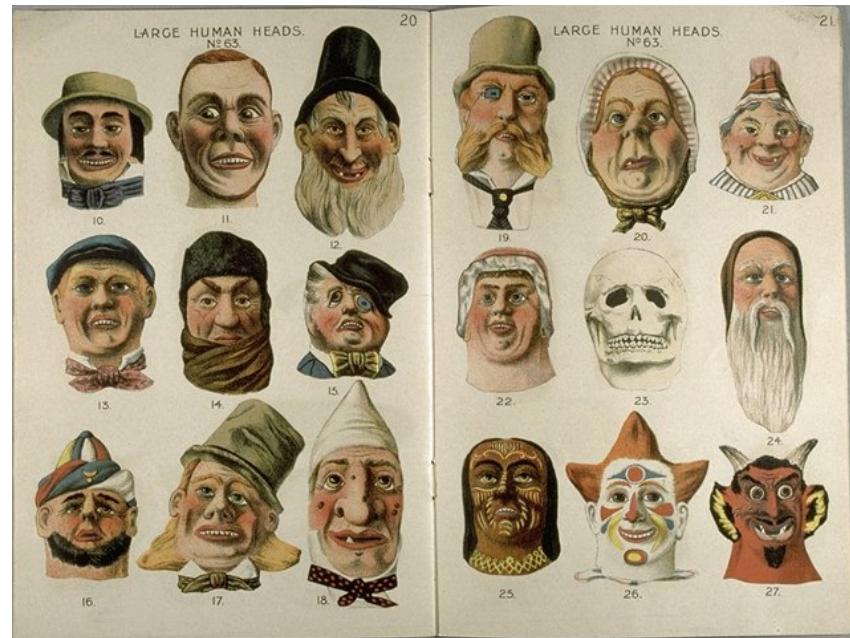
In these classic works, no discussion of race (or gender)



- Today, racial minorities continue to suffer a disadvantage, though ethnic minorities do not
- Porter, Hughes, and Thomas and Znaniecki said nothing about racial inequalities or “racialization”

Racialization creates races

- Racialization: “the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed”
- According to one study, racialized men are “racialized more rigorously (than women)” and feel more threatened by their perception as racial minorities
- Women, for their part, are often viewed as exotic or sexy as a result of racialization



Racialization may have harmful effects



- Being treated as racial minorities distresses people and causes them to feel resentment
- racialization leads to frustration, stress, and poor personal health
- racialization reportedly affects men's sense of masculinity

Which race? And does it matter?



Racialization is related to but not the same as:

- *Racism* -- the unequal treatment of a group that possesses physical or other characteristics socially defined as denoting a particular race
- *Prejudice* – the tendency to judge people without evidence, on stereotypical grounds

Open vs institutional racism

- Overt (*open*) racism –for example, white supremacy – is rare in Canada today.
- By *institutional racism*, we might mean:
 - Stopping and searching young black drivers as potential drug carriers
 - Requiring all new police recruits to be 1.8 meters or taller



Discrimination as expressed racism

Gordon Allport focuses on intentional discrimination, rooted in irrational fears.

- Discriminatory people project their fears on to particular ethnic and racial minorities.
- They view some groups as cunning and greedy and other groups as sex-crazed and lazy.
- We see evidence of this in jokes and cartoons

