KENT L. KOPPELMAN

# Understanding HUMAN DIFFERENCES

Fifth Edition

## MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION FOR A DIVERSE AMERICA

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FIFTH EDITION

# Understanding Human Differences

## Multicultural Education for a Diverse America

**Kent L. Koppelman**

*Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin—La Crosse*

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Dedicated To
Burt Altman and Dick Rasmussen
Who demonstrated the meaning of the word “good”
to precede the nouns: colleague, mentor, friend,
and human being.

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# Preface

## Why Do We Need to Understand Diversity?

Americans live in the most racially, ethnically, and socially diverse country on earth. Yet too often we live, work, and play as if our own social, gender, or religious group is the only one that matters. To enjoy the advantages of our national diversity, it is necessary that Americans seek as many facts and consider as many issues as possible to enhance their ability to interact effectively with individuals from diverse groups. This book is not a collection of essays providing multiple perspectives on diversity—there are many books that already do that; instead, this book uses research to examine problems, perceptions, misperceptions, and the potential benefits of the diversity that exists in the United States. Understanding diversity is obviously a prerequisite for becoming an individual who values the diversity in American society.

If we are to value and respect the diversity represented by different groups in the United States, we can begin by learning how to value and respect opinions that differ from our own. It is not necessary to agree with everything a person might say, but it is necessary that when we disagree, we are able to express disagreement based upon a consideration of all available information and within a context of mutual respect.

The issues this book addresses are not new: Human beings have struggled with them in one form or another for centuries, as illustrated by the quotations from individuals of different eras that appear in each chapter. The quotations are not placed randomly in the text, but near a section of text that relates to each one. For example, near the section in Chapter 2 addressing the confusion about positive prejudices and explaining why prejudices are always negative, the quotation by Charles Lamb suggests that prejudices involve "likings and dislikings." Because Lamb was a respected writer of his era, his confusion about some prejudices being positive was not based on a lack of education or intellectual ability, but instead illustrates how ancient this misperception is.

Since the first edition of *Understanding Human Differences* was published, the rights of various minority groups in the United States have become common topics for debate. For example, the term *marriage* has now become a legislative and judicial football, and American perceptions about how we differ from one another have changed in many ways. Students used to come to diversity classes oblivious of the issues, but that is less likely now, even though many diversity topics are still misunderstood.

## New to This Edition

Two specific goals for this edition were (1) to include content that had been absent in previous editions such as the failed strategy of closing urban schools, restorative justice in K–12 schools, body image issues, ageism in the LGBT community, and equity issues in sports participation for students with a disability, and (2) to expand the coverage of critical issues such as racism in higher education, welfare myths, economic discrimination against youth, emerging transgender issues, and uses of digital learning in multicultural education. Diversity issues are not static as new factors impact ongoing issues and as new issues emerge. It is important for all of us to try to be as knowledgeable as we can to participate in the discussions and debates on these issues.

As with any new edition, care has been taken to update statistics and sources and to find more current examples of issues, and this edition has expanded the number of examples pertaining to issues in K–12 schools. With regard to specific additions of content, the fifth edition of *Understanding Human Differences* includes the following:

- Addition of Learning Outcomes that frame the content of the chapters and tie to each major section, and summary statements at the end of each chapter that highlight the important issues addressed in sections of the chapter

- Reorganization of the content in Chapters 4 and 11, creating a clearer and more logical presentation of the information
- New coverage of recent developments at the U.S./Mexican border concerning the illegal entry of thousands of children from Central America and Mexico
- Expanded content on conflict and conflict resolution in K–12 schools, including why these schools are abandoning zero tolerance policies and how restorative justice is being implemented to provide a more equitable discipline strategy
- Examination of recent research on perceptions of one's own body image and of ideal body images for both men and women
- New coverage of age discrimination in the LGBT community
- New coverage of how schools make accommodations for students with a disability to participate in K–12 sports
- Updated coverage of content on transgender issues such as the new challenge to the military to allow transgender soldiers to openly serve their country
- New coverage on issues of racism at colleges and universities
- Expanded coverage of myths about people on welfare
- Descriptions of recent developments in economic discrimination against youth
- New strategies for using digital learning to enhance multicultural education approaches in K–12 schools

## e-Text Enhancements

This book is available as an enhanced Pearson e-Text with the following features:

- **Video Margin Notes** are available throughout the fifth edition. Two to three videos are included in most chapters. In these videos, students will listen to experts, watch footage of diverse classrooms, listen to teachers and students from diverse classrooms and watch videos that challenge biased behaviors and attitudes. Videos are accompanied by reflective questions.
- **Check Your Understanding Quizzes** align with learning outcomes and appear as a link at the end of every major section of each chapter in the e-text edition. Using multiple choice and short answer response questions, the quizzes allow readers to test their knowledge of the concepts, research, strategies, and practices discussed in each section.

Students should benefit from exploring all of these issues because each is relevant to today's society as well as the future society that they may influence. The first step in problem solving is to understand why a problem exists and how it is perpetuated; with that understanding, a person or a community, a state or a nation can implement solutions to address root causes of persistent problems. Consistent with this book's first four editions, the additional content offers information to enable students to understand problems or issues in society in order to find solutions, or in some cases to describe solutions that have been proposed or implemented.

These features are only available in the Pearson e-Text, available exclusively from www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks or by ordering the Pearson e-Text plus Loose-Leaf Version (ISBN 0134044312) or the Pearson eText Access Code Card (ISBN 0133949710).

