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**CAMPUS RACISM AND WHITE STEREOTYPE THREAT:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR CAMPUS RACIAL  
CLIMATES AND INTERRACIAL INTERACTIONS AMONG STUDENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

In this study, a six cell between-subjects experimental design (n = 124) with random assignment was utilized to examine the relationship among campus racism, stereotype threat, and White students' perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes toward diversity. There were several hypotheses. First, it was expected that campus racism (theme party mocking stereotypes of Blacks) would cause White students to experience stereotype – an identity threat encountered when Whites are placed in situations where they are at risk of being perceived as racist (Goff, 2008). Second, it was believed that the manner in which students and administrators responded to campus racism would affect participants' experience of stereotype threat. Finally, it was expected that stereotype threat would moderate White students' perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes toward diversity.

The data analysis revealed that campus racism can cause White students to experience stereotype threat. The student and administrative responses to campus racism, however, did not affect stereotype threat. Stereotype threat did not mediate students' perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes toward diversity. However, evidence did indicate that stereotype threat was a positive predictor of participants' Inter-Ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans (IATAA), openness to diversity and challenge (ODC), pluralistic orientation, and perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation. Additional findings also revealed that IATAA was a negative predictor of White students' ODC and pluralistic orientation. The implications of these findings are discussed in the final chapter.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ATB	Attitudes Towards Blacks
EMCP	External Motivation to Control Prejudice
IATAA	Inter-ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans
IMCP	Internal Motivation to Control Prejudice
MCP	Motivation to Control Prejudice
ODC	Openness to Diversity and Challenge
PWIs	Predominantly White Institutions

## KEY DEFINITIONS

*Climate* is conceptualized as “the culture, habits, decisions, practices and policies that make up campus life. It is the sum total of the daily environment, and central to the ‘comfort factor’ that minority students, faculty, staff, and administrators experience on campus.” (Green, 1989, p. 113)

*Diversity* (in higher education context) is a broad concept that encompasses the following three dimensions: 1) *Structural Diversity* – “the numerical representation of diverse groups;” 2) *Interactional Diversity* – “the frequency and quality of intergroup interaction;” and 3) *Classroom Diversity* – “learning about diverse people (content knowledge) and gaining experience with diverse peers in the classroom.” (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002, pp. 332-33)

*Inter-ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans (IATAA)* is the level of anxiety individuals have in their personal interactions with African Americans (Britt, Boniecki, Vescio, Biernat, & Brown, 1996). *In this thesis, this term and inter-ethnic anxiety are used interchangeably.*

*Motivation to Control Prejudice (MCP)* is an individual’s concern with controlling their expression of prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998). This motivation can stem from both internal and external sources (Plant & Devine, 1998). Internal motivation stems from an individual’s own personal concern with appearing prejudiced. External motivation stems from an individual’s personal concern with appearing prejudiced to others.

*Pluralistic Orientation* is “the ability to work cooperatively with diverse people; the ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues; openness to having one’s views challenged; and tolerance of others with different beliefs” (Engberg, 2007, p. 285).

*Stereotype Threat* is the psychological threat caused when an individual is placed in a situation where that person is at risk of affirming or being judged by a negative stereotype that targets their social identity (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Steele, 1997).



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Race, racism, and discrimination continue to be prominent issues in American higher education, particularly at many of this nation's large, public predominantly White institutions – PWIs (Smith, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2002; Hurtado, 1992). Racial incidents make national and local news headlines every year at many colleges and universities across the nation. In 2007, college educators and administrators on different campuses were forced to deal with numerous incidents involving student participation in racially insensitive theme parties, the placement of racist graffiti on both university and personal property, the verbal and physical harassment of racial/ethnic minority students, and accusations of discriminatory or unfair treatment from racial/ethnic minority professors and administrators. For example, during September of 2007, a controversy ensued at the University of Maryland when a noose was found hanging outside the Black Cultural Center. The very next month, a similar incident occurred at Columbia University after a noose was found hanging from a Black female faculty member's office door. These are just a few examples; however, these incidents are not anomalies. Each year, many campuses throughout the country are forced to deal with many of these same issues.

Despite the continual reoccurrence of such racially-charged incidents, conversations concerning racism are becoming scarce on many college and university campuses as colorblind ideologies become the socially accepted norm among Whites and as many diversity initiatives become deracialized by efforts designed to expand the inclusiveness of these programs to other underrepresented minorities (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Harper & Patton, 2007; Reason & Evans, 2007). In fact, Harper and Patton (2007) assert, "It is entirely possible for students to graduate from college without critically

reflecting on their racist views, never having engaged in meaningful conversations about race, and using racially offensive language unknowingly” (p. 2). Harper and Patton continue to argue that by continuing to neglect this important topic, educators are partly responsible for perpetuating a society saturated with White supremacist ideals and, more directly, maintaining racially hostile collegiate environments that have the propensity to stifle student learning and development. Administrative failure to engage campus communities in racial discourse and address racism, when appropriate, reinforces widely held misconceptions by students, particularly White students, that racism is a resolved problem of the past that is unworthy of concern (Forman, 2004).

Ironically, although these incidents cause substantial communal disruption, these occurrences also provide institutions with prime opportunities to broach dialogues on race. Yet, when such incidents force administrators to respond to the realities of racism on their campuses, they usually design and implement interventions that provide a quick resolution (Schlosser & Sedlacek, 2001). “Typically, the emphasis is more on ‘putting out the fire’ than on working toward preventing future ‘fires’” (Schlosser & Sedlacek, 2001, p. 25). Instead of first considering the collective well-being of students and the campus racial climate, college and university officials tend to focus immediately on avoiding liability, strictly adhering to policy and procedure, and soothing external relations (e.g., the media, key constituents, and donors) when crafting their administrative responses. By making liability, procedure, and public image the top institutional priorities when dealing with racial issues, postsecondary administrators are ignoring critical factors that can have significant effects on campus racial climates and interracial engagement

among students. The effect of stereotype threat, the theoretical framework guiding this doctoral dissertation, is one such factor postsecondary educators should consider.

Stereotype threat is a theory based on the assumption that many individuals are concerned with how others evaluate them. Specifically, stereotype threat is the psychological threat caused when an individual is placed in a situation where that person is at risk of affirming or being judged by a negative stereotype that targets their social identity (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Steele, 1997). Over 100 studies (Steele & Aronson, 2004), have concluded that this situational threat manifests itself in various negative physiological and behavioral consequences. For example, in one of the studies that contributed to the conceptualization of stereotype threat, Steele and Aronson (1995) asked Black and White students to correctly answer as many Graduate Record Examination questions as possible in thirty minutes. They found Black students scored below their White peers on standardized test questions when they were informed that their intelligence was being assessed. However, the researchers also determined that there were no differences in participants' scores when emphasis was placed on problem solving instead of intellectual ability. The authors concluded that by placing an emphasis on intellectual ability, they were making intelligence a salient aspect of the task demanded. For the Black participants in the study, Steele and Aronson believed this likely primed negative, widely held stereotypes about their intelligence, particularly in relation to Whites. According to Steele and Aronson (1995), the anxiety caused by the pressure to disprove this stereotype is partly responsible for the underperformance of Blacks in such situations. Although this theory was initially used to explain the underachievement of

Blacks on standardized tests, other researchers have concluded that this threat is applicable for other populations in other domains.

This study utilizes Goff, Steele, and Davies' (2008) reconceptualization of stereotype threat. Like the Black students in Steele and Aronson's (1995) study, Goff et al. (2008) found Whites can experience similar anxiety when placed in situations where negative stereotypes about their identity are at risk of affirmation. Essentially, the authors determined that Whites can experience extreme anxiety – stereotype threat – when placed in situations where they are at risk of being perceived as racist. Using this reframed conceptualization of stereotype threat, this study operates under the central hypothesis that a racially-charged incident on a college and university campus, specifically one in which White students are the transgressors, has the propensity to induce stereotype threat in White undergraduates. When such an event occurs, stereotype threat is likely triggered by the priming of their racial identity within the context of interracial relations. Because Whites, in this context, have been historically synonymous with overt and covert acts of racism, oppressive power, exclusion, privilege, and cultural domination (Kincheloe, 1999; Giroux 1997), Whites become vulnerable to stereotype threat when they are placed in situations where affirming the “White racist” stereotype is possible. In order to negotiate and deal with this threatening situation, these students may adopt certain strategies, perspectives, and behaviors that are designed to insulate themselves from the threat of being labeled a racist. It is these actions that may be detrimental to the overall campus racial climate and interracial engagement among students.

For example, Goff, Steele, and Davies (2008) discovered stereotype threat caused Whites to physically distance themselves from Blacks when engaged in controversial

conversations about race. Interestingly, implicit and explicit measures of prejudice did not predict avoidance. Considering this finding, it might be quite plausible to imagine White students avoiding, either consciously or unconsciously, contact with their Black and other racial/ethnic minority peers following a racially-charged incident on campus. Consequently, such avoidance could further exacerbate racial tensions by validating and reaffirming racial/ethnic minority students' perceptions of the campus climate and assumptions about their White peers' racial attitudes. In addition, avoidance might prevent necessary parties from engaging in a constructive dialogue concerning the incident. Fortunately, there are ways to ease feelings of threat. In their experiment, Steele and Aronson (1995) believed threat was reduced, perhaps eliminated, by emphasizing the problem solving aspect of the standardized testing task. By emphasizing problem solving, the authors concluded they eased Blacks' concern with having their intelligence evaluated. Similarly, in their experiment, Goff, et al. (2008) found providing students with "learning goals" prevented the social avoidance behavior of Whites even though stereotype threat was still salient. These findings suggest stereotype threat may not be preventable; however, the influence threat has on behavior can be attenuated.

This knowledge could prove useful to postsecondary educators when dealing with campus racism. It seems logical to believe that racially-charged incidents can influence the overall campus climate and the quality and quantity of interracial engagement among students. Given research findings that suggest stereotype threat can be attenuated, it also seems plausible that the environmental response to such a racially-charged incident could also influence climate and interracial engagement among students. Essentially, the collective actions of administrators and students in response to a racially-charged incident

could conceivably improve the climate or make the climate considerably worse.

However, the effects of these environmental responses all depend on how the collective reactions of administrators and students influence stereotype threat.

### Purpose Statement

Using experimental procedures and a theoretical framework grounded in stereotype threat, this investigation will examine how different administrative and collective student responses following a racially-charged incident (i.e., a race-based theme party involving Blackface) effect the experience of stereotype threat, thus influencing White students' 1) perceptions of the campus racial climate and 2) attitudes about diversity and cross-racial engagement. It is hoped that the results from this investigation will provide postsecondary educators with a new lens for viewing campus racial climate transformation and a base of knowledge that will help inform their efforts to address campus racism and climate issues on their respective campuses.