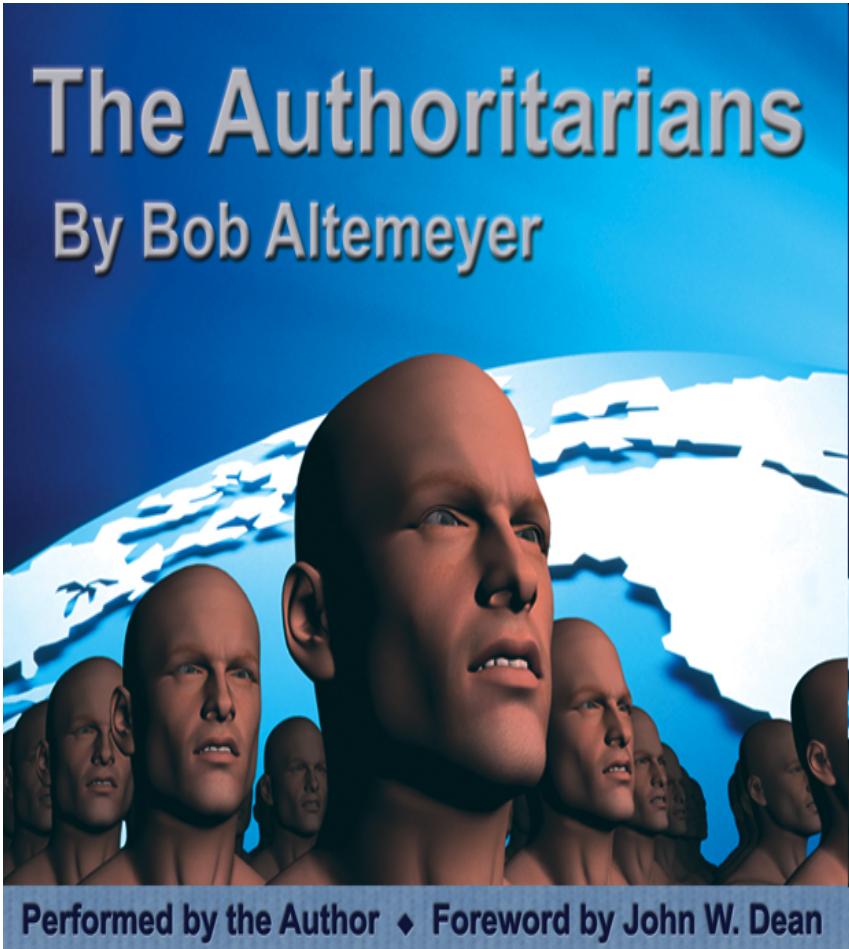


Racists tend to show prejudice against a variety of groups

- *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al) looked for a correlation between personality traits and prejudices against Jews and other minorities
- Using a variety of data collection methods on a variety of US samples, it found plenty of fascists



Racism was found to correlate with other antisocial traits



- The study uncovered various correlates of authoritarianism, including:
 - conventionalism
 - submission to superiors
 - aggression to inferiors
 - superstition and stereotype
 - destructiveness and cynicism
 - projectivity
 - preoccupation with sexual misbehaviour
- the authors concluded that racism is related to political and economic conservatism

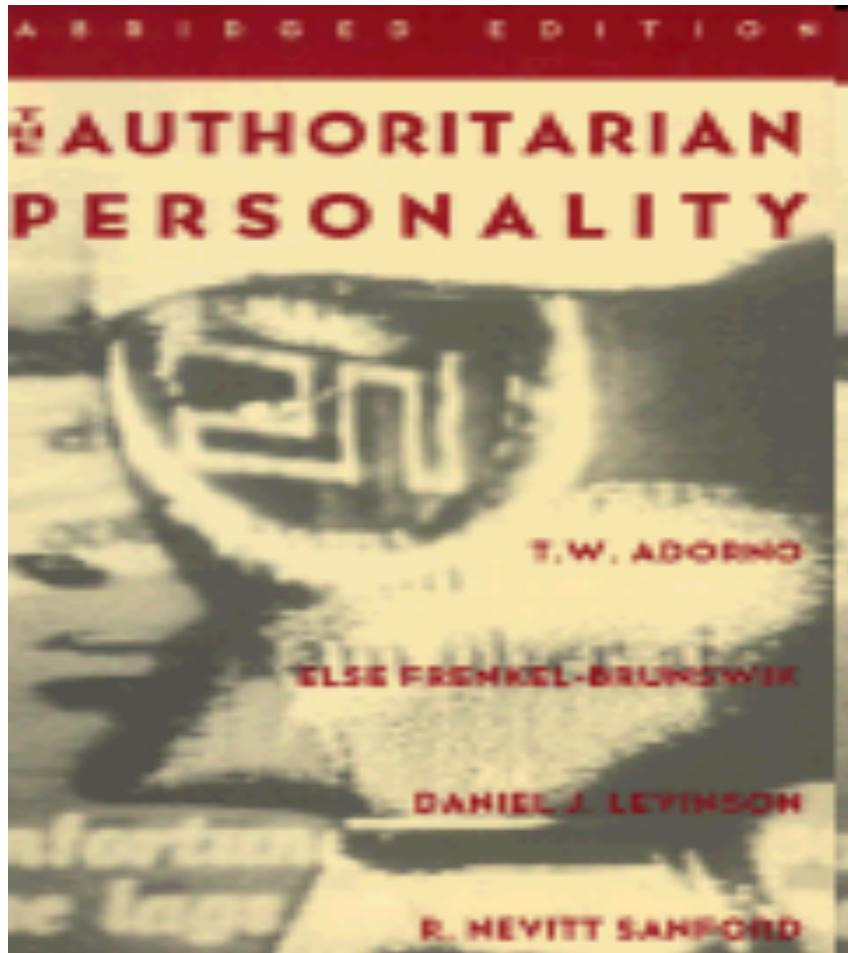
The predictive power of “authoritarianism”