## Organization/The Conceptual Framework for this Book

Understanding human differences is an ongoing challenge. Initially, scholars focused on *individual attitudes and behaviors*; later, they described the influence of *cultural expectations* in shaping individual attitudes. Finally, scholars addressed *institutional policies and practices* in which either discrimination was intentional against minority groups or it was an unintentional outcome. Vega (1978) describes a conceptual framework incorporating these three elements to understand human differences and the oppression of minority groups by dominant groups. This conceptual framework provides the basis for the organization of this book as we examine individual attitudes and actions, the evolution of cultural biases, and the establishment of discriminatory institutional practices (see Figure F.1).

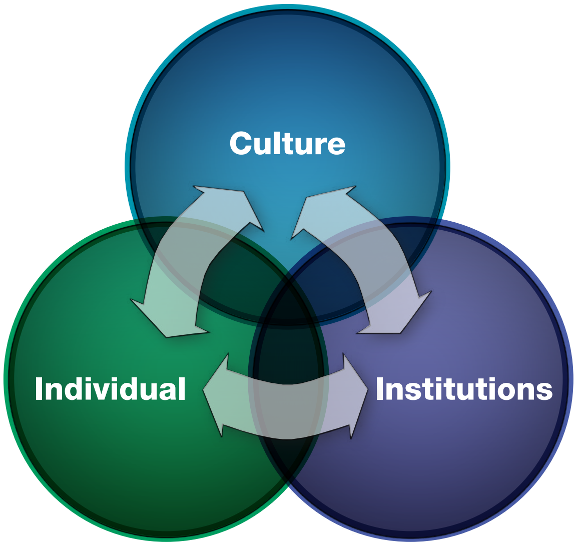

**FIGURE F.1** A Conceptual Framework for the Study of Intergroup Relations

To understand human differences, Vega's conceptual framework allows us to analyze American cultural, individual, and institutional behaviors. In exploring culture, the objective is to describe *cultural norms and standards*. What images are associated with the ideal? Any culture associates particular images with the ideal woman, the ideal man, and the ideal family. For many Americans, those images are primarily white middle-class people living in a nuclear family. Norms and standards are powerful determinants of individual expectations and behaviors, represented by the arrow pointing from culture to individual. Once we understand norms and standards, we can begin to understand what is meant by *cultural biases*. In a multicultural society, cultural biases can be detrimental to minority groups whose norms or standards do not conform to those of the dominant culture.

The influence of culture on individuals is powerful, as can be seen in the analysis of *individual beliefs, attitudes, values, opinions, actions, and inactions*; sometimes what a person chooses *not* to do reveals as much as his or her actions. Although individuals are influenced by their cultural norms and standards, the Vega conceptual framework portrays that arrow as double headed, meaning that when significant numbers of individuals accept cultural norms, express their agreement, and behave in accordance with them, the cultural norms and standards are reinforced. Any analysis of individual behavior must include the influence of prejudice on an individual's choices.

Finally, we analyze *institutional practices, policie*s, and *standard operating procedures* that are influenced by cultural norms and standards as well as by individual attitudes and behavior. To the extent that they reflect cultural norms and standards as well as individual attitudes and behaviors, institutions also reinforce them. To relate institutions to human differences, the analysis must focus on discrimination, identifying both ways in which the institution intentionally discriminates against certain groups and ways in which the institution unintentionally advantages certain groups and disadvantages others.

Although the Vega conceptual framework describes the intricate relationship among the three areas—cultural, individual, and institutional—chapter narratives of necessity deal with each discretely. Readers are asked to keep in mind the double-headed arrows signifying that all three areas are interlocked to create the following relationships:

1. Cultural norms and standards influence and are reinforced by individual attitudes and behaviors and institutional policies and procedures.
2. Individual attitudes and behaviors influence and are reinforced by cultural norms and standards and by institutional policies and procedures.
3. Institutional policies and procedures influence and are reinforced by cultural norms and standards and individual attitudes and beliefs.

The four sections of this book that relate to the conceptual framework are as follows.

Section 1

- Section 1 focuses on the *Individual* by exploring personal values, interpersonal communication, and the way an individual develops negative attitudes toward other people based on perceptions of group identity (leading to bias, stereotypes, prejudice, and negative behavior toward members of these groups).

Section 2

- Section 2 focuses on *Culture* by examining the pattern of historical responses in American society toward immigration and the increased racial and religious diversity that has always been a consequence of this immigration. The final chapter of this section describes how those who are pluralism advocates are engaged in efforts to reject this historical pattern of discrimination, but as the following section illustrates, discrimination remains a problem in our society.

Section 3

- Section 3 describes interrelationships among culture, individuals, and institutions to produce discrimination based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, and disability, with institutional issues being a major focus of this section.

Section 4

- Section 4 addresses changes that have been implemented to reduce levels of individual prejudice and institutional discrimination, focusing on major institutions in our society such as K–12 schools, the federal government, higher education, business, the media, and the military; their pluralistic policies and practices are designed to benefit from the diversity that exists in our society. This conceptual framework helps us to appreciate the changes that are occurring, but also the ongoing issues that illustrate how much farther we have to go.

Before concluding this explanation of Vega's conceptual framework, consider this example to illustrate how interreliant culture is with individual and institutional behaviors. Although many forms of family exist in the United States, our cultural bias is for the nuclear family (the norm). Influenced by this cultural bias, Americans tend to form nuclear families. Even when people with a cultural tradition of extended families immigrate to the United States, they tend to form nuclear families within a few generations, sometimes reversing convention with elderly parents receiving care in nursing homes rather than at home.

American institutions have encouraged the formation of nuclear families because they are more able to relocate in an age in which mobility of workers is highly desirable. In an analysis of discrimination, problems may emerge for minority subcultures that value extended families if they maintain that value rather than adjust to the cultural norm. As this example illustrates, Vega's conceptual framework helps clarify the complexity of intergroup relations by describing the related factors involved in the oppression of minority groups by a dominant group.

