**Chapter 3: Prejudice and Discrimination**

[Swim, J., Hyers, L., Fitzgerald, D., & Bylsma, W. (2003). African American College Students' Experiences with Everyday Racism: Characteristics of and Responses to These Incidents. *Journal of Black Psychology,* *29*(1), 38-67.](http://jbp.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/29/1/38?ijkey=ibtLD9GRqR4ZU&keytype=ref&siteid=spjbp)

Janet Swim and her coauthors provide accounts of encounters with "everyday racism" by African American college students. Their description of these experiences and the details of students' responses to them are eye opening.

Questions to Consider:

1. What are some examples of the interactions between race, gender, and class that are evident in the experiences presented?

[Winslow, M., Aaron, A., & Amadife, E. (2011). African Americans' Lay Theories about the Detection of Prejudice and Nonprejudice. *Journal of Black Studies,* *42*(1), 43-70.](http://jbs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/42/1/43?ijkey=hL9j5S8UNrwtQ&keytype=ref&siteid=spjbs)

This article examines the dynamics of social perceptions of prejudice and non-prejudice among African American university students. Pointing out that most previous studies presented participants with fictional, researcher-constructed situations, the authors suggest that prompting real-life descriptions from people who have been the targets of prejudice is the necessary complement to older studies. Thus, they designed their study to focus on the most common behaviors that indicate prejudice and the most common indications of non-prejudice, using open-ended questions to elicit how African Americans perceive prejudice.

Questions to Consider:

1. What are the most common indicators of prejudice that the study found?
2. What are the most common indicators of non-prejudice?
3. What do the authors mean by “Whites’ impression management behavior related to prejudice”? Can you think of any specific examples of this kind of behavior?
4. What advice do the study participants give to Whites in order to be convincingly non-prejudiced?

[Pager, D., Western, B., & Bonikowski, B. (2009). Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment. *American Sociological Review,* *74*(5), 777-799.](http://asr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/74/5/777?ijkey=XUFiQbyaX2XRA&keytype=ref&siteid=spasr)

This article describes a field experiment to study contemporary discrimination in the low-wage labor market in New York City. The racially diverse study participants were given equivalent resumes and sent to apply for entry-level jobs. Results from the study show that race plays a significant part in whether applicants receive a callback or job offer.

Questions to Consider:

1. How do the authors break discrimination into component factors (vs. as a single decision)? What are these factors?
2. What are the new incentives and opportunities for employers to enact racial preferences in hiring described by the authors?
3. Summarize the basic findings of the study. Would these results have been similar in other major cities in the United States? Why or why not?

[Berrey, E. (2009). Sociology Finds Discrimination in the Law. *Contexts,* *8*(2), 28-32.](http://ctx.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/8/2/28?ijkey=I8f82RaKXU0vk&keytype=ref&siteid=spctx)

This article describes the experience of Chris Burns, an African American man who was fired after being injured on the job and requesting different work responsibilities. Burns’ experience illustrates the fact that workplace inequalities persist despite civil rights reforms. Berrey uses this case to open a rigorous discussion of the complex ways that sociology can be used to reveal the deeper workings of social institutions such as the law and employment. She also makes the critical point that sociology poses as many new questions as it answers old ones.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the findings of the study relative to workplace discrimination?
2. Why is it so difficult to be successful when litigating a discrimination complaint? What role do judges in discrimination cases take in obscuring workplace discrimination?
3. What are the specific new employer interventions that the author cites as “promising alternatives”?

[Hawkins, D. (2011). Things Fall Apart: Revisiting Race and Ethnic Differences in Criminal Violence Amidst a Crime Drop. *Race and Justice,* *1*(1), 3-48.](http://raj.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/1/1/3?ijkey=LXKdmvbBG3rBc&keytype=ref&siteid=spraj)

This article discusses the relationship between race/ethnicity and criminal violence, posing the question of what factors account for ethnic and racial disparities in criminal offending. Presenting the answer in terms of long-term experiences of a particular form of institutional discrimination – internal colonialism – the author argues that little progress has been made in the ways that the social sciences (sociology and criminology in particular) provide explanations for these disparities.

Questions to Consider:

1. What are the ‘‘real world’’ developments related to criminal violence and other crime in the United States that the author cites? What was the response to these events from American social science/criminology?
2. What are the phenomena of “the crime drop” and/or “the great crime decline”? Why are these phenomena important to the general argument of this article?
3. What does the author mean when he argues that there is much evidence that the structure of our academic discipline[s] itself retards such progress?

[Ford, T., Woodzicka, J., Triplett, S., Kochersberger, A., & Holden, C. (2014). Not All Groups are Equal: Differential Vulnerability of Social Groups to the Prejudice-Releasing Effects of Disparagement Humor. *Group Processes Intergroup Relations,* *17*(2), 178-199.](http://gpi.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/17/2/178?ijkey=QtpHd1t.h3RY6&keytype=ref&siteid=spgpi)

This article examines the causal connections between humor that disparages some groups leads to heightened discrimination while humor that disparages other groups does not. The authors detail 3 experiments, each designed to test these connections.

Questions to Consider:

1. Describe experiment 1. What were the findings?
2. Describe experiment 2. What were the findings?
3. Describe experiment 3. What were the findings?
4. In general, what did the authors conclude about disparaging humor? What social conditions foster a greater level of discrimination as the result of disparaging humor?

[Ghumman, S., & Ryan, A. (2013). Not Welcome Here: Discrimination Towards Women Who Wear the Muslim Headscarf. *Human Relations,* *66*(10), 671-698.](http://hum.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/66/5/671?ijkey=EL4lSRq/Gtajc&keytype=ref&siteid=sphum)

This article describes a study of the discrimination faced by individuals who wear religious attire when they are applying for employment. In particular, the author focuses Muslim women wearing the Hijabi, comparing the rates of call backs, formal discrimination, interpersonal discrimination, and low expectations demonstrated by hiring entities.

Questions to Consider:

1. Was the discrimination faced by Muslim women greater when they wore the Hijabi?
2. Are there other types of religious garb that might lead to equal levels of discrimination? Why? If not, why not?
3. How is employee diversity related to the kinds of discrimination the Muslim women experienced?