Part I

Introduction

1

Cultural Diversity in the United States

Ida Susser

In an effort to contribute towards constructive social change, this volume offers an anthropological analysis that reexamines the social and political history of the United States, and attempts to provide a grounded historical context for concepts such as cultural pluralism, multiculturalism, and cultural diversity. Chapters here demonstrate the heterogeneity present in the United States from the first settlers and examine the changing definitions of race and ethnicity in the construction of a nation. We aim to confront national stereotypes and critically review commonly accepted images with respect to nation and identity. The collected work represents an effort to address public discourse and public policy concerning race, class, nation, and gender in the United States in order to inform ongoing dialogue and debate from an anthropological perspective.

American anthropologists have more legitimacy intervening in the workings of their own nation/state than in advocating change in societies where they are not citizens and are often members of a privileged elite. This makes it incumbent upon U.S. researchers to elaborate their findings in terms of the implications for people in this society. Indeed, as global interrelations intensify, studying U.S. society, power, and inequality will have major ramifications for our understanding of events and experiences for people in many other national contexts. Thus, this volume represents a concerted effort to use the tools of anthropological analysis to illuminate contested issues such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity in the United States and to provide a framework for the understanding of inequality.

Anthropologists have begun to reexamine the representations of nationalism, ethnicity, imperialism, and race in the United States in our own discipline, including who is cited and remembered and who ignored and forgotten (Vincent 1990; di Leonardo 1998; Harrison 1995, 1998; Gailey 1998; Brodkin 1998; Baker and Patterson 1994). Benefiting from such revisionist history, this book examines the creation both in the imagination and in the establishment of state power of what we tend to view unproblematically as the United States.

The historical processes which connect the United States to world capitalism have long been transparent to historians and anthropologists (e.g. Hobsbawm 1994; Williams 1966; Wolf 1982; Hall 1991; Nash 1981; Leeds 1994; Mintz

1985). However, their work concerning the turbulent interconnections of trade and colonialism has not been fully incorporated into our understandings of the generation of inequality and difference, in terms of race, nationality, religion, household, and gender in the United States today. The concept of the United States itself has a history of shifting frontiers and contested boundaries. Borders between the United States, Canada, and Mexico, created historically through the competition of colonial powers, have been intermittently porous in response to shifts in the need for labor, political contingencies, and unequal development. The global connections of advanced capitalism and such corresponding government policies as the North American Free Trade Agreement are more recent ways in which we have to reconsider the changing boundaries of the United States and the space that we describe (Fernandez-Kelly 1998; Gledhill 1998; Gutmann 1998; Smith 1998).

As we are all aware, the United States was founded on a history of conquest, colonial exploitation, patriarchal assumptions, labor migration, and slavery. From the initial formation of the thirteen states divisions emerged with respect to religion, language, and cultural practice. Patterns of landownership, slavery and class, definitions of democracy, and the expectations of civil society differed by state and region and certainly differed dramatically from the United States of today (Schudson 1999). Unifying myths and practices have been constructed along with the imposition of federal and state control. From the first, the nation depended on the recreation of identity, possibly based on participation in, and powerfully recreated by, memories of the American Revolution. Nevertheless, as played out in blood and suffering in the Civil War, inequality was always intertwined with socially constructed differences of color and also justified by constraints and discrimination with respect to gender, immigration, and indigenous peoples (see Chapters 2, 8, and 25, this volume; Kessler-Harris 1982; Brodkin 1998). This book examines the long-term processes and struggles which revolved around civil rights, access to employment and national institutions. As several chapters demonstrate, government policies, with respect to documentation, immigration quotas, quarantine, legal definitions of indentured servitude, the land rights of indigenous peoples, and slavery were important determinants of differentiation. Such historical processes limited who was officially granted full national rights and set the stage for continuing patterns of inequality as well as the emergence of social movements and identity politics.

Within contemporary identity groups of the 1980s and 1990s we find a mix of nationalism, feminism, religious community, and revolutionary fervor. But, as many have noted, history is frequently oversimplified when viewed only as the politics of identity. The complex interweaving of race, gender, immigration, class, and political opportunity needs to be addressed, as well as the significance of agency in a society in which both continuity and change are endemic.