## Inquiry Approach/Discussion Exercises

Chapter narratives in this book are presented in an inquiry format. After a brief introduction, each chapter consists of related questions with responses based on research from a variety of disciplines and on author expertise. As references illustrate, information for this book has been collected from studies in a broad array of behavioral sciences, including education, psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, science, and literature. Although sources cited are from relatively recent publications, some older sources are also included either because they are still highly regarded in the field or simply because an author expressed a conclusion replicated by other research but not stated with as much clarity.

### Discussion Exercises

To reinforce the inquiry approach, exercises for group discussion are provided at the end of each chapter to examine serious ethical questions. Based on specific issues, activities encourage readers to reflect on and discuss aspects of issues that involve ethical or moral dilemmas. The exercises are not designed to manipulate readers into finding a "politically correct" solution; rather, they enable students to hear the variety of responses from others and appreciate the complexity of individual, institutional, and cultural issues in America today.

## The Intent of This Book

The information provided in this book is intended to challenge readers to think and talk about issues that each of us must consider as citizens in a multicultural society;

this book is not necessarily intended to change reader values, but to challenge attitudes based on incomplete or erroneous information (see Chapter 1 for a description of the difference between *values* and *attitudes*). Diversity brings benefits as well as challenges, but the surest way to enjoy the benefits is to meet the challenges with a firm foundation of knowledge and insight that is based on research from all behavioral sciences. Once students have read this textbook, the primary goal will be realized if they have gained a better understanding of the issues addressed. Whether or not that is accompanied by changes in attitudes is up to each individual; and there is an Attitude Inventory in the Instructor's Manual that accompanies this text. Your instructor may ask for your cooperation in taking this inventory before, during, or on completion of the course.

The intent of this book is to clarify our understanding of human differences and the role they play in interpersonal and intergroup relations. The Vega conceptual framework allows us to recognize how the interlocking circles of cultural biases, individual attitudes and actions, and institutional policies and practices have produced inequities that continue to polarize and all too often prevent Americans from achieving ideals first expressed over two centuries ago when dreamers imagined a radical new concept: a nation where each person would be given the freedom to be whoever he or she wanted to be.

## Support Materials for Instructors

The following resources are available for instructors to download on www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular edition of the book, and then click on the "resources" tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

### Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank (013394977X)

The Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank includes a wealth of interesting ideas and activities designed to help instructors teach the course. Each chapter contains learning outcomes, and a comprehensive test bank containing multiple choice questions, discussion questions, exercises, and suggested readings. There is also an Attitude Inventory and instructions for its potential use.

### PowerPoint™ Slides (013394980X)

Designed for teachers using the text, the PowerPoint™ Presentation consists of a series of slides that can be shown as is or used to make handouts. The presentation highlights key concepts and major topics for each chapter.

### TestGen (0133949753)

Test Gen is a powerful test generator available exclusively from Pearson Education publishers. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options, such as over a local area network or on the web. A test bank, which is also called a Test Item File (TIF), typically contains a large set of test items, organized by chapter and ready for your use in creating a test based on the associated book material.

The tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

- TestGen Testbank file—PC
- TestGen Testbank file—MAC
- TestGen Testbank—Blackboard 9 TIF
- TestGen Testbank—Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT) TIF
- Angel Test Bank (zip)
- D2L Test Bank (zip)
- Moodle Test Bank
- Sakai Test Bank (zip)

## Acknowledgments

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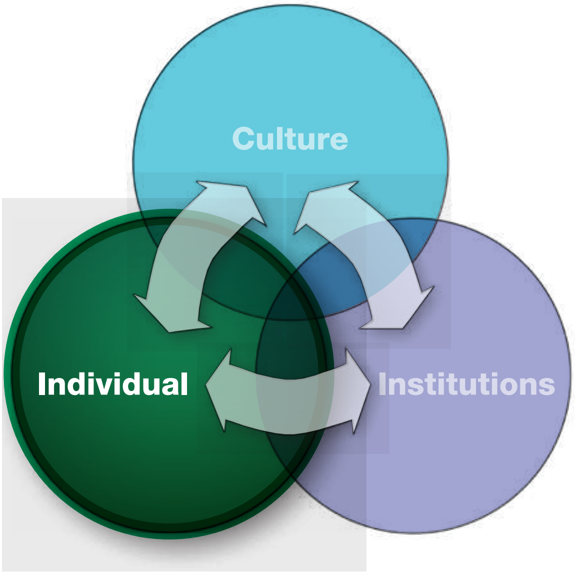

# 1

# Understanding Ourselves and Others: Clarifying Values and Language

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading this chapter you will know and be able to:

- Explain the traditional ways values have been taught in the United States, what all of these approaches have in common, and how this common factor contributes to the phenomenon of Americans consistently engaging in actions inconsistent with American values.
- Provide meaningful definitions and distinctions for two sets of related terms: (1) *bias*, *stereotype*, *prejudice*, *bigotry*, and *discrimination*, and (2) *race*, *ethnicity*, *nationality*, and *minority group*.

> “I have striven not to laugh at human actions, not to weep at them, nor to hate them, but to understand them.”
>
> —Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677)

“May you live in interesting times” is a Chinese curse. It implies that life is easier and more enjoyable when nothing out of the ordinary or controversial happens. As Americans in this complex, multicultural society, we certainly live in interesting times. Is it the best of times or the worst of times? Like the question about whether the glass is half empty or half full, the answer is the same: It’s a personal decision. We can choose to be engaged in the challenges and opportunities of diversity issues, or we can retreat and resign ourselves to an attitude of indifference or even despair. Because America is not only a diverse society but also a democratic one, we have the freedom to choose our perceptions, assumptions, and behaviors.

