

## I

## Trust, Diversity, and Segregation

Walid was born in France and went to a French high school. He will show you his French driving license and even his French identity card. But ask him what his identity is and he will say “93.” ... “Nine Three” – the first two digits of the postal code spanning the roughest suburbs on Paris’s northeastern fringe – stands for unemployment and endless rows of housing projects. It stands for chronically high crime rates, teenage gang wars and a large immigrant community.... “The question of being French is irrelevant – what’s in a piece of paper?” said Walid, 19, who is of Algerian descent, dismissively putting his identification card back into his jeans pocket. “I’m from the ghetto, I’m from 93, end of story.” ... “We are French, but we also feel like foreigners compared to the real French,” said Mamadou, whose father came to France from Mali decades ago and married his mother, a French woman. Who, according to him, are the “real” French? The answer comes without hesitation and to vigorous nodding by a group of his friends: “Those with white skin and blue eyes.”

Bennhold (2005)

Whence all this passion toward conformity anyway? – diversity is the word. Let man keep his many parts and you’ll have no tyrant states. Why, if they follow this conformity business they’ll end up by forcing me, an invisible man, to become white, which is not a color but the lack of one. Must I strive toward colorlessness? ... America is woven of many strands. I would recognize them and let it so remain.

Ralph Ellison (1952, 499) *Invisible Man*

When our son was six years old, my wife and I took him to spend a weekend on a farm in Pennsylvania Dutch country, just outside the city of Lancaster. We woke up early in the morning so that he could help milk the cows. The evening before, at dinner, the farmer told us that his

daughter had made a new friend at school that day. “Is she black or is she white?” the farmer asked his daughter and the girl replied, “I don’t remember. I’ll look tomorrow.”

The farmer’s daughter was color-blind: the background of her new friend didn’t matter to her. She seemed unconcerned, but was unlikely to report back that her new friend was an African-American. Only 3 percent of Lancaster’s population is African-American. The metropolitan area is mostly white and African-Americans are far less likely to come into contact with whites in Lancaster than in most metropolitan areas. The elementary schools are at least as segregated as the larger community.<sup>1</sup>

I grew up in the 1950s and 1960s in a more diverse city – Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson’s African-American population grew from 6 percent in 1950 to 15 percent in 1960, increasing dramatically thereafter (New Jersey Office of State Planning, 1988, 41). I remember only one African-American student among the 600 or so students in Public School 26, which I attended in the 1950s.<sup>2</sup> My high school, Eastside High School (which featured a principal named Joe Clark who kept order with a baseball bat in both real life and the 1989 movie *Lean on Me*), was far more diverse. African-Americans comprised 46 percent of the school’s 2,100 students in the late 1960s, but whites and blacks mostly passed each other in the halls. Classes were largely segregated in tracks supposedly determined by ability, though African-Americans saw such divisions as a method of enforcing segregation (Norwood, 1975, 188). Paterson’s schools in the 1970s were highly segregated: three-quarters of American

<sup>1</sup> The percent of African-Americans ranks 49th of 237 metropolitan areas (data from Echenique and Fryer, 2007, available at <http://www.hss.caltech.edu/~fede/segregation/>). Lancaster’s diversity score is .469, ranking 63rd of 325; its segregation measure (multigroup entropy) is .227, ranking 234th of 325 areas (from Iceland and Weinberg with Steinmetz, 2002; see Chapter 2, n. 11 for the data link). The probability of interaction between groups (here whites and African-Americans) is measured by  $P^*$ , which estimates the likelihood that two randomly selected people come from the same group (Lieberson, 1961). The Lancaster area has a  $P^*$  for blacks and whites of .627, which ranks 176th of 239 areas (with higher scores indicating greater isolation). The data are available at <http://www.s4.brown.edu/cen2000/WholePop/WPdownload.html>. Lancaster ranks 81st of 329 areas in black-white school segregation, with an index of dissimilarity (see Chapter 2) of .655, which is nevertheless very high and considerably above the median of .53 (see Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor, 1997, 462 on the range of the index and [http://www.s4.brown.edu/cen2000/SchoolPop/SPsort/sort\\_d1.html](http://www.s4.brown.edu/cen2000/SchoolPop/SPsort/sort_d1.html) for the metropolitan area rankings); 2.9 percent of white students are exposed to African-Americans. Slightly less than half of African-Americans are exposed to whites, down from 63 percent in 1970 (<http://www.s4.brown.edu/schoolsegregation/schoolsegdatapage/codes/msaschseg.asp>).

