

Introduction

Evidently, Too

I opened Volume 1 of *Discrimination in the United States* by asserting that the vast majority of evidence used to ascertain the effect of race discrimination on the success of blacks and the effect of sex discrimination on the success of women is, in a word, irrelevant. I noted that the evidence was silent not only concerning the impact of discrimination on blacks and women but also on the important question of whether whites and males gain or lose through the operation of antiblack and antiwoman discrimination. I then provided an orientation to the first volume that endeavored to encourage readers to hold off on evaluating the analysis until its full expression could be conveyed. My concern was that the socioemotional challenge of reading about discrimination, and a tendency to almost immediately begin to assess what the analysis *seems* to imply for one's own character, would derail the investigation before it could even begin. Thus, I asked the reader to delay evaluation until the framework could be conveyed.

Volume 1 conveyed the framework, the epistemological foundation of the analysis. The framework is only the first part of a three-part analysis. Using the framework established in Volume 1, this volume presents the results of an empirical investigation of the effects of race and sex discrimination on the experience and success of black males, white males, black females, and white females.¹

1. In the 1970s analysts regarded sex as an immutable biological construct and gender as a mutable social construct. However, more recent theorizing has revealed the

Scope Conditions and Clarifications

To aid the presentation of the empirical analysis, it will be useful to clarify three matters up front.

First, this project is not about inequality; it is about discrimination. Discrimination is one phenomenon that may or may not produce inequality, but focusing on inequality obfuscates the analysis of discrimination. Thus, it is imperative that the focus on discrimination be maintained.

Second, discrimination may touch persons on the basis of race, sex, sexual preference, religion, and other factors. The empirical analysis here focuses on race and sex because of data limitations. But it is imperative that I convey that this is not a study of African Americans or women in the United States; it is, instead, the study of a social phenomenon: discrimination. Therefore, although the discussion highlights sex and race discrimination to the exclusion of other dimensions of discrimination, one has to start somewhere, and I have chosen for various reasons, related to my own skill set and available resources, to start here. However, the foundation on which this investigation stands may be used to study other dimensions of discrimination, and I believe such work will be essential for analysts to ultimately obtain an accurate understanding of the operation and effects of discrimination.

Third, my plea for suspending the question of individuals character was a necessary requirement for the framework to have any chance of being considered on its own terms. More important, however, is that this plea is essential to the success of the ultimate aim of the project: to reconfigure our solutions to the problem of discrimination, as citizens and human beings. This aim presupposes that discrimination is not primarily about individuals. Thus, to accomplish this aim, at its core the analysis cannot be primarily about the actions or character of individuals. Indeed, a major motivation for the framework proposed herein is the belief that we have created major problems by focusing on individuals. That focus has animated the legal analyses of discrimination, and it has infected the social scientific analysis of the effects of discrimination. If we are to ever break the current impasse and craft promising analytic approaches, inclusive political strategies, and transformative public policies, we must free ourselves from this individualistic perspective. *Discrimination in the United States* constitutes a systematic effort to do so; what follows is a brief guide to that enterprise.

weaknesses of this approach, such that now even the existence of a distinction between the two terms is questioned by some analysts. Because of this development in social theory, and because sometimes the term *sex* may be jarring or confusing, I use the terms *sex* and *gender* interchangeably.

Plan of the Work

As noted, the first volume described the new era of race and gender relations that closed the twentieth century and has, so far, continued into the new millennium. There I showed how the old perspectives on discrimination were crafted for a reality that no longer holds and how analysts' efforts to address the well-known problems with those perspectives systematically fall short. I then crafted a definition of discrimination devised for social scientific analyses and illustrated how this definition is both consistent with the reality of discrimination and appropriate for social scientific research. Titled *Theorizing Discrimination in an Era of Contested Prejudice*, the first volume concerned epistemology, focusing on theories through which discrimination has been seen and constructing a strategy to estimate discrimination effects.

In this volume, I use the definition of discrimination developed in Volume 1 to estimate the effects of race and sex discrimination in the United States. This volume presents a series of empirical analyses of discrimination effects in education, labor force participation, job quality, earnings, and mortality, thereby addressing every major phase of the socioeconomic life cycle as well as the important final outcome of death.

In future work I will use the vantage point afforded by the theorized view of discrimination and the findings on its effects to critique both existing public policy on discrimination, racial inequality, and gender inequality and the political strategies adopted by many who seek to redress the past and contemporary wrongs of discrimination. I will offer new policy options and discuss a range of strategies that might prove successful. That work, unapologetically normative in its focus, will close with reflections on building the just society.

Throughout the many pieces of the project, the aforementioned plea remains relevant. Thus, I renew my request that we suspend the evaluation of what the project seems to mean for one's character. Even now, in my mind and heart no one's character is at issue. The social world in which we live together is.