If we take Spinoza’s quote seriously, we need to understand all kinds of diversity—including opinions, appearances, values, and beliefs—as well as the categories of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. The study of human diversity obviously requires an examination of social groups that encounter discrimination. However, in addition to focusing on the sociocultural differences among groups, we must also acknowledge the importance of individual differences. Each of us wants to be recognized as an individual. Our experiences are affected by multiple factors, including whether we are white or a person of color; female or male; from a low-, middle-, or upper-income family; or from a rural, suburban, or urban home. Each person's opinion offers a unique perspective that only the individual expressing it can fully understand. The task for us as listeners is to understand as best as we can the beliefs and values articulated by the individuals we encounter.

## The Role of Beliefs and Values in Human Differences

How do scholars distinguish between beliefs and values? Kniker (1977) suggests that **beliefs** are inferences about reality that take one of three forms: descriptive, evaluative, or prescriptive. A *descriptive belief* is exemplified by those who argued that the world was not flat but round because they observed boats sailing off to the horizon and recognized that the hulls disappear while sails are still visible. An *evaluative belief* is illustrated by Winston Churchill's conclusion about democracy based on his reading of history: He understood why some called democracy the worst form of government, but he found it to be better than all other forms of government that had been attempted thus far. An example of a *prescriptive belief* would be the recommendation that students take a role in creating classroom rules because research showed that students who help create rules are more likely to be cooperative and abide by them. All beliefs are predispositions to types of action. Rokeach asserts that a cluster of related beliefs creates an **attitude**; he defines **values** as "combinations of attitudes which generate action or deliberate choice to avoid action" (Kniker, 1977, p. 33).

Rokeach is saying that values determine our choices: Values are the foundation for actions we choose to take—or to avoid (see Figure 1.1). What value do Americans place on wealth? For some, money and possessions are the primary measures of success. They admire others who are rich and successful, and they define their own worth by their income and wealth. For others, money is not a priority. Their main concern is to make enough money to support a comfortable lifestyle, however they choose to define it. There are also people who believe the biblical caution that love of money is "the root of all evil," and refuse to let wealth play an important role in their choices. Their behavior is a reflection of their values. While serving as vice president to John Adams, Thomas Jefferson was once turned away from a prominent hotel because his clothes were soiled and he had no servants with him. After the proprietor was told whom he had refused, he sent word to Jefferson, offering him any room in the hotel. Having been accepted into another hotel, Jefferson sent a reply politely refusing the offer of a room, noting that if the hotel proprietor did not have a room for a "dirty farmer," then he must not have a room for the vice president either (Botkin, 1957).

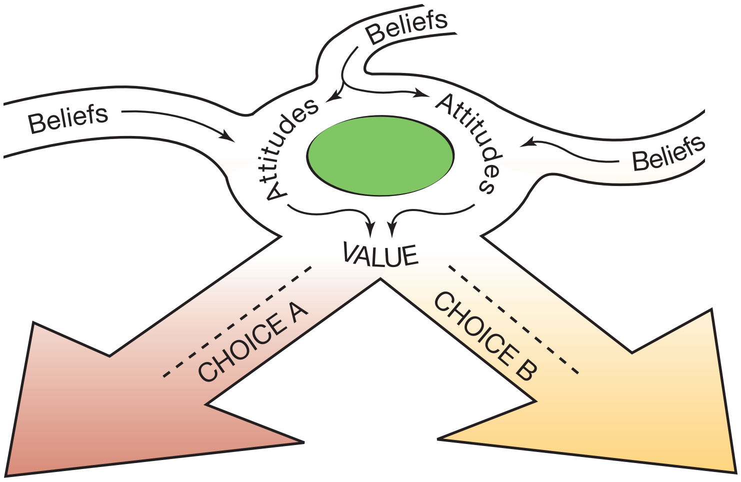

**FIGURE 1.1** The Relationship of Values, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Choices

From Charles R. Kniker, *You and Values Education*. Published by Allyn & Bacon/Merrill Education, Boston, MA. Copyright © 1977. Reprinted and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.

### What is the relationship between a person's values and behaviors?

America has a history of social commentary on the role of values in people's lives, and scholars engage in research examining the relationship between expressed values and behavior. Searching for consistent patterns in values research is challenging. However, one theme from social critics has been repeatedly supported by research and case study: There is a consistent inconsistency between what we say we value and our actual behavior (Aronson, 2008; Lefkowitz, 1997; Myrdal, 1944; Terry, Hogg, & Duck, 1999).

The tendency for Americans to say we believe in a certain value and then engage in contradictory behavior is a curious and yet consistent pattern. Contradictory behavior by human beings has been criticized and even ridiculed by essayists, novelists, and observers of American society. In 1938, the Carnegie Foundation invited Swedish social economist Gunnar Myrdal to the United States to conduct a study on the "American Negro Problem." Myrdal (1944) went far beyond a study of racial relations: He attempted to identify and understand the core values of American society.

In his analysis of Myrdal's research, Risberg (1978) identified nine values that Americans perceived as defining their culture:

1. Worth and dignity of the individual
2. Equality
3. Inalienable rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness
4. Rights to freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and private association
5. Consent of the governed
6. Majority rule
6. Rule of law
7. Due process of law
8. Community and national welfare. (pp. 5–6)

These identified core values seem to be accurate, especially if we compare American culture to other cultures. For example, many nations around the world put great emphasis on the collective good, but in the United States we tend to focus on personal worth and to reward individual achievements. Expectations of equality and of having "inalienable rights" are expressed in founding documents such as the Declaration of Independence, and our various freedoms are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution. Our representative form of democracy is based on the assumption that local, state, and national governments will be elected by the majority, with an expectation that they will rule with the consent of the governed for the welfare of the community, state, and nation. Finally, being ruled by laws and being given a chance to resolve issues by making our case in court (due process) was established to protect our citizens from the whims of the wealthy and powerful (a reaction to oppressive behavior from aristocrats and monarchs in the past). These values have historically defined America as a society, and they represent beliefs that all Americans share.