<sup>2</sup> The figure comes from the school, which I called on August 16, 2011. The administrator said that the figure has remained mostly constant over time.

*Trust, Diversity, and Segregation*

3

schools had more racial diversity than did Paterson's.<sup>3</sup> This reflected the continuing racial tensions in this mid-sized American city of 150,000 people, conflicts that spilled over into the school system (Norwood, 1975, chs. 9–10).

The farmer's daughter was far more likely to see an African-American on television than at school. Kids' television programming has become a virtual rainbow.<sup>4</sup> This is a sea change from the 1950s and 1960s, when children's programming was far more central to television in the United States (and elsewhere). The airwaves were filled with lots of smiling hosts and child actors – and virtually all of them were white.<sup>5</sup> Occasionally I wondered why our school and neighborhood was almost completely white, but our lower middle-class neighborhood didn't seem so different from what I saw in the early days of television. What we see on television today – and in the entertainment world more generally and in sports – has become a vision of what we think we ought to be.

American society has grown more diverse: minorities made up barely more than 10 percent of Americans in 1950. Today more than one-third of Americans are non-whites. American cities have become less racially

<sup>3</sup> The diversity index (see n. 1) between whites and minorities for 1970 is .626 for the Paterson school system, slightly lower than that for contemporary Lancaster but still greater than three-quarters of other municipalities for more contemporary data from 1989 (see n. 1 for the comparative data and <http://www.s4.brown.edu/schoolsegregation/schoolsegdatapage/codes/schoolseg.asp> for the Paterson data). No data are available prior to 1970. Paterson's school segregation is lower than larger cities in the 1960s (Farley and Tauber, 1974, 895–6). This may reflect the smaller number of public schools in the city rather than real interaction between people of different races and ethnicities.

<sup>4</sup> The *Mickey Mouse Club* of the 1970s included several minority cast members ([http://www.retrojunk.com/details\\_tvshows/2865-new-mickey-mouse-club-70s-series/](http://www.retrojunk.com/details_tvshows/2865-new-mickey-mouse-club-70s-series/)). The major contemporary program in the United States is the Public Broadcasting System's *Sesame Street* (<http://www.sesamestreet.org/onair/cast>), which likely has the most diverse cast of any television program in the United States. Primetime programming also has far greater diversity.

<sup>5</sup> The most famous in the United States was the *Mickey Mouse Club*, aired daily on the ABC Network. The adult hosts and the young "Mousketeers" were all white (see [http://www.tvacres.com/child\\_mouseketeers.htm](http://www.tvacres.com/child_mouseketeers.htm) and <http://www.originalmmc.com/cast.html>). Minorities who did get on these shows were classic stereotypes such as "Gunga Ram," a young Indian elephant trainer on NBC's *Andy's Gang* ([http://www.bygonetv.com/shows/andys\\_gang/index.htm](http://www.bygonetv.com/shows/andys_gang/index.htm)) and the American Indian "Princess Summerfallwinterspring" on NBC's *Howdy Doody Show*. Even more "mainstream" minorities such as Jews took on Anglicized names for their children's shows (Irving Pincus was "Pinky Lee," "Andy Devine" was actually on Jeremiah Schwartz, both on NBC, which was owned by the Sarnoff family, themselves Jewish). Adult programming was not much more diverse: The only African-American with a primetime network show was singer Nat "King" Cole, whose NBC series lasted one year because it could not find sponsors (<http://www.jazzonthe tube.com/videos/black-history-month/the-nat-king-cole>).