A six cell between-subjects experimental design with random assignment will be used in this study (further details regarding methods are presented in Chapter 3). In this experiment, one hundred and twenty participants – twenty per condition – will be presented with either a control scenario or one of five different variations of a vignette describing a “ghetto” theme party involving Blackface that supposedly happened at the Pennsylvania State University. Participants who receive the control scenario will be provided with material regarding changes made to an on-campus dining facility. The control scenario will provide a baseline measure of stereotype threat, the dependent variables of interest, and other measures included in this experiment. After participants finish reading one of these scenarios, they will be presented with a series of

questionnaires. However, prior to responding to surveys, they will be led to believe that they will be discussing the event described in the vignette in a focus group with Black students. It is this potential encounter coupled with the description and pictures presented in the vignette that is hypothesized to trigger stereotype threat, except in the control condition.

One of the experimental variations will provide a description of the race-based theme party. Participants in this condition will not receive any information regarding a collective student or administrative response to the incident. It is hypothesized that this information will cause students to experience stereotype threat, thus negatively affecting their perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes toward diversity and cross-racial engagement. Two other variations of the incident will include the same description of the party and a collective student response to incident. These student interventions will be identical except for the race of the individuals involved. In one of the student response conditions, all of the students involved will be Black. In the other, a racially diverse group of students will lead the response. It is believed that the inclusion of Whites in the student response will reduce the experience of stereotype threat and its possible effects on perceptions of climate and attitudes toward diversity and cross-racial engagement. This assumption is based on the belief that White involvement and participation in the response will help Whites feel that the responsibility for the incident is being placed specifically on the perpetrators and not White students as a collective group.

Two more variations of the incident will include an administrative response to the incident. These administrative responses will be identical except one response includes the sanctioning of the students involved in the race-based theme party. It is hypothesized



that punishment rendered from the administration will reduce the experience of stereotype threat on Whites and its possible negative effects on their perceptions of climate and attitudes toward diversity and cross-racial engagement. This theoretical hypothesis is based on the belief that punishment will affect stereotype threat by giving White students a sense that justice has been achieved and that the situation has been somewhat resolved in a manner that will appease the individuals outraged over the incident (i.e., Black students).

### Problem Statement

In order to provide some context to the underlying issues driving this thesis, this section will begin with a story of a racially-charged incident that occurred at the Johns Hopkins University. This account is offered to provide a tangible example of how racially-charged incidents influence campus racial climates and interracial engagement among students. The story will be followed by discussions detailing 1) the administrative mismanagement of racially-charged incidents, 2) the trend involving race-based theme parties and White appropriations of Blackness, and 3) the problematic conceptualization of climate transformation. Next, continued justification for this experiment will be offered by discussing the relationship between interactional diversity, perceptions of campus climate, and valuable college student outcomes. This chapter will conclude with a brief overview of the content included in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

#### *Halloween in the Hood*

On Saturday night, October 28, 2006, the Johns Hopkins University's (JHU) chapter of Sigma Chi Fraternity sponsored a "Halloween in the Hood Party" at an off-campus house near the JHU Homewood campus in Baltimore, Maryland. The party's

flyer, which was posted on Facebook.com prior to the event, contained material that many students, faculty, and administrators considered offensive and racially insensitive. Specifically, the flyer was criticized for describing Baltimore as an “hiv [sic] pit” and a “motherfucking ghetto” and referencing various “derogatory racial stereotypes” largely associated with Black Americans (Gentile & Tsai, 2006a). In addition, the flyer contained satirical references to Orenthal Simpson (O.J.) and his late attorney Johnnie L. Cochran. In order to conform to the theme of the party, the advertisement encouraged party guests to dress in a manner stereotypically associated with ghetto life and its inhabitants. Shockingly, this flyer was the revised version of previous advertisement that JHU’s Greek life coordinator forced the fraternity to remove from Facebook.com after members of the university’s Black Student Union (BSU) expressed their concerns about the event (Gentile & Tsai, 2006a). Despite promising that the original flyer would be removed and the theme of the party be revised, the fraternity proceeded to repost the second version of the flyer and proceed with the event without consulting the Greek life coordinator.

Reports documenting the party alleged the walls of the fraternity house were adorned with bullet hole decorations and fake gunshot sounds could be heard coming from the home. Students at the party were described as being dressed like “pimps, prostitutes, and slaves” (Cassie, 2006). Furthermore, outside the entrance of the home a plastic skeleton dressed as a dark-haired pirate was hanging from the roof with a rope noose around the doll’s neck. After viewing the decorations and the responses of a group of African American students who left the party visibly upset, a university community liaison officer, who was called to respond to the scene of the party, prematurely ended the event early Sunday morning – October, 29, 2006. Although the fraternity members failed

to understand why the party was terminated, they adhered with the officer's directions (Gentile & Tsai, 2006a).

Later on Sunday, members of the fraternity were invited to a BSU meeting to discuss the prior evening events. The meeting was highly contentious and terribly unproductive. The social chair from Sigma Chi indicated he was "greeted with a barrage of hostile accusations and animosity" (Park, 2006). Conversely, the men of Sigma Chi were criticized for being defensive and "cavalier about the situation by suggesting that students were being overly-sensitive" (Chapman, 2006). In addition, the fraternity evoked criticism for trying to shirk responsibility by turning the social chair into the sole scapegoat.

On the following Monday, members of the BSU displayed banners and slogans while participated in a "striking display of protest" for eight hours on the streets surrounding the Hopkins' Homewood campus (Gentile & Tsai, 2006a). The students rallied to denounce the party, Sigma Chi, and racism. In addition, the students hoisted signs condemning the hanging skeleton pirate, which was perceived by these students to represent a lynching of an African American. The institution responded to this demonstration with an official statement. The statement indicated that the university was currently investigating the matter, had contacted the fraternity's national headquarters, and had suspended the Sigma Chi chapter, pending the results of the investigation. Concluding this university statement were the following remarks from the university president:

The invitation to this party represented a serious and unacceptable misjudgment on the part of the fraternity chapter that organized it. We will move quickly to

address that appropriately with the chapter. Ours is a university community where students of many races, ethnicities and religions work hard every day to bridge the gaps between them, to unify rather than to polarize. Our students are generally mature, responsible and hard-working. They are appreciative of the opportunity to get to know many people of backgrounds differing from their own. I have long been committed to embracing diversity and inclusion on campus, as I recognize its fundamental importance. I take this situation very seriously. I find this incident deeply disturbing, and I'm personally offended. It's as simple as this: The adoption of racial stereotyping as a party theme is a repugnant act, and groups that want to consider themselves Johns Hopkins student organizations should understand the university will not tolerate it. ("University," 2006)

Later Monday night, university officials hosted the first of two open forums to discuss the event and issues related to racism on campus. Present at the meeting were members of the BSU and Sigma Chi, various media outlets, many senior-level university administrators, representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). At the meeting, representatives from the BSU expressed concerns about the racial climate and minority student and faculty representation at the institution. Moreover, they repeatedly called for Sigma Chi to issue a formal written apology. The NAACP accused the university of perpetuating institutional racism by "sweeping the issue under the carpet" (Gentile & Tsai, 2006a). In that same meeting, the president of Sigma Chi issued a verbal apology on behalf of the fraternity.

In the weeks following the "Halloween in the Hood" party, Hopkins became the target of much scrutiny from the community and both local and national media outlets.

Racial tension inundated the Johns Hopkins' Homewood campus as "rumors, accusations, and even threats" regarding the incident circulated among students (Gentile & Tsai, 2006b). Throughout this controversy, the BSU was accused of overreacting and exaggerating the issue. The members of the fraternity described the BSU students' actions (i.e., protesting, demonstrating, and press releases) as "questionable" and "disingenuous" and the editorial board of the JHU Newsletter asserted the group was "more interested in creating a media spectacle than inducing positive change at Johns Hopkins" (Gentile & Tsai, 2006b; "Sigma," 2006; Trautman, 2006). Instead of focusing on promoting diversity and education, fostering dialogue, and providing solutions, these critics suggested the BSU was only inflaming the issue. Similarly, many of Johns Hopkins' White students asserted that the protesters were simply overreacting to an isolated incident which did not reflect the campus' racial climate, while many of the Black students alleged the party was highly offensive and symbolic of a systemic culture of racism. Black students were urging the institution to take some sort of disciplinary action against the fraternity and its members, whereas their White counterparts claimed any university sanctions would infringe on students' right to free speech by censoring speech and behavior. Clearly, this Saturday night fraternity party had inflamed racial tension, polarized the campus along racial lines, inflamed an already tarnished image with the local community, and presented a difficult situation for the administration to negotiate.

#### *Racial-charged Incidents and Administrative Mismanagement*

The incident at Hopkins should not be viewed as an isolated incident on one campus. Between 1986 and 1993 at least one million incidents involving racial/ethnic

conflict occurred on postsecondary campuses in the United States (Ehrlich, 1994). During the 1986-1987 academic year, nearly 175 colleges and universities reported incidents involving hate speech (Magner, 1989). Also, in 1998 the Federal Bureau of Investigation documented 250 reported incidents involving hate crimes on college and university campuses (McGrew, 2000). Although some of these statistics are dated, they should not be completely dismissed. Admittedly, it would be naïve to suggest that conditions have not changed at all over the past few decades. However, it would be just as callow to imply postsecondary educators have done an exemplary job addressing many of our students' socially constructed prejudices and biases, especially when it comes to racism. Subsequently, race-based theme parties and other racially-charged incidents continue to occur at predominantly White colleges and universities.

The continued occurrence of such incidents has prompted some critics to suggest that college and university administrators have struggled to appropriately deal with racially-charged incidents and the associated turmoil in a manner that improves the campus racial climate and protects all member of the college or university community. Aguirre, Jr. and Messineo (1997) assert that the systemic racist ideologies that are infused into an institutional environment prevent the bigotry from being properly addressed and criticized. The authors point out that the students who perpetuate these racially-charged incidents rarely receive severe sanctions such as dismissal from the institution. More commonly, perpetrators are required to attend multicultural awareness or diversity classes. In some instances, these student's first amendment rights are upheld by the institution at the expense of the damage done to the campus racial climate. Aguirre, Jr. and Messineo (1997) assert that because these incidents are usually inadequately

addressed, “racial bigotry is nested within an institutional environment that provides it with expressive outlets, while shielding it from criticism by not imposing sanctions that penalize its expression” (p. 27). Essentially, campus bigotry is often treated by administrators as a “technical issue at the expense of its moral harm” (Aguirre, Jr. & Messineo, 1997, p. 29). Such treatment reinforces and perpetuates “the privileged position of white students and the powerless position of minority students” (Aguirre, Jr. & Messineo, 1997, p. 29). Moreover, treating such incidents as technical matters, educators essentially avoid addressing the effects of the behavior not only on its targets but also on the community as a whole.