Despite the consensus about them, Myrdal observed that all of the values were regularly contradicted by American behavior. He provided examples from his observations, primarily based on race relations, to illustrate his conclusion.

## What inconsistencies exist between American values and American behaviors?

Although Americans have always tended to emphasize individuality, American society quite consistently has demanded conformity. The influence of peers on individual behavior illustrates the seductive power of conformity. Social psychologists studying the influence of peer pressure have reported that people in groups engage in behaviors they would not undertake as individuals (Aronson, 2008; Haag, 2000; Terry, Hogg, & Duck, 1999). According to LeBon (1968), when individuals congregate, the group "presents new characteristics very different from those of the individuals composing it" (p. 27). In a study of young men who had assaulted homosexuals, Franklin (2000) found that many of the men she interviewed expressed tolerant attitudes toward homosexuality even though they admitted that when they were with friends, they participated in verbal or physical assaults on people perceived to be gay. When questioned, 35% said they were motivated by a desire to prove their "toughness" and to become closer to the friends who engaged in antigay behavior.

> "The primal principle of democracy is the worth and dignity of the individual."
>
> —Edward Bellamy (1850–1898)

Contradictory behavior also is illustrated in the belief that Americans value equality. The Declaration of Independence proclaims that the United States is founded on the belief that "all men are created equal," and yet the man who wrote that statement owned slaves. During World War II, boxing champions Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson signed up for military service. At a bus stop in Alabama, a military policeman insisted that the two "colored soldiers" move to the rear of the station. When they refused, they were arrested. After an officer had reprimanded them, Louis responded, "Sir, I'm a soldier like any other American soldier. I don't want to be pushed to the back because I'm a Negro" (Mead, 1985, p. 231). Despite the gains made from the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the United States has still not achieved the goal of racial equality.

This nation also was founded on the rule of law and the belief in a justice system that would be fair to everyone, yet people with wealth and status are able to circumvent this ideal. One of many examples challenging this belief occurred in Texas in 2013. A mother and daughter tried to assist a woman whose car had stalled on the side of a highway, and a youth pastor also stopped to help. Suddenly a pickup veered off the road, smashing into the cars and killing the four people. Two people in the back of the pickup were also injured; one had a brain injury that deprived him of the ability to move or talk. The teenage driver, Ethan Couch, had a blood alcohol level of 0.24, three times the legal limit. When the case came to trial, the boy's wealthy father hired an expensive legal defense team. A psychologist testified that Ethan was a victim of "affluenza," describing his misbehavior as a result of having wealthy, privileged parents who never set limits for him. After the trial, the judge insisted that the "affluenza" claim had no influence on her ruling; however, as punishment for killing four innocent people and injuring two others, Ethan Couch was sentenced to no jail time and only ten days probation. In response to outrage over this light punishment, the judge modified her sentence to order Couch to a residential treatment facility. The judge did not indicate what length of time the teenager would be required to stay there (Ford, 2014). In contrast to Ethan Couch, there are a lot of poor people in prison today because they could not afford to hire the skilled lawyers available to wealthy clients who are more likely to be successful in getting desired outcomes in court.

Even when wealthy people are convicted and incarcerated, they may have a very different experience than the average person. Since the 1990s, certain Southern California city jails and prisons have provided upscale cells for affluent prisoners. For $45 to $175 a day, incarcerated people can have luxuries such as an iPod, cell phone, exercise bike, DVDs, or a computer. They may also request a private cell, have their meals catered, or be placed in a work release program depending on what they can afford. In contrast, jail conditions in Los Angeles County offer a compelling reason to avoid them. A *Michigan Law Review* article described the fate of 21,000 inmates who were each housed with three other prisoners in filthy cells (originally built for two people); 85% of these inmates were pre-trial detainees and most were arrested on non-violent charges. In 2007, over 2,000 prisoners in the Pasadena jail paid about $234,000 for what some have called "incarceration vacations" (Clark, 2014). Other states are copying the practices of California city jails and state prisons, and these luxury jail cells illustrate that our justice system does not dispense punishment equally.

What Myrdal observed and reported in the 1940s continues to be true: As individuals and as a society, Americans behave inconsistently, engaging in actions that contradict expressed values. Myrdal's observations reinforced what American social critics had been saying for years and what research and case studies have documented. These observations require some explanation, and it seems logical to begin by examining how people choose their values.

> "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread."
>
> —Anatole France (1844–1924)

## Are values individually chosen or are we taught to accept certain values?

The way American values are taught plays a major role in our acceptance of them. Individuals, subcultures, and institutions are involved in teaching values; parents, teachers, peers, clergy, relatives, and youth counselors are just a few examples. By studying how individuals and organizations in America teach values to children and youth, Raths, Harmin, and Simon (1978) identified seven traditional approaches.

The first way to teach values is to (1) *set an example*. Parents and teachers are supposed to be role models for children and youth. Young people are also told to emulate various individuals—from historical leaders to contemporary athletes—whose achievements are attributed to practicing certain values. In similar fashion, schools and other organizations use (2) *rules and regulations* to promote certain behaviors in children and youth (and adults) that represent important values. Learning punctuality is considered important enough that teachers send children to the principal's office for a tardy pass if they are late for class. This example is especially interesting because the child securing the tardy pass from the principal is kept away from the classroom for additional time while the other children engage in some kind of learning activity, which is supposedly the primary purpose for requiring students to attend school.