segregated in the past few decades, but the gains have been small since the 1950s (Lichter, 1985).<sup>6</sup>

Our children are especially likely to see people of different backgrounds primarily on television (or in other forms of entertainment and sports) than in daily life: 44 percent of students in American public schools are minorities. Yet “our two largest minority populations, Latinos and African Americans, are more segregated than they have been since the death of Martin Luther King more than forty years ago [in 1968]” (Orfield, 2009, 6). There are more and more minorities all around us, but we are more likely to see them on the wide screen than in our neighborhoods.

When we live apart from people who are different from ourselves, we are unlikely to trust them – or to trust people more generally. When you live apart from people of different backgrounds, you are more likely to develop negative stereotypes of “other groups” than to trust people who are more likely to be strangers than close friends. Contact with people of different backgrounds can lead you to a broader sense of trust – generalized trust – but simple contact is not enough. You must interact with people of different backgrounds on the basis of equality (which children generally do), and do so often. Frequent contact, in turn, depends upon where you live. If you live apart from people of diverse backgrounds, you are unlikely to develop the strong ties needed to build trust. Segregated communities separate people and breed mistrust. A Patersonian said of the city in the late 1960s: “It don’t matter, white, black, or Puerto Rican, there’s no unity. Nobody sees nothing, nobody helps nobody, nobody trusts nobody” (quoted in Norwood, 1975, 68).

The farmer’s daughter was a prototypical generalized truster. It didn’t matter to her whether her new friend was black or white. Even when she would notice her friend’s race the next day, it would not make any difference. Yet she is an anomaly – living apart from minorities didn’t shape her worldview. And if her friend turned out to be African-American, she would be an anomaly in another sense: our friends tend to look like (and have interests) very much like ourselves. Whites hang out with whites, blacks with blacks, Jews with Jews, Muslims with Muslims. So our contacts largely reinforce our sense of in-group identity.

Believing that “most people can be trusted” is atypical – at least in most countries. For some, it seems strange that we might ever consider

<sup>6</sup> See <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jun/10/nation/la-na-census-20100611>, [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/1216\\_census\\_frey.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/1216_census_frey.aspx), and for data on racial diversity, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html>.

*Trust, Diversity, and Segregation*

5

trusting people we don't know, at least until we have substantial evidence that they are trustworthy (Gambetta, 1988, 217; Hardin, 2004). Even the late President Ronald Reagan was too forgiving when he said of the former Soviet Union "trust but verify." Most of us are not willing to make the inferential leap of faith that "most people can be trusted." Across 69 countries in the 1981, 1990, and 1995 World Values Surveys,<sup>7</sup> only 30 percent of respondents agreed with this statement. In only five countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Canada) did a majority of respondents give a trusting response.

As far back as Virgil, Trojans were warned to "beware of Greeks bearing gifts."<sup>8</sup> Our parents told us not to take candy from strangers. We feel more comfortable with people like ourselves. African-Americans call each other "brothers" and "sisters." Jews refer to each other as "members of the tribe." The Mafia calls its members "the family." Outsiders are "the other," not part of our community.

We are programmed to look out for our own kind first and to be wary of others (Brewer, 1979). Messick and Brewer (1983, 27–8, italics in original) review experiments on cooperation and find that "members of an in-group tend to perceive other in-group members in generally favorable terms, particularly as being *trustworthy, honest, and cooperative*." The Maghribi of northern Africa relied on their extended Jewish clan – and other Jews in the Mediterranean area – to establish a profitable trading network in the twelfth century (Greif, 1993). Models from evolutionary game theory suggest that favoring people like ourselves is our best strategy (Hamilton, 1964, 21; Masters, 1989, 169; Trivers, 1971, 48). For most of us, the default position is to put our trust *only* in people like ourselves – what Yamigishi and Yamigishi (1994) call *particularized trust*.

