proverbial black sheep, you repair your group’s tarnished identity and maintain a positive self-image (Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Marques, Robalo, & Rocha, 1992).

C. Social Learning

Realistic group conflict and motivational models provide two ways to understand the development of prejudice. Prejudice can also be learned. Via the media and interactions with parents and peers, people learn various stereotypes. After all, few of us have ever met an Italian mobster, but most of us have a pretty clear stereotype of this social group, having seen movies like The Godfather and television shows like The Sopranos. Unfortunately, media portrayals of minority group members have long been negatively skewed. In films, television, and music videos, women are too often depicted as seductresses and African American males are portrayed as aggressive and sexually abusive. Other minority groups are simply ignored. Asians and Latinos comprise a substantial proportion of the population in America, but they rarely appear in films and on television. Although this situation is changing, there is no doubt that people learn negative stereotypes from media depictions.

Learning influences the development not only of stereotypes but also of prejudiced feelings. During the cold war, American schoolchildren were taught to fear and hate the Russians. Now that the Soviet Union no longer exists and Russians pose less of a threat to the United States, these attitudes have softened. This example highlights the interplay between realistic group conflict and learning theory. For many years, the Soviet Union posed a threat to America, and this led to the development of prejudice. This prejudice was then transmitted from generation to generation through social norms and social communication (Brauer, Judd, & Jacquelin, 2001; Crandall, Eshleman, & O’Brien, 2002; Lyons & Kashima, 2003; Schaller, Conway, & Tanchuk, 2002; M. S. Thompson, Judd, & Park, 2000; Wigboldus, Semin, & Spears, 2000).