The most interesting and important finding is that people are consistent in their ethnocentrism:

- a person who hates Jews is likely to also hate gypsies, homosexuals and political radicals
- And a person who hates Jews is likely to hold unyielding, uninformed attitudes towards poverty, welfare, government and the economy



Criticisms of this work



- Later showed the existence of left-wing authoritarianism
 - i.e., authoritarians are not always politically conservative
- Other research suggests racism may be structural and situational, not psychiatric
 - e.g. a response to local competition for jobs or housing
- Social *norms* and socialization may also explain prejudiced behaviour

How to reduce racism by introducing familiarity

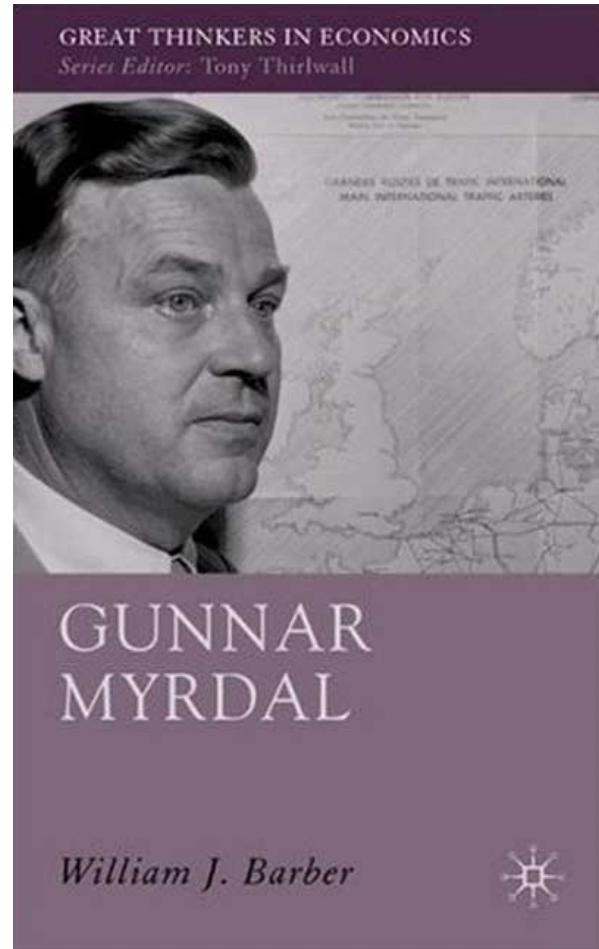


Here are Gordon Allport's four rules for merging hostile groups:

1. Give all group members equal status
2. Have them work at a cooperative activity
3. The task should involve social interaction
4. Rules of good behaviour are enforced to give a positive experience

A fourth classic work: *An American Dilemma*

- Consider the classic work by Karl Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944).
- This work brought progressive European eyes to look at the problem of race relations in the United States.
- It showed how social science analysis could be used to evaluate a racial problem and propose solutions.



The American Black experience



- This study tried to trace discrimination from the beginnings of American history up to 1938 (date of the study)
- It aimed to show how racial attitudes had damaged an entire society by limiting the opportunities and actions of African-Americans.
- Myrdal proposed several solutions to America's dilemma.

What Myrdal recommended

- First, he suggested expanding the role of the federal government to oversee race relations
- Second, he suggested that African Americans migrate from the rural South to industrial North
- Third, he argued for a full-employment policy
- Finally, he urged Americans to live up to the intentions of the American Creed



What actually happened



- Some of Myrdal's proposals were fulfilled in the American civil rights Act of 1964 and the voting rights legislation of 1965
- Migration northward also occurred in the 1950s and 1960s
- Yet, despite these changes, black and white Americans remained socially and economically unequal