Why, then, do almost a third of people throughout the world throw caution to the wind and trust others? What does it mean to say that "most people can be trusted"? Where does trust come from and why are we so reluctant to put our faith in people unlike ourselves? I consider

<sup>7</sup> I don't use later WVS modules because of some puzzling results for trust and other variables. Most notably, the 2000 wave shows that 39 percent of Canadians believe that most people can be trusted, compared to 54 percent in 1995 – and in three other surveys conducted in Canada in 2000 (the Canadian National Election Study, the Quebec Referendum Study, and the Economy, Security, Community Survey). Iran has a higher level of trust than almost any other nation – tied with Norway – and Indonesia, Vietnam, and Belarus (among other nations) have higher levels of trust than the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Germany. Details of other anomalies are available on request. I also exclude China (see Uslaner, 2002, 226, n. 8).

<sup>8</sup> See [http://german.about.com/library/blidioms\\_greeks.htm](http://german.about.com/library/blidioms_greeks.htm).

these questions, discussing different conceptions of trust, the foundations of each type of trust, and the relationship of faith in others to diversity and to residential segregation. I then consider the cases I examine and discuss the route ahead.

In contrast to the view that contact with people of different backgrounds leads to greater trust, some argue that we turn away from people who are different from ourselves because we fear that increasing diversity threatens social cohesion. Living among people who are different from ourselves leads us to be less likely to trust others and to have lower levels of civic engagement – not just in the United States, but throughout the West and elsewhere. Walid and Mamadou may express their thoughts more forcefully than many, but they are not atypical.

Which perspective is correct? Does living among people who are different from yourself make you more or less likely to trust people more generally? I present evidence supporting the former view and suggest that the two perspectives are inherently contradictory. If you live among people who are different but don't have close contact with them, you are more likely to become (or remain) a particularized truster. But people don't just find themselves living among people who are different from themselves in some random order. Where you live often reflects whom you want your neighbors to be.

### **Trust: A Multi-Headed Hydra<sup>9</sup>**

The standard view of trust is a story of reciprocity: we learn to trust each other by our daily interactions. If I loan you five dollars and you pay me back, I will trust you. But trust is always conditional. Paying back a loan is not a good basis for trusting you to paint my house or to perform open heart surgery on me. This “knowledge-based trust” (Yamigishi and Yamigishi, 1994) reflects Offe's (1999, 50) observation that trust in persons results from “continued interactions with concrete persons whom we typically know for a considerable period of time.” Hardin (2004, 10) is even more emphatic: “My trust of you must be grounded in expectations that are particular to you, not merely in generalized expectations.”

Of course, much trust is based upon experience. There is also another form of faith in others, called “altruistic” trust by Mansbridge (1999) and which I call “moralistic trust” (Uslaner, 2002, 2–3, 17–21). The belief that people can be trusted stems from a moral argument that *we ought to trust*

<sup>9</sup> This section is largely drawn from Uslaner, 2002, chs. 1 and 2.

*Trust, Diversity, and Segregation*

7

*most people*, that we would be better off taking the risk to trust strangers, including people who look and think differently from ourselves. Since many, if not most, people in Western societies are likely to be different from yourself, moralistic trust is both a leap of faith and a commitment to the belief that people from diverse backgrounds can still be part of your “moral community.” Moralistic trust is the belief that others share your fundamental moral values and therefore should be treated as you would wish to be treated by them. What happens to them affects you. Walid and Mamadou should be seen as “real French,” as part of the greater community rather than known by their ethnicity or where they live.

The scope of our moral community is key to understanding moralistic trust. Particularized trust is restricted to people like yourself – however defined, by race, class, ethnicity, or whatever is most salient, including people in your neighborhood. Generalized trust is the belief that “most people can be trusted” (as opposed to “you can’t be too careful in dealing with people,” in the standard survey question).