Throughout the history of the United States, populations have struggled with inequality and its concomitant and changing definitions of difference. At times groups have crossed ethnic and nationality lines to combat class inequalities. Other groups have constructed communal identities which have served as a base from which to struggle against inequities related to class but fueled also by racial or religious discrimination. Although many of the craft unions of the late 19th

century were based on the exclusion of new immigrant workers, a few earlier worker organizations formed in the 1860s included black as well as white workers. In the early 1900s, in the frequently described cauldron of the Lower East Side of New York City, and the working-class mill towns of New England, the formation of unions among Jewish, Italian, and Irish populations was based upon, but reached beyond, ethnic and religious identity. At the same time, many worker organizations enforced black/white and gender distinctions which mirrored those of their employers (Gutman 1976; Montgomery 1979; Brodkin 1998).

Analyses in this volume explore the formation of social movements and the construction of political identities as they changed in relation to state policies and shifts in social relations over time.

The social construction of gender and the position of women in U.S. society has been contested since the creation of the United States as a nation. Women with many different ethnic and racial identities have fought for equal employment opportunities, reproductive freedom, freedom of sexual orientation, and against sexual harassment and battering (Bookman and Morgen 1987; Sacks and Remy 1984; Mullings 1997; Gailey 1998). Historically, women have also worked for their voices to be heard in the public discourse with respect to inequality. In the 1920s and 1930s educated women worked to build community centers and training programs for working-class women of all groups. Undeniably, the category "woman" is fractured by class and the social construction of race. Thus, African American women have battled jointly with African American men for equal employment opportunities and separately from men for a Black feminist public voice (Mullings 1997; Collins 1990). In this volume we examine the issue of women's place and gender within the context of the creation of the state and shifting patterns of inequality.

Communal identities are constructed and remade in the battle for recognition of humanity. Cultural studies has elucidated connections between popular culture and the creation of communal identities of resistance (Hall 1991; Williams 1982). Musical narratives contained in Rap music, opposition to school rules, and even failure at work and at school have been interpreted as signifying modes of resistance in advanced capitalism (Willis 1977; Bourgois 1995; Hebdige 1979; see also Chapter 20, this volume).

Nevertheless, postmodernism has taught us to be wary of defining the world only in terms of narratives of power or its opposition in resistance. Robin Kelly argues that narrow emphasis on the glaring inequities of class and race risks ignoring the creativity and agency inherent in the art, dance, and social vitality of the urban poor of the United States. In fact, a focus on misery, poverty, and crisis alone contributes to the objectification of a population (Somers 1997; Kelley 1997; Hebdige 1979). Such critiques direct researchers to a more open-ended approach to the analysis of class, difference, and inequality which includes human emotions, manners and representations, and enjoyment as well as misery (see Chapters 18 and 20, this volume; Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1990; Stoler 1991; Roseberry 1997). We cannot, however, neglect an analysis of the commodification of pleasure, such as the sale of cigarettes through the targeting of minorities and young women, nor the structuring of the state with its

policies which may either reinforce or reduce patterns of inequality (Baer et al. 1997). To be sure, family, race, religion, gender, and sexuality are all powerful symbolic categories, which generate human warmth, happiness, caring, and communal solidarity. They are, as well, building blocks for the maintenance of inequality and our analyses will fail if they do not integrate these two crucial perspectives. Nor should it be forgotten that inequality can be measured at times in the silencing and invisibility of whole populations, such as happened with the working poor and homeless in the United States of the 1990s (Susser 1996).

A crucial limitation of postmodern analysis arises around the concept of "hybridity." While attempting to address the reality of the changing identities available to an individual, this concept negates the possibility of a unified long-term political identity leading to agency and political change (Harris 1993; Nash 1997; Lilla 1998). In other words, if individuals are viewed as chameleon products of their historical situations, there is no place in the analytic framework from which to understand how a group of people might build a critique of the society in which they find themselves. For example, Nelson Mandela, who clearly represents what many might understand as a hybrid personality, held a consistent and lifelong set of beliefs which involved a critique of class and race oppression and was crucial in the transformation of the South African state. Born to Xhosa chiefly status but trained as a lawyer in a South African law school in British constitutional law, Mandela risked capital punishment and death in prison, in the cause of the poor black population of South Africa. The concept of hybridity emphasizes Mandela's conflicting western and traditional identities, elite versus commoner status, to the detriment of a recognition of the possibility of his long-term political commitment to constitutional freedom and equality for all people.