As illustrated in the Hopkins story, racially-charged incidents seem to have the power to significantly alter campus racial climates and student attitudes and interactions. When dealing with such incidents, it is absolutely imperative that educators make administrative decisions and that help mend and improve racial climates on their campuses. It is also critical that university administrators have a sound understanding of how the actions of students may also influence campus climate. It is hoped that the findings from this study will help inform administrators’ actions when faced with racially-charged incidents on their campuses.

#### *Racially Insensitive Theme Parties: White Appropriations of Blackness*

Over the past several years, media coverage of various race-related incidents involving students on many predominantly White campuses has revitalized conversations regarding college and university racial climates, specifically interracial relations among students. Perhaps, one of the more common race-related disturbances at many PWIs involves events similar to the Hopkins’ “Halloween in the Hood Party.” These theme

parties, which are typically hosted and primarily attended by White students, have been criticized for being insensitive, if not racist, acts that often satirize and stereotype racial/ethnic minorities. At many of these events, White students appropriate stereotypical behavior commonly associated with economically disadvantaged racial/ethnic minorities from urban, low income or “ghetto” communities. For example, in the fall of 2006, a group of first-year, White law students at the University of Texas at Austin (UT) hosted a “ghettofabulous” theme party (Jensen, 2006; West, 2006). The individuals who attend the party presented themselves in a manner congruent to their own notions of “ghetto” life. Subsequently, these students arrived “sporting Afro wigs, large necklaces with medallions and name-tags with fake historically black [sic] or Hispanic names while holding 40-ounce bottles of malt liquor” (West, 2006). Although these students indicated their intent was not to insult, many individuals considered their behavior offensive.

When used as a descriptor, the word “ghetto” carries a negative connotation in mainstream America because it is typically used to describe lifestyles and behaviors that deviate from traditional, White American middle class norms and values. Moreover, when the word “ghetto” is used as a descriptor, there are racial implications because this term is typically used to describe behavior and lifestyles that are largely associated with racial/ethnic minorities, namely African Americans and Latinos/Hispanics, who happen to be overrepresented in low-income urban communities (Kingsley & Pettit, 2003). Therefore, when students, especially Whites, satirically mimic behaviors they consider “ghetto,” these students are outwardly expressing their White privilege in an offensive manner by having fun at the expense of low-income individuals without considering the



serious social conditions and injustices that have not only created but also continue to perpetuate these life experiences.

Although White students have appropriated stereotypical behavior associated with many racial/ethnic minority students at these theme parties, particular emphasis at these events seems to be focused on stereotypes associated with Black Americans. On many campuses, White students have hosted and attended parties that have parodied stereotypes of Blacks, especially those related to hip hop and “ghetto culture.” While mimicking their perceptions of Blackness, White students at some of these parties have also blackened their faces and other visible body parts while imitating their perceptions of Blacks (i.e., appearing in Blackface). Many individuals, especially African Americans, consider such parodies to be both highly offensive and racially insensitive, largely due to the racist legacy of Blackface minstrelsy, “the first and most popular form of mass culture in the nineteenth-century United States” (Rogin, 1996). At these minstrel shows, White actors would mock the physical appearances of African Americans by blackening their faces with a mixture made of burnt cork or greasepaint (i.e., appear in blackface), over-exaggerating the shapes of their lips with bright red lipstick, and wearing wooly wigs and tattered clothing. While dressed in these costumes, these actors would commonly depict African Americans as experts in song and dance who were often lazy, uneducated, incompetent, childlike, hypersexual, over-joyous, and cowardly. Lott (1996) writes, “the minstrel show indeed seems a transparently racist curiosity, a form of leisure that, in inventing and ridiculing the slow-witted but irrepressible ‘plantation darky’ and foppish ‘northern dandy negro’ conveniently rationalized racial oppression” (p. 3). Scholars suggest blackface minstrelsy is partly responsible for the mainstream proliferation and

advancement of stereotypes associated with African Americans (Cockrell, 1997; Lott, 1996; Rogin, 1996). Given the racist history associated with this form of theatre, it is extremely offensive when Whites perform and appropriate their misguided notions of Blackness, especially in Blackface.

Perhaps, two of the more offensive incidents involving such behavior occurred at Auburn University and the University of Mississippi. At Auburn, White students at a fraternity party took pictures dressed as Ku Klux Klansman holding a noose around the neck of another White student in Blackface with a Confederate flag in the backdrop (Bartlett, 2001). At a University of Mississippi fraternity party, a photograph captured a White student dressed as a police officer holding a gun to the head of another White student on his knees in Blackface posing as an African slave picking cotton and placing it into a bucket (Bartlett, 2001). Although the prevalence of such incidents is unknown, students at nearly 40 institutions have been caught engaging in similar behavior in the past several years. These institutions include: Auburn University, Clemson University, Cornell University, Dartmouth University, Emory University, Grand Valley College (Michigan), Johns Hopkins University, Macalester College, Massachusetts Institution of Technology, Oklahoma State University, Stetson University, Swarthmore College, Syracuse University, Tarleton State University, Texas A & M University, The Pennsylvania State University, Trinity College, University of Alabama, University of Alabama Birmingham, University of Arizona, University of California at Irvine, University of Chicago, University of Colorado, University of Connecticut School of Law, University of Delaware, University of Illinois, University of Louisville, University of Mississippi, University of Tennessee, University of Texas at Austin, University of

Virginia, University of Wisconsin at Whitewater, Washington University, Whitman College, Willamette College, William Jewell College, (Bartlett, 2001; FOX News, 2007; Jensen, 2006; King, 2006; MSNBC, 2007; Noble, 2007; Smith, 2003; USA Today, 2007; Wise, 2007).

It is likely that many more of these parties occur each year but go undiscovered. Typically, these parties receive little attention unless individuals report the incident or visual evidence from the event is made public. Some postsecondary administrators dismiss these occurrences as isolated incidents that are not representative of their institutions overall racial climate. However, other critics believe such behavior happens every year on many college and university campuses and is indicative of a culture of institutionalized racism that that exists on college campuses. In an article from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* exposing a string of racially insensitive incidents at theme parties hosted by fraternities at four Southern institutions, Jennifer Holiday, a representative from an antiracism group called the Southern Poverty Law Center, suggested these parties are “probably a more regular occurrence than we like to think....The difference is that we have images this year” (Bartlett, 2001).

It can be argued that these theme parties are symptoms of cultures of institutionalized racism that exist on the campuses of many predominantly White colleges and universities. For Whites students to engage in such behavior, they must either believe 1) that their actions are not offensive or 2) that their behavior is acceptable or in line with the majority culture on their campuses. In either case, the continued reoccurrence of these theme parties and other race-related incidents involving students affirm the fact that

postsecondary educators are doing a poor job of transforming the racial climates at many PWIs and educating our White students about issues related to race.

*Climate Transformation: Focus on the Majority*

Perhaps, the most significant barrier to improved race-relations and racial equality on our college campuses is White students' inability or reluctance not only to recognize race-based discrimination and prejudice, but also their failure to fully comprehend both the gross inequalities and subtle everyday inconveniences caused by institutionalized or systemic racism. Although racial/ethnic minority students perceive and report high levels of prejudice, discrimination, and racial tension on their college and university campuses, a substantial amount of evidence suggests these perceptions of the climate are not shared by their White peers. In fact, a significant body of evidence indicates White students tend to evaluate campus racial climates and institutional support for diversity more positively than their different race peers, especially when their perceptions are juxtaposed with those of Black students (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Hurtado, 1992; Johnson-Durgans, 1994; Loo & Rolson, 1986; Mack, Tucker, Archuleta, DeGroot, Hernandez, & Oh Cha, 1997; Malaney & Shively, 1995; McClelland & Auster, 1990; Nettles, Thoeny, & Gosman, 1986; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003). Some critics and researchers may argue that interracial relations on college campuses are improving (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999); however, news of hate crimes, insensitive acts, and instances of overt and passive racism continually emerge in the headlines of college, local, and national newspapers. Alone, these incidents suggest that interracial relations among college students on postsecondary campuses continue to be problematic.

Certainly, postsecondary educators at many institutions across the nation have implemented various measures to make their campuses more welcoming and inclusive for racial/ethnic minority students. Administrators and faculty have attempted to transform their campus racial climates by increasing the representation of racial/ethnic minority students, staff, and faculty; inserting classes in the curriculum that appeal to “diverse” students; and creating various minority students support services. Although these measures are, without question, essential and beneficial, these strategies alone cannot transform “chilly” racial climates. In fact, approaching climate transformation in such a manner only reinforces the attitude and mindset that racism is not a White problem but rather an issue to be handled by Blacks, Latinos/Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, and other racial minorities (Katz, 2003).

Such an approach to climate transformation does little to change the prevailing culture of racism, but instead provides students with resources and support to weather tumultuous climates. Essentially, instead of attempting to adjust the thermostat, postsecondary educators have continued to hand racial/ethnic minority students winter coats, gloves, scarves, and ear muffs to insulate them from the frigid environment. Although these methods are certainly necessary and temporarily effective, measures must be taken to transform the culture of racism that plagues many of the nation’s college and university campuses. By treating campus racism as a problem for minorities, postsecondary officials continue to treat symptoms instead of the cause. Climate transformation cannot be achieved by focusing on the minority. To effectively transform campus racial climates, educators must reject this traditional lens for viewing and responding to issues involving race and begin framing and addressing racism as problem

that concerns and involves Whites as well as non-Whites. Only after such a perspective is adopted will administrators and faculty begin to see climate change on their campuses.

This traditional lens for viewing interracial relations among students and climate issues on college campuses is evident in the higher education research literature. Much of college student research related to race focuses on explicating the experiences of minority students on predominantly White campuses. Although these investigations are informative and useful, their findings and implications can be only marginally effective in transforming racial climates. As long as White students continue to be oblivious to systemic racism, prejudice, and discrimination and remain passive in antiracism activism, college racial climates will continue to be chilly for racial/ethnic minorities. Higher education researchers must begin examining White students' racial attitudes, thoughts about interracial engagement, knowledge and understanding of issues related to race, and responses to racism. These topics are relatively unexplored or examined on a surface level, especially in peer-reviewed journal articles addressing issues in higher education. Certainly, further exploration in this domain is warranted. Therefore, through experimentation, I will seek to examine how White students react to campus racism (i.e., a "ghetto" theme party involving Blackface) and the actions their peers and the administration take in response to racist event on campus.

#### Significance of the Study / Justification

Beyond the need to extend the higher education literature regarding White students' racial attitudes, this study finds its significance in the research linking various critical outcomes to interactions with diverse peers and perceptions of campus racial climates.

