

Reducing Hate and Prejudice on Campus: A Sociologist's Contributions¹

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Our educational institutions are, for good reason, generally regarded as bastions of enlightenment and respect for diversity. Indeed, students on most campuses are exposed to a broad range of ideas, speakers, faculty members, and fellow students. They are encouraged to express dissenting points of view and to interact with diverse fellow students and faculty members. They might work or study in other countries, or do community service among diverse populations.

Yet our image of the college experience may also underestimate seriously the intergroup hostility and conflict that, on occasion, can come to define relationships on a campus. In a highly competitive environment, where students vie for grades, scholarships, jobs, organizational budgets, and popularity, they may regard one another not as allies but as opponents competing for scarce resources. In one recent survey of 10

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