Similarly, the concept of "discourse" generates a diffuse and unidentifiable context of power just as "public culture" implies an amorphous undifferentiated arena which has no place for the significance of collective action or human agency in the search for equality and human rights. While we build on the insights of cultural analysis, a constant tension and contradiction arises between exposing the roots of terminology and unexamined beliefs, and addressing the real sources of power and inequality in the United States as represented in the ever-merging major corporations, powerful, wealthy lobbies, and associated government executives (Roseberry 1997).

For these reasons, this volume presents several perspectives, many voices and contrasting foci of study. Since much of the public debate concerning education, health, and other dimensions of inequality in the United States centers on questions of biological and cultural difference, we draw here on the broad and interconnected range of anthropological knowledge. We examine controversial concepts such as race and gender from the perspective of the fossil record, genetics, patterns of health and disease, as well as archaeological evidence and linguistic variation. Chapters consider the social construction of race in the history of physical and medical anthropology. They note the research in these fields that shows the lack of foundation in skeletal and genetic data for race as defined in the United States. As Loring Brace and Russell Nelson show, even the term

"Native Americans" has no clear meaning in the fossil record. There were several migrations to North America and the physical characteristics of the different populations that journeyed across the Bering Strait were strikingly varied. Since in their definitions of their topics anthropologists contributed to the image of Native Americans as a separate "race" and exotic "others," it is crucial that we redress this misrepresentation in our current reviews of U.S. anthropology.

Although professional anthropologists have studied the United States only since the late 19th century, most anthropologists concentrated first on Native Americans and later on the experiences of isolated ethnic groups, most recently defined as "others." Yet there was also research conducted against the grain, concerned with the destructive policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Lesser 1933; Mooney 1896) and confronting ethnic, class, and racial stereotypes (for review and discussion of some of these works, see Lewis 1998). W. E. B. Du Bois conducted a neighborhood ethnography among African Americans in Philadelphia – hardly an exotic and mysterious group. Pioneering work addressing factory employment, class, and ethnicity was conducted by W. L. Warner during the Great Depression. At the same time, U.S. scholars such as Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Ruth Landes, Gene Weltfish, Alexander Lesser, and Allison Davis intervened in public debate concerning inequality, race, and gender.

In the postwar period of the 1950s, much of the anthropological research both by American and British scholars in urban third world settings, itself a product of the independence movements and reevaluations precipitated by World War II, laid the groundwork for conducting ethnographic work in complex societies and for discounting the "exotic" in the definitions of appropriate populations and theoretical formulations (Steward 1956; Wolf 1956; Wilson 1941; Gluckman 1955; Cohen 1969; Peattie 1970; Watson 1958; Magubane 1979; Vincent 1982).

Later, the political turmoil of the 1960s precipitated a reevaluation of anthropological scholarship. This was signaled by the publication of such works as *Reinventing Anthropology* (Hymes 1969) and Vine Deloria's (1969) *Custer Died for Your Sins*, and the appearance of such new journals as *Critique of Anthropology*. The political demands of this period for civil rights, women's rights and Native American reparations led the way for research concerning power, culture, and social movements within the United States.

Researchers, many of whom tried to act as advocates for oppressed peoples, became aware of the contradictory role of anthropologists as the "handmaidens of imperialism" (Gough 1968; Caulfield 1969; Asad 1973). They were obliged to recognize that the discipline's excessive focus on colonial populations was itself a product of global inequality. Either the discipline itself was moribund or, alternatively and more constructively, the method and theory of anthropology might serve to illuminate the experience of global inequality, class, and nation in the centers of the capitalist "north"/"west" (as we might designate the industrialized world of the 1970s).

In addressing the centers of global capital, researchers had to confront a long-standing perception in anthropology that research "at home" in the United States (unless it were among Native Americans or small communities such as

the Amish), does not challenge scholars to negotiate cultural difference and to come to reevaluate ethnocentric and atheoretical approaches to society. Such a view is based on a particularly geocentric, static, and idealized hegemonic definition of culture as well as on a distancing and hierarchical vision of a mysterious, unchanging, and exotic "other." In this volume, theoretical arguments and ethnographic cases challenge this perception. As a long lineage of "invisible" anthropologists have demonstrated since the 19th century, U.S. research has been equally or more substantively and theoretically challenging as research conducted elsewhere (Vincent 1990).