*Interracial engagement and student outcomes.*

Interactions with peers are some of the most influential and beneficial aspects of the collegiate experience (Astin, 1993). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) concluded peer interactions are the “most pervasive and powerful force in student persistence and degree completion” (p. 615). In particular, there is substantial evidence suggesting educationally purposeful peer interactions outside the classroom, especially with racially diverse peers, have positive influences on student learning, psychosocial development, and attitudes (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Specifically, cross-racial peer engagement is positively correlated to student self-reports in an array of outcomes: intellectual engagement, academic skills, active and critical thinking, civic interest and engagement, perspective taking, social skills, cognitive and personal, development, academic and overall self-concept, leadership ability, satisfaction with college, multicultural competence and awareness, vocational preparation, attitudes toward multiculturalism, and persistence (Antonio, 1998; Antonio, 2000; Chang 1996; Chang, 2001; Chang, 2002, Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004; Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2005; Globetti, Globetti, Brown, & Smith, 1993; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Villalpando, 2002).

Although all students tend to gain from interracial engagement, this body of evidence indicates White students experience more gains than racial/ethnic minorities in many of these outcomes (Gurin et al., 2002; Milem, 2003). Even though the evidence suggests that White students have the most to gain from interracial engagement, various studies have determined that racial/ethnic minority students are more likely to engage in cross-racial interactions than their White peers (Hurtado, Dey, Trevino, & 1994; Hurtado,

Carter, & Sharp, 1995). In a survey administered to college students at nearly 400 institutions, Hurtado et al. (1994), found Black, Asian American, and Latino students were more likely to date, dine, room, and socialize with members of other racial/ethnic groups than White students. Moreover, different racial/ethnic groups were more likely to engage in cross-racial interactions during specific activities (i.e., academic endeavors, intercollegiate sports, culturally-based organizations, social activities, Greek organizations, resident advising). In addition to engaging in more diverse interactions, racial/ethnic minority students also report having more close friendships with outgroup members (Antonio, 1998; Minatoya & Sedlacek, 1980). Antonio's (1998) longitudinal study found 85% of White students reported that most or all of their close friendships were with same-race peers. Conversely, only 44% of racial/ethnic minorities responded similarly. Clearly, living in a predominantly White environment would present more opportunities for racial/ethnic minority students to engage in cross-racial interactions. Therefore, the research indicating racial/ethnic minority students are more likely to engage in cross-racial interactions and develop close friendships with different-race peers should seem rather intuitive. However, the lack of cross-racial engagement among White students, underscores the reality that postsecondary institutions must actively seek to intentionally construct environmental conditions that facilitate and encourage positive and meaningful interracial engagement in order to reap the educational benefits of racially diverse student body.

This may be especially critical as more racial/ethnic minority student enrollments continue to increase. In fact, Hurtado (1992) determined increases in the representation of racial/ethnic minority students can lead to increased racial conflict when college and



university administrators fail to intentionally focus their efforts on cultivating a student-centered environment with a positive racial climate devoid of intergroup competition for resources. Additionally, the likelihood of racial tension and conflict may continue to increase over time as students' opportunities to positively engage with racially diverse others decline as their home communities and K-12 schools continue to become more racially segregated (Orfield, 2001; Orfield & Chungmei, 2005). With such limited exposure to and experience dealing with diverse others, students may be ill-equipped to engage in interracial interactions (Hurtado, Engberg, Ponjuan, & Landreman, 2002; Radloff and Evans, 2003; Sáenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007). Therefore, college educators must place an emphasis on cultivating campus climates free of racial tension. The findings from this study may provide higher education officials with the knowledge to aid in the construction of such environments.

*Students' perceptions of racial climates and student outcomes.*

A methodologically sound body of research has determined students' assessments of the campus racial climate – measured primarily by their perceptions of racism and prejudice – are related to important aspects of student life and other critical outcomes. For instance, Levin, Van Laar, and Sidanius (2003) found negative perceptions of campus climate caused students to constrict their friendship groups to same-race peers. These findings suggest that poor racial climates can influence students' desire to engage in interracial interactions, thus limiting their opportunities to benefit from many of the cognitive, psychosocial, and interpersonal gains associated with such engagement. Similarly, Nora and Cabrera (1996) and Cabrera, Nora, Terenzini, Pascarella, and Hagedorn (1999) concluded that students' perceptions of prejudice exerted a significant

negative direct influence on their social interactions with peers and academic experiences with faculty and staff. Astin (1993) asserts student-faculty interactions are extremely critical to student development. In his study, he found these interactions were positively associated with gains in overall satisfaction with collegiate experience and a host of critical academic, intellectual, personal, behavioral, career, and attitudinal outcomes. The college student literature clearly indicates that “the extent and content of [students’] interactions with the main agents of socialization on campus – namely, faculty members and students – played a large part in determining the impact of college on students” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 613). However, when racial climates are poor, evidence suggests the influence of these interactions can be negated and in some cases detrimental to student development.

Additionally, several studies (Cabrera et al, 1999; Helm et al, 1998; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Nora & Cabrera, 1996) have also determined negative perceptions of campus climate are negatively related to goal and institutional commitment, overall educational satisfaction, and sense of belonging. Essentially, this literature suggests that when students sense their environment is inundated with racial tension, discrimination, and prejudice, they are also more likely to question their ability to persist to degree completion, feel connected to their institution, and enjoy their collegiate experience.

Such ramifications should not be taken lightly. Research (Nora & Cabrera, 1994; Cabrera et al, 1999) indicates goal commitment is directly related to student persistence, which accompanies various costs. These costs include individual losses in future income for students, institutional losses accrued from inefficient resources investment, and societal losses caused by strains and thwarts to the American economy (Lotkowski,

Robbins, & Noeth, 2004; Porter & Swing, 2006; Swail, n.d; Vernez, Krop and Rydell, 1999). Lotkowski et al. (2004) state, “low retention rates waste human talent and resources, jeopardize our nation’s economic future, and threaten the economic viability of our postsecondary institutions and our country’s democratic traditions” (p. 2). Moreover, student alienation and dissatisfaction with their educational experience resulting from poor perceptions of the campus climate could also affect future monetary investments from college and university alumni since evidence suggests satisfaction with undergraduate experiences is a significant predictor of future giving and donations by alumni (Clotfelter, 2003; Monks, 2003).

Negative perceptions of climate also exert a negative direct influence on the academic and intellectual development for minority students (Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Similarly, Cabrera et al. (1999) concluded perceptions of prejudice and discrimination had a negative direct influence on Black student’s intellectual development. In addition to hindering their academic and intellectual development, perceptions of climate has also been linked to academic performance – measured by GPA – of racial/ethnic minorities. For example, Smedley et al. (1993) determined psychological stressors related to racial/ethnic minority status in a predominantly White collegiate environment was significantly related to poor college adjustment and low academic performance. Negative perceptions of climate do not just affect non-White students. In their study, Nora and Cabrera (1996) determined perceptions of prejudice directly affected the academic performance of White students. Interestingly, they found perceptions of prejudice did not influence the academic performance of Black students. However, other evidence (Nettles, Thoeny, and Gosman, 1986) indicates these feelings are a significant negative predictor

of academic performance for both Black and White students. Although the literature suggests negative perceptions of climate influences various critical student outcomes and other aspects of student life, there is little evidence that perceptions of prejudice and discrimination directly affect student persistence (Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Instead persistence seems to be indirectly influenced, for all students, through many of the constructs described above (e.g., unpleasant interactions with peers and faculty, poor academic performance, low institutional commitment and goal commitment, etc.). Whether this influence is direct or indirect, it seems clear that negative perceptions of climate can have serious detrimental effects on student experiences, development, and outcomes. Considering the possible negative implications on learning, development and persistence, university officials should strive to make campus environments welcoming and comfortable for all students.

#### Dissertation Overview

In this opening Chapter, I have established the theoretical framework driving this experimental investigation and the purpose, significance, and justification of this study. Chapter 2 will examine the research literature in the following areas: 1) racism at PWIs; 2) polarized perspectives of climate and limited interracial engagement among student populations; 3) the changing nature of racism and its implications for research; 4) students pre-college racial attitudes and experiences across race, and 5) the racial attitudes of White college students. Chapter 3 will provide a more thorough description of the study's design, materials, and procedures. Chapter 4 will highlight the procedures used in data analysis and findings. Chapter 5 will include a discussion of findings, implications, directions for future research, and a summary.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Since the Supreme Court declared in 1954 that the “separate but equal” approach to education was “inherently unequal” and, therefore, unconstitutional (Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483), student race-relations, particularly between Blacks and Whites, have become a significant concern for college and university educators. This landmark ruling along with the Civil Right Act of 1964 (Teddlie & Freeman, 2002) significantly increased Black student access to predominantly White institutions (PWIs) of higher education. In 1954, approximately 45,000 Black undergraduates were enrolled at PWIs (Bowles and DeCosta, 1971). However, by 1976 there were roughly 746,150 Black students on these campuses – a 1,558 percent increase (Brown, 2002; NCES, 2006). Although new programs and services were implemented to assist this new influx of students, evidence suggests institutions did very little to create environments conducive for positive and meaningful interracial engagement among students (Peterson, 1978). Consequently, issues involving race, particularly race-relations among Blacks and Whites, at PWIs have been a consistent problem for both students and postsecondary educators throughout the post-segregation era. In this chapter, several aspects of the literature relating to race relations in higher education will be reviewed. First, I shall briefly discuss the experiences of racial/ethnic minority students on predominantly White campuses. Second, the polarized perspectives and limited engagement among different racial/ethnic will be detailed. Third, I will discuss the changing nature of racism and its implications for research examining White racial attitudes. Next, the influence that pre-college attitudes, abilities, and experiences have on

students' collegiate experiences will be discussed. Finally, several findings that emerged from literature on White college students' racial attitudes will be presented.

### Racism on Predominantly White Campuses

Stemming from an analysis of 106 racially motivated incidents reported in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*, Aguirre, Jr. and Messineo (1996) developed a framework for identifying and classifying acts of racism that affect racial/ethnic minority students on campus. They determined that racially motivated incidents can be classified into three distinct categories – person-focused, structural, and cultural racism. Person-focused racism involves bigotry focused on individual students. Examples include physical harm and verbal harassment (e.g., racial epithets). From their analysis Aguirre Jr. and Messineo determined person-focused racism was the second most common form of racism on college and university campuses. Structural racism, which is the least common form of bigotry, involved the overt expression of White supremacist ideals. The authors described incidents involving cultural racism as episodes that “identify symbolic bigotry, such as slave auctions, black face parodies, and derogatory statements, [sic] that target cultural differences (p. 27).” The race-based theme parties, like the one that will be used in this experiment, are examples of incidents involving cultural bias on college campuses. Aguirre, Jr. and Messineo determined such displays of systemic racism accounted for exactly 65% of the incidents that were reported in the two newspapers. Accounts of racial incidents are not only documented in media, these stories of racism seem to be a reoccurring theme in the literature investigating the collegiate experiences of non-White collegians.