We don’t learn to trust “most people” by evidence. We can’t meet most people. Nor can we generalize from the people we know to “most people.” Generalized (moralistic) trust is *not* trust in Walid or Mamadou, but of people in general, especially people who are different from ourselves, as are most people we don’t know. And it is not specific to one domain such as loaning money, painting a house, or performing surgery. Nor is it a judgment that others are trustworthy, but rather that we should treat strangers *as if they were trustworthy*. Generalized trust does not depend upon reciprocity. It may seem foolhardy for people to place confidence in people generally or to think that they might do so.

Perhaps the best reason for people to “invest” in moralistic trust is that faith in others has many positive consequences. Trust is not a magical cure-all for collective action, as Putnam suggests (1993, 170–2). It does not lead us to join more voluntary organizations, to socialize more with our friends, to participate more in politics, or even to vote. Nor does it make us more likely to help people we know – or even make us more willing to pay our taxes (Uslaner, 2002, ch. 5; Uslaner, 2007a). These are all activities in which we interact with people we know or who are very much like us. You don’t need trust to cooperate with people who are like you. You don’t need trust in other people to participate in politics where the goal is to defeat the other side. And you don’t need trust in people to do your duty to your government.

Generalized trust does connect us to people who are different from ourselves: Trusters are more likely to be tolerant of minorities and



supportive of equal rights for blacks, gays, and women (among other groups). They give more to charities and volunteer more for causes that link them to people who are different from themselves. High-trust societies have higher growth rates and less corruption and crime, and are more likely to redistribute resources from the rich to the poor. Generalized trust leads people of different backgrounds to work with each other, to less polarization in our political life, and to greater legislative productivity over time in the United States.

Trust makes people less likely to see risks wherever they turn – in their own neighborhoods when they walk at night or when they come into contact (or consider coming into contact) with people unlike themselves. If you believe that “most people can be trusted,” you are more likely to hold that people of different backgrounds share the same fate. This leads to a more inclusive identity encompassing diverse groups in a society rather than seeing ourselves as members of different ethnic and racial groups – and to expect our leaders to represent all of us rather than just their “tribes.” Trusters are more willing to admit immigrants to their countries, and are less worried that immigrants will take their jobs. This sense of unity of identity underlies the provision of universal social welfare benefits, where all are entitled to receive benefits such as education from the state *simply because they are members of a political and social community*. Governments in highly trusting societies also have greater commitments to policies that promote equality among their publics (Algan and Cahuc, 2010; LaPorta et al., 1999; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005; Uslaner, 1993, 2000, 2002, chs. 5, 7, 2007b).

The best evidence for believing that people have faith in others more generally is that they say they do. When asked what the standard trust question means to them, the overwhelming majority of respondents to a pilot survey for the 2000 American National Election Study gave responses that reflected general moral concerns rather than specific incidents (Uslaner, 2002, 72–4). The question “most people can be trusted” forms a scale with trust in strangers (people you meet on the street, clerks in stores) rather than with people you know (friends, family, co-workers; Uslaner, 2002, 52–5). People interpret the standard trust question as faith in people they don’t know.

If the only basis for trust is experience, we would expect trust to be fragile (Bok, 1978, 26; Dasgupta, 1988, 50), but it is not. Trust is among the most stable values over time across a wide range of attitudes (Uslaner, 2002, 68–75). If trust were based upon experience, it should reflect life events such as being helped by others, joining civic



*Trust, Diversity, and Segregation*

9

groups, and our confidence in people we know. But it is not (Uslaner, 2002, ch. 5).