In recognizing that anthropology cannot depend on any exclusive claim to foreign lands or strange behavior and, thus, in confronting the vacuousness of the concept of the exotic "other," the anthropology of the United States has generated self-conscious and far-reaching theoretical controversy.

In terms of cultural challenges which may illuminate ethnocentrism, crossing class boundaries can lead to cultural dissonance as challenging and illuminating as crossing national or ethnic boundaries. Indeed, current literature attests that crossing national or ethnic boundaries in search of difference does not necessarily lead to an understanding of silenced and subordinated populations. Writers such as Gayatri Spivak argue that previously colonized subaltern populations have been deprived of a voice in the analysis of their own societies. In fact, the assumptions of an approach which insists on the identity and mystery of the "other" reduces our vision of humans to impenetrable individuals lacking the ability to understand experiences beyond our own. As critical research in Africa and later subaltern studies in India have taught us, only if we consider frameworks of colonialism and class in the hierarchy of relations between researcher and the populations studied can we begin to penetrate this silence.

Clearly, traversing national boundaries in search of cultural contrast while remaining in the restricted environment of what nowadays is recognized as a global elite may be less illuminating than studying people, advantaged and disadvantaged, within the same nation (Appadurai 1990). In fact, contemporary global elites are not defined or limited by region. In advanced capitalist society in both "first" and "third" world cities, local poverty can be found side by side with mobile international wealth. Similarly, older distinctions of industrial versus non-industrial nations no longer have the same salience (Castells 1996). Countries emerging from half a century of communist rule may be more similar to one another in their cultural constructions than they are to their neighboring capitalist states. For these reasons, it is no longer reasonable, if it ever was, to view culture in any holistic sense in terms of area and language without considering class, political relations within global capitalism and other forms of inequality.

Thus, in contemporary societies in many parts of the world, the wealthy and the poor are separated less by geography than by divisions of education, employment, information, and capital (Castells 1996). While populations are shifting in response to changing global economies, many migrants remain in similar relations of inequality as they search for new entrées for educational opportunities, employment, and political representation. Anthropological approaches have begun to take account of these transformations of society and

culture in studies of immigration, transnationalism, and diaspora. This book provides the groundwork for examining the impact of such changing global relations in the centers of capital.

In crossing boundaries, the anthropology of the United States must offer an approach that builds on, but also enriches, the understanding of other disciplines. Such ethnographic research is concerned with the construction of culture within historical and political processes. In this volume, we first dissect American culture. We trace the historical creation of national identity, citizenship, gender divisions, sexual orientation, race, and the changing nature of class consciousness. We examine hegemonic constructions of whiteness, considering the invisibility of the white poor and the scapegoating of the racially defined poor. We examine biologically defined issues of health, aging, and gender and demonstrate the inseparability of such apparently/inherently biological considerations from the social construction of categories and groups in the United States. We present this research in an effort to reopen questions of equity and human rights as we enter the third millennium.

To conceptualize events in contemporary America requires consideration of the shift from modern industrialization to what some call the information society, flexible accumulation, or, simply, advanced capitalism. The partial welfare state, created in the United States in the first half of this century has been under concentrated assault in recent decades. A detailed understanding of the processes of change in global and national political economies is central to concomitant shifts in our concepts of family, gender, leisure, and even knowledge and how we seek it. As the chapters here demonstrate, these changes have led already to redefinitions of race, citizenship, and diversity. They underlie changing policies concerning immigration and have to be taken into account in registering the experiences of new immigrant populations and the entitlements they are or are not permitted to access. These processes of change have been documented in their impact on urban space and the increasing racial and class segregation of U.S. neighborhoods, schools, and public spaces (Smith 1996; Marcuse 1996). As I note later in this volume, in Chapter 14, on urban poverty, over the past twenty years American ethnographers have begun to produce an overall analysis of the shaping of people's lives within the changing patterns of industrialization and deindustrialization (e.g. Susser 1982; Vesperi 1986; Zavella 1987; Lamphere 1987; Sacks 1988; Pappas 1989; Nash 1989; Bourgois 1995; Stack 1996; Sharff 1997; Sanjek 1998).