Another approach is to (3) *persuade or convince* others to accept certain values. Respectful discussions with reasonable arguments can be an effective means of convincing someone that the values being espoused are appropriate for living a good life. Related to this is (4) an *appeal to conscience* in which a parent or teacher may challenge a child or youth who seems to advocate an inappropriate value or belief. This approach is illustrated when a teacher responds to a student making an inappropriate comment by saying, "You don't really believe that, do you?" The point of such questions is not to give the student a chance to explain or defend what he or she said, but to produce a subtle and insistent form of moral pressure intended to coerce the student into rejecting an unacceptable point of view.

Parents often teach values by offering (5) *limited choices*. By limiting choices, parents intend to manipulate children into making acceptable decisions. If a mother values cooperation and tells her children that family members should share in household duties, what can she do if one of her children refuses? She asks one child to wash dishes twice a week, but the child hates to wash dishes and refuses. The mother might say, "Either you agree to wash dishes twice a week or you will not be allowed to play with your friends after school." The child is restricted to two options in the hope that he or she will choose to do the dishes, reinforcing the mother's original objective of wanting her children to learn the value of sharing domestic responsibilities.

Organizations have employed the approach of (6) *inspiring people* to embrace certain values, often by sponsoring a "retreat" with inspirational or motivational speakers or a social function where the combination of speakers, films, and activities is designed to have emotional or spiritual impact. Although religious groups employ this approach, corporations sponsor such events to inspire employees to work harder to achieve personal or group goals, and in doing so, contribute to the achievement of organizational goals.

Some religious groups and secular organizations emphasize (7) *religious or cultural dogma* to teach values. To accept beliefs without questioning them is to be **dogmatic**. If a Christian with dogmatic beliefs were questioned, he or she might say "That's what the Bible says," or, similarly, a dogmatic Muslim might say "This is what it says in the Qu'ran," even though for centuries people have interpreted the teachings of Jesus and Muhammad in different ways. Even early Christians held widely divergent views on the meanings of the life and words of Jesus (Pagels, 2006). Dogmatic beliefs stifle debate by emphasizing tradition: "This is what we have always believed."

Dogmatic beliefs also can be found in a secular context. When someone questions a value based on cultural beliefs, a dogmatic response might be "We've always done it this way." The appeal to tradition in opposing change has been employed in such controversies as using Native American mascots for school sports teams and including the Confederate flag in the official flags of some southern states. Only in 2003 did Georgia change its state flag to remove the confederate symbol, and in 2015, South Carolina finally removed the Confederate flag from its statehouse grounds after a white supremacist murdered nine Black people in a church.

Understanding how values are taught provides some insight in answering the question about why people consistently behave in ways that contradict their expressed values. Each of the seven traditional approaches to teaching values seems to be based on a common assumption, and that assumption might explain the inconsistencies.

> “When people are free to do as they please they usually imitate each other.”
>
> —Eric Hoffer (1902–1983)

## How does the way values are taught explain the inconsistency between values and behavior?

What do the seven traditional approaches to teaching values have in common? They are all based on an assumption that certain prescribed values should be taught, and that the individuals being instructed should accept them. The person teaching

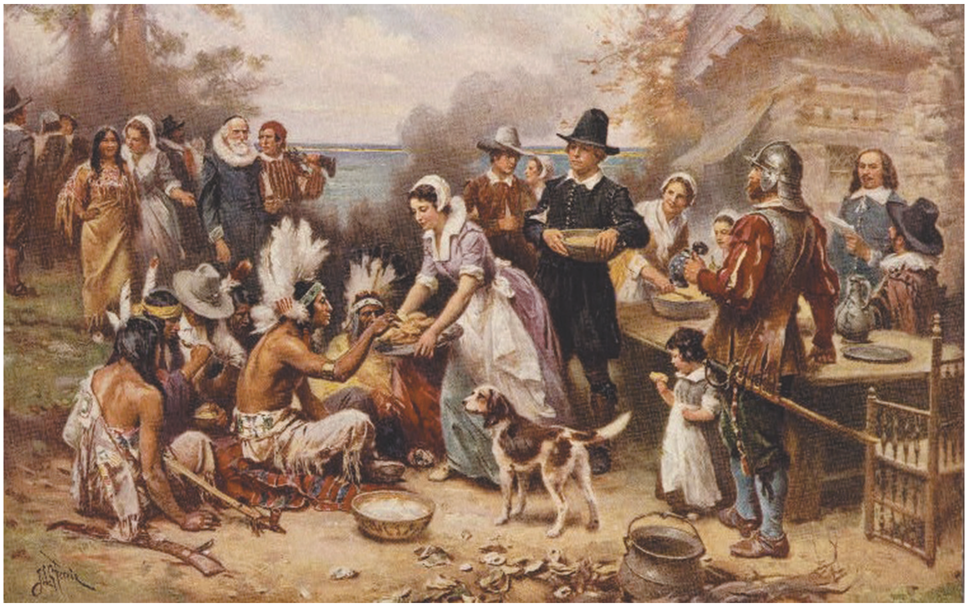

**FIGURE 1.2** "The First Thanksgiving"

Often found in public school textbooks, illustrations such as this one suggest that Native Americans and colonists had a peaceful, harmonious relationship, but the reality was one of consistent conflict as Indians were pushed off their lands and forced to move westward.

*Source*: "The First Thanksgiving," painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1863–1930). Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [Jean Leon Gerome Ferris/LC-USZ62-1234].

values—the teacher, parent, scout leader, minister, priest, rabbi, imam, or employer—knows which values are appropriate. The goal is to persuade the student, child, parishioner, or worker to accept those values. In actuality, each approach is a form of **indoctrination**, where the intent is to dictate cultural values that must be accepted rather than assist people in deciding what is right and wrong (see Figure 1.2).