Throughout the literature on college students, Black students and other racial/ethnic minority students have repeatedly encountered problems with and differential treatment from White peers, faculty, and staff on predominantly White campuses (Ehrlich, 1994; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2001; Loo & Rolison, 1986; McCormack, 1995; Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000; Solórzano, 2000; Suarez-Balcazar, Orellana-Damacela, Portillo, Rowan, & Andrews-Guillen, 2003; Turner, 1994). These problems broadly range from social exclusion and isolation or pervasive stereotyping of academic ability and cultural norms to verbal and physical harassment. The literature suggests racial/ethnic minority students negotiate experiences with racism, differential treatment, and socially awkward encounters with college and university staff, faculty, and peers on a daily basis. These experiences with racism coupled with their dissatisfaction with culturally biased curricula and the inadequate representation of racial/ethnic minority peers, faculty, and staff create climates and conditions that are often unwelcoming, uncomfortable, and difficult to navigate. Turner (1994) equates the experiences of racial/ethnic minorities at PWIs to being a guest in someone's home. She writes:

Like students of color in the university climate, guests have no history in the house they occupy. There are no photographs on the wall that reflect their image. Their paraphernalia, paintings, scents, and sounds do not appear in the house.  
(Turner, 1994, p. 356)

These words encapsulate the experiences of racial/ethnic minorities on predominantly White campuses. The author suggests this sense of visitation or second class citizenship prevents these students from maximizing their full academic potential and engenders feelings of exclusion, isolation, alienation, and marginalization. As mentioned in the

opening chapter, research literature suggests many of these attitudes and perceptions of the campus racial climate are directly and indirectly related to various negative outcomes, such as educational satisfaction, persistence, student transition and adjustment, sense of belonging, and institutional attachment (Cabrera et al., 1999; Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Smedley, Myers, & Harrell, 1993).

### Polarized Perspectives and Limited Cross-Racial Engagement

Although the literature suggests racial/ethnic minority students experience a chilly campus racial climate, these same perceptions of climate are not shared by their White counterparts. A host of single-campus investigations have revealed students' perceptions of campus racial climate, racism, discrimination, prejudice, and differential treatment are moderated by race (Ancis et al., 2000; Biasco, Goodwin, & Vitale, 2001; Diver-Stammes & LoMascolo, 2001; Globetti et al., 1993; Johnson-Durgans, 1994; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Marcus, Mullins, Brackett, Tang, Allen, & Pruett, 2003; McClelland & Auster, 1990; McCormack, 1995; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Suarez-Balcazar, et al., 2003; Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003). The findings from these single-institution studies have also been confirmed by various multi-campus investigations. Therefore, this review of the literature will focus exclusively on the multi-campus investigations.

In a large quantitative examination of 30 colleges and universities, Nettles et al. (1986) found White students were significantly more likely to feel the university was nondiscriminatory than their Black peers. These findings were later corroborated by Hurtado's (1992) study on campus racial climates. Using nationally representative, longitudinal data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) at UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), she determined White students



perceived significantly less racial tension and more institutional support and commitment to diversity than Black students. However, when juxtaposing the views of White students with those of Latino/Hispanic students there were no statistically significant differences. Again, similar findings were discovered in Mack and colleagues' (1997) study examining interethnic relations on five campuses. They determined that White students were more likely to have a positive view of interracial interactions, while "Black students tended to describe the climate as more hostile, uneasy, and uninviting" (p. 265). Findings revealed that Asian and Latino/Hispanic students' views were moderate in comparison to the perspectives of their Black and White peers.

The most recent and perhaps the most comprehensive study on climate is Rankin and Reason's (2005) 10 campus national study. The authors determined that White students were less likely to experience and observe harassment and describe their institution as racist, hostile, disrespectful, and intolerant of difference. While racial/ethnic minorities believed the climate was worsening, White students reported the campus climates on their campuses were improving. The authors also found that White students were more likely to agree that the institutional leadership addressed racism and visibly fostered diversity, and that the curriculum represented the contributions of underrepresented groups. Interestingly, however, findings revealed White students were less likely to believe workshops, programs, and classes for students and staff that were focused on race would help improve the climate. Perhaps, White students were less likely to advocate the need for these services because of their positive perceptions of the racial climate.

The evidence clearly seems to portray at least two strikingly different perceptions of the campus racial climate for students on predominantly White campuses. At one polar extreme are the experiences of Black students. These students seem to view the environment as unwelcoming, hostile, and intolerant, if not outright racist. White students, on the other hand, perceive very few racial microaggressions in the environment. For them, the climate is much more welcoming, friendly, and tolerant of difference. The realities of other racial/ethnic minorities, such as Asian and Latino/Hispanic students, seem to fall somewhere in the middle. In their study of the racial climate at a small private Ivy League institution, McClelland and Auster (1990) offer an interesting explanation for the polarized perspectives on climate of Black and White students. The authors conclude that the climate consists of two layers. They assert:

On the surface it looks calm: blacks and whites manage to interact on a daily basis with few overt conflicts, and the majority of students on campus feel the racial climate is good. Yet just beneath this surface calm a variety of hidden tensions are evident. Though there are important exceptions, whites and blacks lead somewhat separate social lives. The black/white social distance gap strongly suggests that this is not so much a “voluntary” self-segregation on the part of blacks as it is a defensive response; blacks express far more willingness to associate at intimate levels with whites than whites do with blacks. It is this discrepancy, more than any absolute level of desired association, [sic] that is likely to be significant in contributing to feelings among blacks that whites continue to draw racial lines in their daily lives. Many (though not all) black students expressed these feelings of discomfort directly, both in our survey and in the group discussions. (p. 634-35)

The superficial engagement and social segregation described by McClelland and Auster seems to be a plausible explanation for the polarized perspectives on climate that appear in the research literature. If students are able to live within a relatively small, defined geographic space and sustain very few meaningful interactions across race, it makes sense that their constructed realities of this space could vary by race. McClelland and Auster's (1990) findings are not an anomaly. Similar observations have also been found in other studies examining cross-racial interactions and student friendship groups. (antonio, 1998, 2000; Chang et al., 2004; Hurtado, Dey, & Trevino, 1994; Hurtado, Carter, & Sharp, 1995; Minatoya & Sedlacek, 1980).

These studies have determined that White students are less likely to engage in cross-racial interactions and have close interracial friendships than their racial/ethnic minority peers. For instance, in a survey administered to college students at nearly 400 institutions, Hurtado et al. (1994) found White students were less likely to date, dine, room, and socialize with members outside their own racial/ethnic groups than Black, Asian American, and Latino students. Similarly, Hurtado et al. (1995) found White students engaged in fewer informal cross-racial interactions than racial/ethnic minority students. Evidence also suggests that White students also report having fewer close friendships with different-race peers (antonio, 1998, 2000). antonio's longitudinal studies found that 86% of White students reported that most or all of their close friendships were with same-race peers. Conversely, only 44% of racial/ethnic minority students responded similarly. Statistically, living in a predominantly White environment would present more opportunities for non-Whites to engage in cross-racial interactions. Therefore, the research indicating racial/ethnic minority students are more likely to engage in cross-

racial interactions and develop close friendships with different-race peers should not be surprising. However, any dialogue about interracial engagement should not be limited to statistical probability. Antonio (2004) argues that power and choice should also be examined. He suggests the racial majority controls interracial interactions through their ability to choose whether to engage or ignore members of a minority group. Thus, he writes, “minorities must either assimilate to the dominant norms of the majority or be relegated to the margins of society” (p. 570).

### The Changing Nature of White Racism

Survey research reveals there has been a decline in Whites’ prejudicial attitudes toward Blacks over the past 40 years (Bobo, 2004; Firebaugh & Davis, 1988; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997). At first glance, this positive trend seems to indicate that many of the racist beliefs and stereotypes White Americans have historically held about Blacks are disappearing. However, some skeptics believe a significant portion of Whites still harbor negative beliefs about Blacks. These critics argue that negative racial attitudes are no longer reflected in responses to survey research because the blatant expression of racial prejudices in the post Civil Rights era is regarded as politically incorrect. This social prohibition on the open expression of racist beliefs along with legislation outlawing segregation and discriminatory practices has caused a significant decline in overt, “old fashioned” racism (McConohay, 1986). Instead, racism now manifests itself in more subtle way that, in many instances, has equally dire consequences. In this section, four theories that describe and explain this new contemporary form of White racism will be briefly detailed – aversive racism, symbolic racism, color-blind racism, and implicit

bias. A discussion of the challenges hindering research examining White racial attitudes will conclude this section.

### *Aversive racism*

Aversive racism is a much different form of oppression than overt acts of prejudice and discrimination. According to Kovel (1970) and Gaertner and Dovidio (1986), aversive racists are individuals who endorse egalitarian values and consider themselves non-racists but hold and express, often unconsciously, negative stereotypes and attitudes about Blacks and other racial/ethnic minorities. This form of racism is the result of individuals' unconscious socialization within an American culture laden with race-based prejudice, discrimination, and inequities. This form of racism is typically characterized by avoidance, discomfort, anxiety, and fear directed toward racial/ethnic minorities instead of overt hostility. Typically, since aversive racists consider themselves non-racists, they only express racist beliefs and behaviors when their actions can be justified by factors other than race. For example, an aversive racist might rationalize endorsing a White job applicant over an equally qualified racial/ethnic minority candidate by selectively critiquing, inadvertently or not, the credibility of the minority applicant's qualifications.

### *Symbolic racism*

Although conceptually similar, Sears (1988) defines symbolic racism as "a blend of anti-black affect and the kind of traditional American moral values embodied in the Protestant Ethic" (p. 56). This type of oppression, similar to laissez-faire racism (see Bobo, 2004), is associated with feelings that racism is no longer a problem in contemporary society and that requests by racial/ethnic minorities are both unfair and

unwarranted. Symbolic racists believe race-based social inequalities are the result of cultural deficiencies resulting from racial groups' failure to adopt many of the values held by White Protestant Americans. Some of these principles include morality, respect, honesty, family values, individualization, and hard work. The belief that these values have been rejected by many racial/ethnic minorities ground symbolic racists' opposition to many social programs, such as affirmative action, that are often believed to be initiatives solely designed to assist racial/ethnic minorities. For instance, an symbolic racist might argue against affirmative action in the college admissions process by suggesting prospective students be evaluated solely on the merits of their academic record without any consideration being given to race and other relevant factors. This individual's position on the matter, however, might be based on stereotypical beliefs that cultural deficiencies and effort may be the cause of discrepancies in the achievement gap between Blacks and Hispanic youth and their White and Asian peers. While an aversive racist would not openly express their negative beliefs about racial/ethnic minorities, symbolic racist see no problem making their stereotypes know. In addition, the discomfort and anxiety experienced in interracial interactions by aversive racists, is not a characteristic of symbolic racists.