Following Thomas Patterson's historical introduction to the political economy of diversity in the United States, Part II of this volume considers the untenability of race as a biological category through Alan Goodman's discussion of the problem of racial interpretation of skeletal remains and an analysis of the fossil record in the Americas by Loring Brace and Russell Nelson. Cheryl Mwaria disentangles the genetic variation of disease from popular categories of race, and Merrill Singer documents medical anthropological approaches to diversity and delineates the connection between patterns of disease and social inequality.

Part III begins with Lee Baker's examination of the social construction of race in the United States and of ongoing conflicts over the interpretation of constitutional rights. Sally Merry develops a processual analysis of immigration, citi-

zenship, and the legal creation of "racialized identities." Thomas Patterson's discussion of the archaeological record of the Americas brings with it a history of imperial states, gender inequality, and patterns of cultural resistance. The findings of historical archaeology with respect to the confinement of women to the domestic sphere, emerging class divisions, and the undocumented lives of slaves in settler society are highlighted by Elizabeth Scott.

In Part IV, focusing on contemporary conflicts, Thomas Biolsi explores the contested issues of land rights and sovereignty for Native Americans. Bonnie Urciuoli examines the social context of language variation among African Americans, Spanish–English bilingual populations and Native Americans. Drawing on ethnographic research among documented and undocumented Latino food store workers, June Nash delineates the relationship between the new immigration and resurgent labor struggles. Inequality and representations of diversity in U.S. cities are the concerns of my essay. Kenneth Guest and Peter Kwong revisit theories of ethnic enclaves using New York's Chinatown to illuminate class divisions within culturally defined populations. Chapters by Lynn Bolles, Michael Winkelman and Maria Vesperi analyze issues of family structure, psychocultural models and aging with respect to the experience of inequality, diversity and the dynamic creation of culture in U.S. society. In the last chapter of Part IV, Jeff Maskovsky analyzes the intersections between sexual minorities, queer theory and the significance of class in the U.S.

In Part V, two chapters challenge predominant theoretical perspectives on diversity in the United States, integrating current analyses of class, race, and cultural identity. Douglas Foley and Kirby Moss show how postmodernism and cultural studies ("post-Marxism") underlie and illuminate recent ethnographic research. Karen Brodkin investigates the underpinnings of the dualistic breakdown of race in the United States, as well as the ways in which Western social theory confronted or incorporated racial stereotypes.

Steven Arvizu introduces Part VI with a discussion of how an anthropological understanding of diversity can be integrated into the educational curriculum. Diego Vigil and Curtis Roseman outline a method for teaching students to recognize the significance of place and migration within varying conceptions of ethnicity. Ruben Mendoza analyzes the social values that underlie the shaping of museum exhibits and develops methods or teaching students to critically analyze such presentations. Judith Goode discusses the history of immigration, the significance of class divisions, and the changing constructions of nationality and ethnicity in the United States, countering essentialist notions common among students. Many chapters provide annotated bibliographies, recommendations of specific approaches, readings and films, as a way to introduce textured and politically controversial analysis in the classroom. In her Afterword, Louise Lamphere suggests ways in which this volume moves us toward a processual analysis of the United States and the contemporary politics of culture.

The population of the United States faces changes already in motion. As the structure of employment becomes less secure and public assistance is no longer assured, as corporate for-profit health care determines life chances, education is increasingly privatized, investment in public needs decreases, and ideas of legitimate dependency are reconsidered, we run the risk of constructing hostile iden-

tity politics and categorizing population groups such as immigrants or the underclass as the source of the nation's problems (Jones and Susser 1993; and Chapters 6, 13, 14, and 15, this volume). However we understand the transformation of the country, in terms of flexible accumulation or informational technology, it is evident that the particular configurations of family policy, education, health care and employment that are currently emerging differ in significant ways from those currently being reconstructed among European nations or other centers of global capital, such as Japan or Hong Kong. In some western European nations, such as France and Sweden, increased wealth is being translated into broader social services, day care and educational opportunities for most of the population, accompanied by new forms of hostility to immigrants. In the United States and in Great Britain we have witnessed a reduction of social supports and increasing inequality for the population in general, also accompanied in many situations by increasing hostility to new immigrants, and in the United States, specifically, racism. Only when the origins of inequality and the roots of diversity and common ground are clearly exposed can people in the United States begin to work together to construct a more humane social policy.

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