This assumption shared by all seven traditional approaches to teaching values in America caused Raths et al. (1978) to question whether all approaches were primarily successful in convincing people to *say* the right thing, yet not *do* the right thing. If this is true, there are important implications for how values should be taught. It is neither ethical nor prudent to teach values that are advocated but not practiced in our everyday lives. This teaches hypocrisy, not values. If the goal of teaching is to help learners understand what they genuinely believe and choose values to incorporate into their behavior, then those who teach must recognize the limitations of coercing children and youth to feign acceptance of prescribed values. For Americans to behave consistently with our expressed values, we must demonstrate authentic commitment to them.

## Why should anyone be concerned about inconsistencies between values and behavior?

If we understand our values and consistently act on them, it is more likely that our choices will reflect our highest ideals. We are constantly confronted with ethical dilemmas that challenge our values and require us to make moral choices. A *New York Times* reporter interviewed a national sales manager for Wachovia who was living in an upper-middle-class suburb of Atlanta—a homogeneous community where everyone was of the same race and social class, and residents even shared similar opinions on a variety of issues. At his corporate worksite, the manager said the importance of diversity was emphasized: "At work, diversity is one of the biggest things we work on" (Kilborn, 2005, p. 157). Yet in his private life, the manager admitted that he and his suburban neighbors were "never challenged" to learn about other groups, so they did not. The contrast between what happens at work and what takes place at home reveals an inconsistency that could call into question the sincerity of the manager's commitment to diversity.

Another example of inconsistency that came up during the interview was when the sales manager said that his family attended church and Bible Study classes. Because they were secure in their own comforts, the manager admitted that he and his family didn't give much thought to other "economic groups"—to families living in poverty.

As a contrast, there is the example of Bono, lead singer for the rock group U2, who has used his position and wealth to lobby for human rights. Accepting an NAACP Image Award in 2007 for his work on poverty issues and the AIDS crisis in Africa, Bono identified Martin Luther King, Jr., as someone who inspired him, and he went on to say:

> The poor are where God lives. God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is where the opportunity is lost and lives are shattered. God is with the mother who has infected her child with a virus that will take both their lives. God is under the rubble in the cries we hear during wartime. God, my friends, is with the poor. God is with us if we are with them. This is not a burden. This is an adventure. (Gamber, 2007, p. 37)

## Should parents rather than schools teach values to children?

The question of who should teach values is a rhetorical one. Both parents and schools in America are expected to contribute to the development of children's value systems. We constantly encounter people who reveal their values in everyday words and actions. Teachers model their values regardless of whether they consciously choose to do so. The question is not whether values should be taught, but how they should be taught.

Of the many approaches Kniker (1977) identified for teaching values, the most effective allow children and youth opportunity for discussion and debate, employing activities that stimulate them to think about their beliefs, hear other perspectives, and consider what effect different decisions could have for others as well as themselves. Discussing values, related behaviors, and possible consequences exposes young people to perspectives of others; evaluating arguments about values from their peers can help them decide which ones seem more attractive, compelling, and meaningful. In the process, they learn not only what values are important to them but also how to accept people with values different from their own.

As adults, we do not tend to make decisions about values at a particular point in time and then never change our minds. Our values are based on beliefs and attitudes that change frequently, resulting in an ongoing process in which decisions are made and reevaluated throughout our lives. Culture, geographical location, parents, and life experiences influence each person's decisions. Each individual must determine what he or she believes is best, and the cumulative decisions individuals make influence the evolution of our society (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1991; Lappe, 1989; Zinn, 1990). School classrooms are part of this journey. Teachers must present students with moral dilemmas and trust that when our children and youth are given the freedom to choose, they will be capable of making ethical decisions.

> “Consciously we teach what we know; unconsciously we teach who we are.”
>
> —Don Hamachek (contemporary)

## What problems can interfere with making ethical decisions?

One of the main problems in making ethical decisions about human differences is confusion concerning the language employed to address those differences. Many essential words or phrases are either unfamiliar terms or common expressions with a history of misuse. Confused language often reflects the discomfort people feel toward sensitive issues. For example, the word *racism* did not appear in most English dictionaries until the 1960s. As the civil rights movement gained momentum and attracted considerable attention from the media and people across America, we could no longer avoid using the term. Similarly, the word *sexism* did not appear in dictionaries until the early 1970s, as the women's movement became increasingly successful at bringing issues concerning the treatment of women to public attention (Miller & Swift, 2000).

Using inaccurate or ambiguous language creates problems when we are addressing sensitive, uncomfortable issues. To be coherent and meaningful in our discussion of human differences, we must clarify our vocabulary and agree to specific appropriate meanings for significant words and concepts.

To test your knowledge of what you've just read,
complete Check Your Understanding 1.1.

## Defining Terms Related to Human Differences

One would expect that consultation with any scholarly authority would provide definitions for a term such as *prejudice*, but the scholarly world is not free from confusion. Some textbooks have defined *prejudice* as a prejudgment that could be either positive or negative; this definition confuses prejudice with *bias*, a feeling in favor of—or opposed to—anything or anyone. *Stereotypes* always refer to people, and also can be positive or negative. As with stereotypes, prejudice always refers to people, but prejudice is always negative.

This chapter includes a series of definitions intended to clarify terms referring to human differences. Definitions throughout the text are based on the work of scholars from various fields in the behavioral sciences, including racial and ethnic studies, women's studies, education, sociology, and anthropology. Unless cited, definitions reflect a distillation of common themes identified in several scholarly sources (Andrzejewski, 1996; Feagin & Feagin, 2010; Herdt, 1997; Levin & Levin, 1982; Schaefer, 2015; Simpson & Yinger, 1985). The following series of definitions makes distinctions and indicates relationships between the terms.

