

Preface

In publishing ANNUAL EDITIONS we recognize the enormous role played by the magazines, newspapers, and journals of the public press in providing current, first-rate educational information in a broad spectrum of interest areas. Many of these articles are appropriate for students, researchers, and professionals seeking accurate, current material to help bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. These articles, however, become more useful for study when those of lasting value are carefully collected, organized, indexed, and reproduced in a low-cost format, which provides easy and permanent access when the material is needed. That is the role played by ANNUAL EDITIONS.

The explosion of journalistic accounts, the growing legitimacy of ethnicity and race as salient—if not significant—factors related to economic globalization, and the super-power status of the United States of America all engage our attention toward and understanding of race and ethnicity. Experiences of race and ethnicity are aspects of personal identity sustained by societies, governmental policies, economics, and religion, as well as the historical narratives of meaning; all of which are embedded in the *mentalities* that influence personal and group identity. The reader is invited to observe race and ethnicity in the United States; and to discern the development of regimes that have been applied to this socially and economically mobile and culturally pluralistic and immigrant-receiving country.

Nearly a hundred years after the U.S. Supreme Court declared the civil rights laws passed by Congress after the 'War Between the States' unconstitutional, the Court addressed the issues again in 1954 in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. A decade later, in the mid-1960s, Congress stepped up to the plate and passed civil and voting rights laws and immigration reform by the mid-1960s. The universal proclamation of the America Dream found new vigor, but engaged new challenges of pluralism and diversity. Though related to personal/individual rights, cultural rights are clearly associated with a group's participation and its respected access to its part within the public and social affairs. Given its size—and the historical legacy of slavery, conquest, and immigration—the contemporary reality of the United States remains rooted in the legacies of many cultures and the ongoing drama of evocations of race and ethnicity oscillate between celebrative proclamations and lamentations and outrages based on experiences of oppression and unfairness. Such is the destiny of a large society comprised of many cultures and the negotiation of boundaries among groups in a political order committed to personal liberties and civil rights. Thus the issue and realities of racial and ethnic diversity are patiently real and woven into the very nature of the country. Beyond the personal claims of liberties and rights stand other questions: How well are we negotiating relations among and between groups? How well are we shaping and sharing the burdens and benefits of social change and economic affluences? How we make such social choices determines the character of our common life.

This collection was designed to assist you in understanding ethnic and racial pluralism in the United States in a global age. Unit 1, acquaints the reader with case-studies that are illustrative of the contemporary scene at the micro

levels. Each fine grain case-study reveals the specificity and particularity of race and ethnic intersections. Unit 2 addresses the specific historical characteristics of diversity and delineates significant features of American-diversity related to slavery and color consciousness and immigration. The ongoing, yet changing impacts and characteristics of a new American demography are broached in Unit 3. The historical and contemporary experiences of immigration are covered in Unit 4.

The uniquely American expressions of indigenous groups in this modern society are reviewed in Unit 5. Very large and historically marginated populations are treated in the selections found in Unit 6 and Unit 7, which focus respectively on African Americans and Hispanic/Latino Americans.

Unit 8 explores various dimensions of the Asian American experience. Unit 9 extends the discussion of ethnic identity to Americans of Eastern European and Mediterranean background and offers comparative perceptions and perspectives of ethnic Americans on contemporary issues. Selections in Unit 10 illustrate how the most basic legal principles of a society, and especially the U.S. Congress and Supreme Court's interpretation of them, are significant for the delineation of race and ethnic relations. The intersection of the aspirations for inclusion and the realities of economic, gender, and racial claims reveal a pattern of cultural pluralism and contemporary challenges to the promise of American liberties. This unit presents selections of articles that address approaches to understanding the origins of racialism and strife. It focuses on the religious and ethnic origins that shape the consciousness of group affinities and give rise to political and governmental mobilizations of regimes.

In addition to the annotated table of contents, this edition of *Annual Editions: Race and Ethnic Relations* contains a list of Internet References that can be used to further explore article topics and a Topic Guide to reference articles by subject. Readers may have input into the next edition of *Annual Editions: Race and Ethnic Relations* by completing and returning the prepaid article rating form in the back of the book. Thank you.



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