Instead, we learn to trust at an early age, mostly from our parents but also from experiences at schools and with friends. Once formed, trust remains stable from youth to adulthood (Uslaner, 2002, ch. 6). We can even trace the roots of trust back further. We “inherit” a substantial share of our trust from where our ancestors came from. If our grandparents came from the Nordic countries, we are more likely to believe that “most people can be trusted,” while people whose background is from low-trusting places (Africa, Spain, Latin America) will be less likely to place faith in others (Uslaner, 2008b; cf. Algan and Cahuc, 2010).

People who trust others are optimists: they believe that the world is a good place, it is going to get better, and they can shape their destiny. Thus they can wave away bad experiences as exceptions to the general rule that things will go well, so that trust doesn’t seem quite so risky. Yet trust is not divorced from the “real world.” Across nations without a legacy of communism, over time in the United States, and across the American states, the consistently best predictor of trust is the level of economic inequality: in an unequal world, those at the bottom will have little basis for optimism. People at the bottom and the top will not see each other as having a linked fate – as part of each other’s “moral community” (Uslaner, 2002, chs. 2, 6, 8; Uslaner and Brown, 2005). This tight connection with inequality explains why generalized trust is rare. Inequality is widespread in the world, especially in the developing countries of Latin America and Africa. High levels of inequality breed greater in-group trust at the expense of trusting strangers because inequality is often overlaid with group tensions (Baldwin and Huber, 2010; Uslaner, 2008a, 52).

**In-Group Trust, Out-Group Trust, and Diversity**

High in-group trust does not automatically lead to low generalized trust. You are unlikely to have positive feelings toward others if you don’t like your own kind. But particularized trust is having faith *only* in people like yourself and such sentiments can lead to intolerance and withdrawal from participation in more broad-based civic activities (Uslaner, 2001; Wuthnow, 1991).

The more you are surrounded by people like yourself, the more likely you are to become a particularized truster. Alesina and LaFerrara elaborate on how in-group preference leads to demobilization and to negative social attitudes toward minorities:

[I]ndividuals prefer to interact with others who are similar to themselves in terms of income, race, or ethnicity ... diffuse preferences for homogeneity may decrease total participation in a mixed group if fragmentation increases. However, individuals may prefer to sort into homogenous groups.... For eight out of nine questions concerning attitudes toward race relations, the effect of racial heterogeneity is strongest for individuals more averse to racial mixing. (2000, 850, 889)

Putnam makes an even stronger claim. When you live among people like yourself, you will be less trusting of *everyone*:

Rather, inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours, regardless of the colour of their skin, to withdraw even from close friends, to expect the worst from their community and its leaders, to volunteer less, give less to charity and work on community projects less often, to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform more, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference, and to huddle unhappily in front of the television ... this pattern encompasses attitudes and behavior, bridging and bonding social capital, public and private connections. Diversity, at least in the short run, seems to bring out the turtle in all of us. (2007, 150–1)

This is a dire set of results. If trust connects us to people who are different from ourselves, but living among them leads to less trust, then what good is trust?

*Diversity is not the culprit driving down trust. Instead, it is residential segregation. When people live apart from one another, they will not develop the sort of bridging ties that promote tolerance and trust. Living in integrated communities is not sufficient to boost trust: you must also have friends of different backgrounds, as Allport (1958), Pettigrew (1998), and Marschall and Stolle (2004) have argued.*

This is the core argument to come. I develop the theory and the framework for analyzing diversity, segregation, and trust in Chapter 2. I show why diversity is not the key problem: it is largely a proxy measure for the percent of nonwhites in a community and we know that minorities are less trusting. And I show that diversity and segregation are not the same thing; they are only modestly correlated.

I then move to examinations of how living in diverse and integrated communities and having friends of different backgrounds leads to greater trust in the United States (Chapter 3), Canada (Chapter 4), the United Kingdom (Chapter 5), and Sweden and Australia (Chapter 6). I also show that people living in integrated and diverse communities with heterogeneous social networks do more altruistic deeds helping strangers rather than members of their own communities (Chapter 7). I end on a less optimistic note when I show (Chapter 8) that the positive effects of what