#### *Color-blind racism*

This form of racism is primarily characterized by a lack of interest in racial matters and an overall feeling of indifference toward race-based inequities that exist. This apathetic feeling toward race coupled with feelings that race is no longer a significant factor in contemporary America is what Forman (2004) labels color-blind racism. Forman argues color-blind racists' expression of racial apathy or indifference is really an

outgrowth of internal resentment and dislike stemming from the idea that racial/ethnic minorities are responsible from their own social conditions. Essentially, color-blind racists believe inequalities across race are the result of negative individual characteristics or group-level cultural deficits. This belief is grounded in the belief that discrimination and systemic racism are nonexistent in today's society. In turn, color-blind racists typically oppose systemic measures to level the proverbial playing field. The key differentiation between this form of oppression and the others detailed above is the outward expression of racial apathy instead of negative sentiments toward racial/ethnic minorities, especially Blacks.

#### *Implicit attitude bias*

Social psychological research suggests human behavior and decision-making may not be completely guided by our conscious thoughts, that is, our explicit attitudes (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). In fact, a growing body of literature indicates that implicit attitudes may have an influence on human behavior (Dasgupta, McGhee, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2000; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998; Greenwald & Krieger, 2006; Ottaway, Hayden, & Oakes, 2001). According to Greenwald and Banaji (1995), "implicit attitudes are introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) traces of past experience that mediate favorable or unfavorable feeling, thought, or action toward social objects" (p. 8). Simply stated, implicit attitudes are evaluative responses to stimuli that automatically occur prior to conscious introspection. These attitudes are the product of past experiences and cultural socialization. Interestingly, implicit attitudes often do not match the explicit attitudes individuals' express, especially on controversial social topics like racial discrimination and prejudice.

Scholars believe dissociations or discrepancies between explicit and implicit attitudes may be largely attributable to individuals' concern with self-presentation and pressure to be politically correct or their simple lack of awareness related to the existence of their implicit thoughts.

Since being introduced by Greenwald and colleagues in 1998, the Implicit Association Test (IAT) has been one of the most popular and widely used measures of implicit cognition (Greenwald & Nosek, 2001). The IAT is a five-step computer task where participants are asked to quickly and correctly respond to visual stimuli that appear on a computer screen. Using either their left or right index fingers, participants are instructed to enter their responses by pressing one of two keyboard keys which are each assigned to a particular target/concept or attribute. When taken correctly, the test can help identify individuals' implicit attitudes by measuring latency response times between any target of interest (e.g., a racial group, a company, or a product) and select words representing an attribute dimension (e.g., good vs. bad, attractive vs. unattractive, smart vs. dumb). In their 1998 experiment, Greenwald and colleagues sought to determine if White students held an implicit racial bias in favor of White over Black. The experimenters conducted the study by using the IAT to test implicit associations between stereotypical White (e.g., Tyler, Matthew, Betsy, & Katie) and Black (e.g., Malik, Lamar, Tanisha, & Kiana) names and pleasant (e.g., lucky, happy, honor) and unpleasant (e.g., lazy, hate, disaster) words. The authors concluded that White college students held an implicit racial bias in favor of Whites. It was also determined that the participants' scores on the IAT were weakly related to explicit measures of prejudice. The authors suggested this finding indicates the IAT may reveal implicit bias "among subjects who explicitly



disavowed any Black-White evaluative difference” (p. 1475). In lieu of their findings, however, Greenwald et al. (1998) assert the implicit favorability to White may be the result of word/stimulus familiarity (the increased familiarity of White names to White students).

In an attempt to control for word/stimulus familiarity, Dasgupta et al. (2000) conducted a similar experiment using the IAT except unfamiliar Black and White faces were used instead of names. Akin to results produced by Greenwald et al. (1998), the findings revealed an implicit racial bias favoring Whites. The use of unfamiliar faces helped debunk the word/stimulus familiarity counter-explanation while providing further evidence that the IAT is a reliable and valid measure of implicit attitudes. The authors also found a very weak correlation between implicit and explicit attitudes, thus replicating the findings of Greenwald et al. (1998). In another similar experiment, Ottaway et al. (2001) replicated Greenwald and colleagues’ (1998) experiment while controlling for word/stimulus familiarity. They found that word familiarity can, in fact, influence performance on the IAT but did not repudiate the internal validity of the IAT as an instrument to measure participants’ implicit attitudes. Ottaway et al. (2001) reached this conclusion because the use of low familiarity words also produced low IAT effect sizes. In addition, the researchers found very little relation between implicit and explicit attitudes.

Since the Race IAT (a version of the IAT that tests implicit attitudes associated with White Americans and Black Americans) was introduced in 1998, scholars have amassed a significant body of evidence that indicates many non-Blacks implicitly hold favorable implicit racial biases toward Whites (71.5% for Whites, 67.5% for Asians &

Pacific Islanders, 60.5% for Hispanics) and unfavorable implicit racial biases toward Blacks (6.8% for Whites, 7.7% for Asian & Pacific Islanders, 10.2% Hispanic) (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006.) So how might this unfavorable racial bias toward Blacks manifest itself in human behavior? In other words, are implicit attitudes predictive of behavior? In their review article on implicit bias, Greenwald and Krieger (2006) determined:

Implicit measures of bias have relatively greater predictive validity than explicit measures in situations that are socially sensitive, like racial interactions, where impression-management processes might inhibit people from expressing negative attitudes or unattractive stereotypes. Additionally, implicit measures have relatively greater validity in predicting spontaneous behaviors such as eye contact, seating distance, and other such actions that communicate social warmth or discomfort. (p. 954-55)

The findings related to implicit attitudes coupled with the theories of aversive, symbolic, and color-blind racism all suggest that the nature of racism, prejudice, and discrimination has changed dramatically over the past half-century. Unfortunately, this body of research also suggests that these social ills are still very much prevalent, if not ingrained, within the social fabric of our society and culture. Given the continuing persistence of these ills and the extent to which they are often concealed, it seems imperative that scholars continue to develop more sophisticated and clandestine research methods when examining issues related to race and other socially-charged topics.

## Challenges Hindering Research on White Racial Attitudes

Given the changing nature of racism, prejudice, and discrimination, it may be necessary to adjust the manner in which researchers examine the racial attitudes of Whites. Clearly, racism is still expressed in open and overt ways on a daily basis; however, more subtle and covert expressions seem to be predominant. According to research, this more “polished” and contemporary form of racism seems to be prevalent among White college students (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Houts Picca & Feagin, 2007; Reason & Evans, 2007). Findings from these studies, which are detailed below, suggest that survey techniques may be insufficient methods for accurately detecting this more subtle and covert form of racism. For example, in a mixed methods examination of White students’ racial attitudes, Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) found participants expressed more racist and prejudice views in their responses to individual interview questions than they did on the survey instrument. During the individual interviews, the researchers also found White students were often hesitant to express their racial views and often answered questions indirectly. The authors suggest participants used “semantic moves” to express their prejudices in “a sanitized way” (p.76). Although participants seemed sympathetic toward the conditions of Blacks, they also blamed Blacks for existing racial inequalities. In addition, the authors found that many of the White students “openly expressed contempt and hostility toward Blacks” (p. 78) and believed structural or systemic racism is nonexistent, racial inequalities are the result of what they perceive to be individual or group cultural deficiencies, a small number of Whites are responsible for discrimination, and Blacks use America’s history of racism as an excuse to complain and underachieve. Bonilla-Silva & Forman (2000) also concluded from the interview data that White

students utilized colorblind and liberal ideologies to support their opposition for institutional measures designed to create racial equality (e.g., busing programs and affirmative action). Often students indicated these measures were unfair, unnecessary, logistically unfeasible, or reverse-discriminatory.

In their study, Houts Picca and Feagin (2007) present a provocative framework for understanding White students' racial attitudes in the context of contemporary forms of racism. In their qualitative study involving the analysis of roughly 9,000 journal entries from 626 White college students, the authors found that White students expressed their racial beliefs and attitudes quite differently in frontstage and backstage settings.

Frontstage settings are public domains where racial/ethnic minorities are present. In these arenas, Whites often invest energy in actively demonstrating they are not racists and avoid interracial interactions and conversations about race with non-Whites. They also utilize aggressive tactics, such as making racist jokes and direct confrontation, to control interactions with non-Whites. Moreover, the authors found White students employ defensive strategies designed to protect themselves from perceived harm from racial/ethnic minorities. Other defensive strategies were also used to defend White culture and privilege.

Backstage settings are private areas where Whites assume they are around like-minded peers, family, and friends. These settings are exclusively White places that are considered safe places for the open expression of racist perspectives. The authors' analysis of the journal accounts revealed that racist speech, pervasive stereotyping, and racist jokes are common in backstage settings. Occasionally in these private spaces, non-racist Whites will confront their same-race peers subtly or more aggressively. However,

non-racists often find themselves uncomfortable with confrontation, fearing the social consequences that might accompany what may be considered betrayal. The backstage is also a place where Whites prepare themselves for engagement with diverse others in the frontstage. They learn what language and behaviors are appropriate in the company of racial/ethnic minorities. Perhaps, most shocking is their findings that Whites often ignore and rationalize racial discrimination and prejudice when it occurs. In addition, they often engage in strategies designed to conceal racist behavior. For example, using vague or code language and nonverbal actions to disguise racist remarks were strategies commonly described in the students' journals. Vague or code language might be using a substitute word or phrase that is understood by insiders to mean something completely different. In one journal a student wrote BG was used to mean Black girl. Another student indicated BT was used among Whites in the restaurant industry to identify tables occupied by Blacks, who are commonly stereotyped as having poor tipping practices. Similarly, eye movement, such as eye aversion or the widening of eyes, were reported to be nonverbal messages that racial outgroup members may be present.

Houts Picca and Feagin (2007) assert racism is still prevalent among many of today's college students. Although students continue to ascribe to many racist beliefs, they are selective about when they express their perspectives. This finding indicates that Whites are consciously aware that the expression of overt racial prejudices is not longer socially acceptable or tolerable. Collectively, the research of Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000), Houts Picca and Feagin (2007), and other scholars (Dovidio, 2001; Henry & Sears, 2002; Sears & Henry, 2003) suggest traditional survey techniques may be obsolete ways to accurately assess the racial attitudes of Whites. While other fields and disciplines

(e.g., social psychologists and sociologists) have begun to adhere to these critiques of survey research, the clear absence of such methodology in the higher education literature and research is evident. In fact, in depth investigations of White students' racial attitudes are nearly absent altogether.

#### The Influence of Pre-college Attitudes, Abilities, and Experiences

Prior to presenting the themes emerging from the literature examining White college students' racial attitudes, it is important to note that students come to college with pre-existing attitudes, abilities, and experiences that will undoubtedly influence their collegiate experiences. Obviously, when students depart for college, they do not immediately abandon their views about the world and its inhabitants, which have been shaped by their pre-college experiences and a host of other background characteristics, such as socioeconomic status and race. In Chang's (2003) national study involving 93 institutions and 5,000 students, he found that there were statistically significant differences in entering students' viewpoints on a variety of contemporary social issues. On issues pertaining to race, the analysis revealed that Whites were less likely than any other racial/ethnic group to believe racial discrimination was a major problem in America and that racist speech should be permitted on campus. Given the racial divide in students' pre-college views on contemporary social matters it seems natural that college students from different racial/ethnic groups would experience and perceive the campus racial climate in very distinct ways.