**Bias** A preference or inclination, favorable or unfavorable, that inhibits impartial judgment.
**Stereotype** A positive or negative trait or traits ascribed to a certain group and to most members of that group.
**Prejudice** A negative attitude toward a group and persons perceived to be members of that group; being predisposed to behave negatively toward members of a group.
**Bigotry** Extreme negative attitudes leading to hatred of a group and persons regarded as members of the group.
**Discrimination** Actions or practices carried out by a member or members of dominant groups or their representatives that have a differential and negative impact on a member or members of subordinate groups.

Notice that each of the first four terms just listed represents attitudes of greater intensity than the previous one. Regarding bias and stereotypes, attitudes can be either positive or negative and can influence a person's perceptions of a person or group. Having a *bias* related to a group creates an inclination to favor or dislike an individual from that group. (See Table 1.1.) *Stereotyping* a group indicates an expectation that most members of the group will behave in certain positive or negative ways. No positive option exists for prejudice or bigotry because of the greater intensity of these attitudes. *Prejudices* are negative attitudes based on a prejudgment of a group; *bigotry* involves hatred and represents a harsher form of prejudgment against a person or group. Note that whereas bias, stereotype, prejudice, and bigotry relate to attitudes, discrimination refers to actions taken that demonstrate negative attitudes. A person can have a bias, a stereotype, or a prejudice, or even be a bigot and still not engage in any kind of negative or positive behavior. Unless an individual's attitudes are publicly expressed, others may not be aware of them. Discrimination can be seen and documented, and it can cause physical and emotional harm.

### How do negative attitudes develop?

Watch the video, If Asians said the stuff white people say, and identify the four stereotypes being satirized. Why is satire effective in exposing stereotypes in this video? https://www.upworthy.com/if-asians-said-the-stuff-some-white-people-say-it-would-sound-as-ridiculous-as-it-actually-is?c=bl3

We learn various biases, stereotypes, and prejudices as we grow up. We can be biased in favor of or against certain kinds of foods, categories of books, styles of clothing, or types of personalities. Bias can affect decisions about what we eat, read, or wear; it can influence our choice of friends. A stereotype assumes that individuals possess certain human traits simply because they are members of a particular group. Some traits are regarded as positive—such as blacks have rhythm, Asians are good in math—and other traits are viewed as negative—certain groups are lazy, shiftless, dishonest, or violent. Although negative stereotypes are regarded as unacceptable, many people accept positive stereotypes. The problem with positive stereotypes is that they cause us to have specific expectations for individuals and groups even though we have little or no evidence for these assumptions. A positive stereotype may sabotage the process

**TABLE 1.1** Examples of Bias

**The following selection comes from a list of 27 biases**

1. **Family Bias:** Believing information from family members without seeking evidence to support the accuracy of their information.
2. **Attractiveness Bias:** Believing information provided by attractive people.
3. **Confirmation Bias:** Believing information that reinforces beliefs already held and ignoring information that contradicts these beliefs.
4. **Self-Serving Bias:** Believing information that is beneficial to self-interest and goals.
5. **In-Group Bias:** Believing information from people who are members of our group (e.g., friends, co-workers, racial or ethnic group, etc.).
6. **Expectancy Bias:** Tending to pursue information and draw conclusions that reinforce our beliefs when looking for information (or even conducting research).
7. **Pleasure Bias:** Assuming that pleasant experiences offer greater insights for strengthening one's beliefs than unpleasant experiences.
8. **Perceptual Bias:** Assuming that one's own perceptions and experience of reality reveal objective truths to confirm one's beliefs.
9. **Perseverance Bias:** Perpetuating one's beliefs even after encountering information that contradicts those beliefs.
10. **Uncertainty Bias:** Choosing to believe or disbelieve information rather than remain uncertain because people tend to be uncomfortable with ambiguity.

*Source:* Adapted from Newburg and Waldman (2006), *Why We Believe What We Believe*. Free Press.

of forming a realistic and accurate perception of an individual, as is illustrated in the following example.

During a coffee break at a Midwestern university, three Asian American women employed by a student services office reminisced about their undergraduate days. They complained about how difficult math classes had been and laughed as they recalled some of their coping strategies. The student services director, an African American, walked into the room, overheard what they were saying, and interrupted their discussion to chastise them for "putting yourselves down." He said they should stop. He also said he was disappointed in them and departed.

After the director left, the three women initially were too surprised to speak. Once they started talking, they realized they were angry because his comments suggested that he assumed they all had good math skills and were not being honest when discussing their lack of math ability. The women had thought the director viewed them as individuals, and they were angry and hurt when they realized that he had allowed a stereotype to distort his perception of them. They were especially upset because they had not expected a person of color to believe in a stereotype—even a positive one about the math abilities of Asians—but apparently he did.

One of the ways that positive or negative stereotypes are reinforced is a result of **confirmation bias**. Newberg and Waldman (2006) describe *confirmation bias* as the tendency to accept information reinforcing one's beliefs while ignoring information contradicting those beliefs. It is a bias with a long history in human attitudes and behavior. In 1620, philosopher Francis Bacon observed: "the human understanding, once it has adopted an opinion, collects any instances that confirm it, and though the contrary instances may be more numerous and more weighty, it either does not notice them or else rejects them, in order that the opinion will remain unshaken" (Mlodinow, 2008, p. 189).

## How does confirmation bias influence people, and can it be overcome?

Confirmation bias not only causes people to look for evidence that reinforces their views, it also causes them to interpret ambiguous information in a way that