Moreover, every year colleges and universities open their communities to students who do not always share many of the institution's espoused values. This seems to be especially true when it comes to issues involving race and the appreciation of individual

and group differences. For instance, in a longitudinal investigation of White incoming students, Balenger, Hoffman, & Sedlacek (1992) determined that incoming White students' racial attitudes toward Blacks were consistently negative over a ten year period. These perspectives were in opposition to those of the university; however, these students were welcomed nonetheless. Apparently, institutions invite these students into their communities under the assumption that they will magically adopt the core values of the institution. However, the researchers' discovery that White students' racial attitudes had remained relatively constant for a decade indicates that racist ideals are systemically ingrained in American culture and difficult to change. Altering negative racial biases demands educators devise intentional measures to promote not only racial tolerance but also appreciation for individual and group differences (Balenger et al., 1992). Yet, if these racial attitudes go unchallenged, these negative views could have significant detrimental effects on individual student experiences and outcomes as well as the overall campus racial climate.

In addition to pre-existing perspectives and attitudes, students also bring with them a variety of different skills and experiences. Often students' abilities are highly developed and their experiences diverse; however, in some cases, students' abilities are somewhat underdeveloped and their experiences limited. For many White students, the evidence suggests they are likely to arrive on campus ill-equipped to engage in an increasingly diverse society (Milem & Umbach, 2003). Despite the increased racial/ethnic diversification of the United States, the majority of White youth continue to be raised and educated in predominantly White neighborhoods and K-12 schools (Orfield, 2001; Orfield & Chungmei, 2005). This racial segregation effectively limits

these students' opportunities to meaningfully engage with individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Subsequently, upon their enrollment in higher education, they are often joining communities that are more racially diverse than their pre-college environments. Without prior experience in interracial and cross-cultural interactions, many students come to college without the skills needed to negotiate relationships and interactions with diverse others (Gurin et al., 2002). For example, Milem and Umbach (2003) concluded that due to their limited pre-college engagement with racially diverse peers, White students are less likely to be prepared to engage in diversity experiences in college than their Asian American, Black, and Hispanic/Latino counterparts. In their study, White students reported having more same-race friends prior to college, attending racially homogenous secondary schools, and living in mostly White neighborhoods.

Evidence seems to suggest that racially diverse pre-college environments and interaction with different-race peers are highly related to more frequent and positive diversity experiences in college (Hurtado, Engberg, Ponjuan & Landreman, 2002). Although most research examining college students utilizes samples mostly comprised of White college students, some studies disaggregate data by race to explore trends among racial/ethnic groups. For instance, in their multi-campus investigation involving nine institutions, Sáenz, Ning Ngai, and Hurtado (2007) found studying and interacting with different-race peers prior to college was related to positive interracial interactions for all students during college. However, disaggregating the data by race revealed that these findings were stronger predictors for Whites than for Black and Asian students. Similar findings were also replicated in Milem, Umbach, and Liang's (2004) single campus study examining the pre-college experiences of White students. The authors determined that



pre-college interaction with racially diverse peers, attending a racially diverse high school, and living in a racially diverse neighborhood was a predictor of interracial interaction during college and participation in diversity related college activities.

### White College Students and their Racial Attitudes

Much of the literature examining race in higher education has extensively focused on the experiences of racial/ethnic minority students. As argued in the opening chapter, engaging in such scholarly research is useful in helping postsecondary educators understand the unique needs and challenges facing racial/ethnic minority students. However, the ability for this body of literature to help transform racial climates on predominantly White campuses is limited. Scholars must also engage in research that examines the racial attitudes and interracial experiences of White students. Such research can provide faculty and administrators with a more in depth understanding of how White college students make meaning of issues involving race and construct their own racial identities and perspectives. Unfortunately, there has been very little research literature published on the racial attitudes of White college students in traditional education peer-reviewed journals (Saddlemire, 1996). Therefore, this review of the literature on White college students' racial attitudes will include literature that has been published in other social science venues. Below are several themes that have emerged from the scholarship examining White college students and their racial attitudes.

#### *Change in racial attitudes during college*

Research seems to suggest that college students' racial attitudes improve throughout college. That is, college students' attitudes regarding race/ethnicity become more positive or liberal. In their comprehensive review of the literature on college

students, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) determined that “the evidence points to higher education-related increases in positive attitudes toward racial equality and tolerance as well as increases in awareness and understanding of, and interactions with, people of different racial-ethnic or cultural background” (p. 279). In fact, the authors found that, during college, students experienced increases of .09 standard deviations (4 percentile points) in their understanding of individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Using CIRP data, Astin (1993) also came to a similar conclusion. He found that, over the course of college, students experienced a 4.1% increase in commitment to promoting racial understanding. Also, Astin’s findings revealed that years of college completed was a statistically significant predictor of seniors’ racial attitudes. This finding indicates that college attendance, more specifically each year a student completes, is significantly related to improvements in an attitudes about race/ethnicity.

A large body of research connects these positive increases in students’ racial/ethnic understanding, tolerance, and awareness to a variety of educationally meaningful activities (Milem, 1992; Milem, 1994; Pascarella, Whitt, Nora, Edison, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001). Such activities include: participation in interracial interactions, attending social justice and cultural awareness workshops, taking ethnic studies courses, and discussing social and political issues. In addition, racial attitudes were positively influenced when faculty emphasized diversity and included racially/ethnically diverse materials in their courses (Astin, 1993; Villalpando, 2002).

*Racism is a thing of the past*

Despite the positive increase seen in college students' racial attitudes, evidence indicates that a significant portion of White college students believe racism is no longer a significant issue in this country. In an analysis of the results from the 2005 College Student Survey (CSS) and the 2005 CIRP Freshman Survey that was administered to nearly 36,000 college undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities, Sáenz and Barrera (2007) found that in 17.5% of incoming first-year students and 16.7% of seniors agreed with the statement racism is no longer a major problem. Overall, their research indicates college seniors are slightly less likely than first-year students to believe racism is no longer a problem in American. However, further analysis reveals that this trend does not hold consistent when gender is considered. Whereas, 21.9% of first-year and 23.9% of senior male students thought racism was no longer a problem, 14.8% of first-year and 12.3% of senior female students held this opinion. This finding reveals college men, especially seniors, are much more likely to believe racism is no longer a major concern than college women. Given the overrepresentation of women in the study (62.3% of students were women) it is plausible to conclude that the overall trend regarding a decline in college students' attitudes about the importance of racism may be the result of sampling bias. According to National Center for Education Statistics (2006), women represented 56.6% of students enrolled in four-year institutions during 2005. Also, it is plausible to conclude that the sampling bias could lead to an underestimate with regard to students overall belief that racism is no longer a problem. In addition, because the sample included racial/ethnic minorities (19.1%), who typically evaluate racial issues much differently than Whites, it may also be plausible to assume that White students' opinions

on the significance of race in today's society may be higher than aggregate findings reported by Sáenz and Barrera (2007).

White students' opinion that race and discrimination is no longer a major problem is also present in the qualitative research on White students. Gallagher (2003a, 2003b) came to this conclusion in his qualitative investigations of White college students. In interviews with 89 White college students, Gallagher (2003a) found White students discounted the role slavery plays in shaping the current lives of Black Americans. Many students expressed frustration in what they thought were unreasonable claims from Blacks that racism is the cause of current racial inequalities. Participants even used examples of Black Americans who have succeed in America (e.g., Michael Jackson, Michael Jordan, and Oprah Winfrey) to support their claims that racism is no longer a problem. In another article based on an analysis of 17 focus groups and 30 individual interviews with mostly White students, Gallagher (2003b) also found many White students believed the life opportunities afforded to racial/ethnic minorities were not constricted by prejudice and discrimination. Additionally, most White students expressed that everyone had the same opportunities but hard work determined who was able to capitalize on these opportunities. Students did acknowledge that racism was significant in the past, but suggested racial/ethnic minorities now use racism as an excuse for race-based social inequalities. With respect to these findings, Gallagher concluded the following:

Ignoring the extent or ways in which race shapes life chances validates whites' [sic] social location in the existing racial hierarchy while legitimating the political

and economic arrangements that perpetuate and reproduce racial inequality and privilege (p. 29).

Similarly, in a mixed-methods investigation, Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) found that 35 of 41 White students believed racism and discrimination no longer influenced the lives of racial/ethnic minorities. According to the authors, this belief is largely related to these students definition of racism. In their study, the researchers found White students conceptualized racism on an individual level and not a systemic level. They believed that racism was “prejudice based on race,” “a feeling of racial superiority,” or hating people because of their skin color” (p. 65-66). Very few students understood the racism to be system of racism that privileges some based on their racial/ethnic background. Only five of the 41 students interviewed understood or implied racism was “society, institutional, or structural,” and only two participants believed “racism is part and parcel of American society” (p. 66). Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) and Gallagher (2003a, 2003b), both concluded White students used their beliefs that racism was no longer a significant issue in America to inform their political opinions on institutional measures (e.g., affirmative action) to correct race-based social inequalities seen in society.

*“They” make race an issue*

Gallagher (2003b) discovered White students viewed racial identification as a matter of choice. Overall, the participants believed race was nothing more than mere background cultural information. The students in Gallagher’s study believed race/ethnicity was nothing more than mere affinities for certain music, foods, or clothes. The participants also suggested that by stressing racial distinctions, Blacks make their

race/ethnicity a larger issue than it should be. In addition, Gallagher reports that White students insinuated Blacks caused problems for themselves by choosing to embrace their racial identity instead of assimilating toward White cultural norms. Also, he found White students view their choice to express pride in their Irish ethnic background on St. Patrick's Day as similar to Blacks' expression of their racial identity. Gallagher indicated the participants failed to understand that "being ethnic" for a day has no social repercussions.

In another study, Gallagher (2003a) reported White students expressed frustrated with what they perceived to be "overexcessive" embraces racial/ethnic identity. In this study, Gallagher indicated one student said:

I mean you should be proud of who you are, be proud of what you are, and not overly proud, accept who you are and don't make a big deal about it. I mean, I think they tend to make a big deal of it. It's like well, I can see that you're black. You don't have to wear the shirt telling me that you are, you know. (p. 156)

These frustrations, according to Gallagher (2003a), stemmed from resentment that Blacks are able to promote their race/ethnicity while Whites cannot do so without being labeled racist. Gallagher (2003a) suggests these students perceived this as a racial double standard.

### *White Visibility*

Another theme that seems to be emerging in the literature is that White students are becoming more conscious of their racial identity. As Giroux (1997) and Kincheloe (1997) both argue, Whiteness is no longer an unconscious privilege. Due to the increased media emphasis being placed on race and racial politics, White youth are now forced to

grapple with questions related to racial identity (Giroux, 1997; Kincheloe, 1999). In his research Gallagher (1995) asserts that many White students are beginning to explore and develop their racial identity; however, “this is accomplished by constructing an identity that negated white oppressor charges and framed whiteness as a liability” (p. 309). This sense of White victimization was based on their color-blind beliefs that race is not, and should not, be significant in contemporary society. Interestingly, however, these students also felt that the expression of their racial identity was socially oppressed. They felt being proud of being White was nearly impossible without being seen as racist. Gallagher (1995) found this dilemma manifested itself in anger and resentment toward racial/ethnic minorities, mainly Blacks.

### Summary

The research literature and theory discussed in this chapter provide further justification for the need to conduct research on White students’ racial attitudes. The research clearly suggests that race-relations among students continue to be problematic. This crisis is evidenced by the continued reoccurrence of racial incidents, the polarized perspectives of the climate across racial lines, and the limited cross-racial engagement among students. The shift from overt to more discreet or passive forms of racism coupled with White students’ desire to deny and conceal discriminatory or prejudicial attitudes and behaviors at all costs, make investigating the continuing significance of race quite difficult. Therefore, it is imperative that researchers adopt methods, like the experimental design used in this study, that allow White racism to be explored and deconstructed.

### **Chapter 3: Methods**

In this chapter, the methods utilized in this experiment are detailed. Using experimental procedures and a theoretical framework grounded in stereotype threat, this investigation examines how different administrative and collective student responses following a race-based theme party affect the experience of stereotype threat, thus influencing White students' 1) perceptions of the campus racial climate and 2) attitudes about diversity and cross-racial engagement. As detailed in Chapter 1, this experiment will test the hypothesis that racially-charged incidents can negatively influence perceptions of campus racial climates and interracial engagement among students by placing White students in situations where they must negotiate the personal threat of possibly being perceived as racist. If not properly handled, it is this threat that may lead to reactions and behaviors (e.g., colorblind ideologies, avoidance behaviors, victim blaming) that may prove destructive to the overall campus climate and campus racial relations. It is expected that manipulations of the administrative and student responses to the race-based theme party will alter students' experience of stereotype threat, thus influencing their responses to the dependent variables of interest. The first section of this chapter describes the design of the experiment and the participants. Next, a detailed explanation of the materials used in this study, the experimental procedure, and a description of the various conditions will be presented. The final section of this chapter will present the specific hypotheses.

#### **Design and Participants**

A six cell between-subjects design was used in this experiment. One hundred and twenty-four participants were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions (roughly 20



participants per condition). All participants were undergraduates at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park campus. Additionally, all participants were 18 years of age or older and self-identify as White. Participants meeting this profile (PSU White undergraduates who were at least 18 years of age) were recruited from the institution's Department of Psychology research subject pool. Students who have participated in similar experiments were excluded from participation using the subject pool website's filtering options for participant selection. Research credit, which is needed to satisfy undergraduate coursework requirements in psychology, was awarded to students as compensation for their participation.

#### Materials (See Appendix A)

##### *White Identity Centrality*

Participants were asked to respond to an eight-item measure of ethnic identity centrality, measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Possible scores range from 8 to 56; higher scores represent strong racial identity. This scale is a modified version of Sellers and colleagues' Black identity centrality sub-scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997). This scale was modified to work for all racial groups by replacing the word "Black" with the phrase "a member of my racial group." This measure of White identification was added as a control measure. The scale should help determine if individuals with a strong White identity are more susceptible to the threat of being perceived as a racist. This particular measure was chosen because it provides both a trait and state measure of racial identity. Centrality is a trait measure of racial identity because it measures the extent to which race is a consistent core part of an individual's self-concept. This measure also accounts for racial salience.

Salience is a state measure because it tries to determine how important race is to an individual's self-concept at a particular moment in time. Although intrinsically different, these two constructs are closely related. For instance, the more central an individual's racial identity, the more likely it is to become salient in certain situations (Sellers et al., 1997).

#### *Motivation to Control Prejudice*

Participants also responded to Dunton and Fazio's (1997) Motivation to Control Prejudice scale. This ten-item scale is measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Possible scores on this measure range from 10 to 70. Higher scores indicate increased motivation to control prejudice. This scale is designed to measure an individual's concern with controlling their expression of prejudice. Plant and Devine (1998) assert this concern is motivated by both internal and external sources. Internal motivation stems from an individual's own personal concern with appearing prejudiced. For example, a question measuring the internal component is: "I attempt to act in non-prejudiced ways toward Black people because it is personally important to me." Alternatively, external motivation stems from an individual's personal concern with appearing prejudiced to others. An example of a question measuring the external component is: "I try to hide any negative thoughts about Black people in order to avoid negative reactions from others." On the surface this external component may seem similar to stereotype threat; however, external motivation to control prejudice is thought of as a trait measure (i.e., a personal characteristic) and stereotype threat is conceptualized as a situational threat induced by environmental stimuli. This scale was included to control for any changes in the dependent variables of interest that may be

caused by individuals' concern with self-presentation, whether it be trait or state influenced.

#### *Attitudes Towards Blacks*

Brigham's (1993) twenty-item Attitudes Towards Blacks scale was also administered in this experiment. Like the other measures in this first packet, this scale is measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Possible scores range from 20 to 140, and higher scores indicate more prejudice toward Blacks. This scale was included to measure of participants' explicit prejudicial attitudes toward Blacks. Using this measure will help determine if possible changes to the dependent variables are related to participants' prejudicial attitudes toward Blacks. This particular scale was chosen over other measures, such as McConahay's (1986) Modern Racism Scale, because of its strong reliability rating – Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.88$  and its contemporary social relevance and comprehensiveness (Brigham, 1993).

#### *Inter-ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans (IATAA)*

The Inter-ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans scale (Britt, Boniecki, Vescio, Biernat, & Brown, 1996) has eleven items and is measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strong disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Possible scores range from 11 to 77. Higher scores on this measure correspond to more anxiety. This scale measures the level of anxiety individuals have in their personal interactions with Blacks. This instrument detects what can be understood as trait-based level of threat (anxiety). Essentially, the IATAA measures the anxiety that participants' consistently experience in their daily interactions with African Americans.

Research suggests anxiety in interracial interactions can lead to a host of harmful outcomes, such as increased stereotyping, avoidance behavior, and hostility toward outgroup members (Devine, Evett, & Vasquez-Suson, 1996; Greenland & Brown, 1999; Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Stephan, Stephan, Demitrakis, Yamada, & Clason, 2000; Stephan, Diaz-Loving, & Duran, 2000). This anxiety stems from expectations derived from previous interactions with members of different racial/ethnic groups (Britt et al., 1996; Plant & Devine, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Because anxiety seems to play a significant role in interracial interactions, this scale was included to determine the relationship among anxiety, stereotype threat, and the dependent variables of interest. This particular measure of anxiety was chosen primarily because it focused specifically on anxiety toward Blacks.

#### *Stereotype Threat*

Participants also responded to a five-item scale designed to measure stereotype threat as it pertains to the threat of being perceived as a White racist (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008). This scale is measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Higher scores indicate an elevated experience of stereotype threat. The items in this scale are designed to measure how concerned participants are with being labeled a racist or stereotyped as prejudiced because they are White.

#### *Campus Racial Climate*

Participants responded to 31 questions gauging their perceptions of the campus racial climate. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Many of these questions are modified

versions of various questions obtained from the higher education racial climate and diversity literature cited in Chapter 1 and 2. The questions cover students' 1) personal experiences with campus racism, prejudice, and differential treatment; 2) overall assessments of climate; and 3) perceptions of institutional support and commitment to racial/ethnic diversity.

#### *Attitudes about Diversity and Interracial Engagement*

Participants were also asked to answer 23 questions that assessed their attitudes about diversity and interracial engagement. Many of the questions used to measure this variable are also modified versions of various questions obtained from the higher education racial climate and diversity literature cited in Chapter 1 and 2. Eighteen of these items are scored on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Two other items are also scored on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from “no problem” (1) to “big problem” (7). The final question is an open ended question requiring written responses.

#### *Openness to Diversity and Challenge*

Participants were also asked to respond to Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini's (1996) Openness to Diversity and Challenge scale. This scale measures a student's “enjoyment from being intellectually challenged by different values, ideas, and perspectives as well as an appreciation for racial, cultural, and value diversity” (Pascarella et al., 1996, p. 179). The measure contained eight items and was measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

### *Pluralistic Orientation*

Pluralistic Orientation (Engberg, 2007) refers to an “ability to work cooperatively with diverse people; the ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues; openness to having one’s views challenged; and tolerance of others with different beliefs” (p. 285). This scale consists of five items that are measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The important distinction between the two measures is that Engberg’s scale measures perceived ability, while Pascarella and colleagues’ scale measures enjoyment and openness.

### Procedure

A description of the study was posted on the subject pool’s website for potential participants. This description was intentionally void of any specific references to race and diversity. This vague description was provided in order to prevent possible participant selection biases that may arise from examining such a socially-charged topic. Therefore, all participants enrolled in the experiment believing that they were coming in to participate in a focus group discussion on “PSU student life.” Since students thought they would be contributing to a focus group discussion, several students (between four and six) were scheduled to participate in the experiment at one time. Upon their arrival, all participants were greeted outside the specified location by an experimenter. All experimenters were White female undergraduates who worked in Dr. Phillip Atiba Goff’s social psychology laboratory. To ensure all participants experiences were similar, experimenters were instructed to use a script (see Appendix B). After greeting participants, the experimenter would confirm that everyone is there for the correct experiment. Participants were then provided with an informed consent sheet and a

demographic questionnaire. After completing these documents, the participants were given the first of two packets of surveys to complete. However, prior to asking the students to answer these questions, the experimenter lead the participants to believe that another group of students, who were supposedly completing the same questionnaires in a different room, would also be taking part in the focus group discussion. The experimenter then instructed the participants to complete the first packet. While the participants were completing the questions, the experimenter informed them that she was going to leave the room to check on the progress of the other group, which, in reality, does not exist.

This first packet of measures included the following scales: Attitudes Towards Blacks, White identity centrality, and Motivation to Control Prejudice. This first packet of measures was disseminated to participants before they were placed in a situation that may induce stereotype threat (i.e., the threat manipulation). Therefore, the data from these measures can be used to help refute alternative hypotheses to the study's results and enhance the overall ability to interpret the findings from this investigation.

After returning, the experimenter collected the informed consent, demographic questionnaire, and first packet of surveys. Next, each participant was randomly presented with one of the experimental conditions described below and the second packet of surveys. Included in this second packet were questionnaires designed to measure stereotype threat, Inter-ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans, climate, attitudes toward diversity and interracial engagement, openness to diversity and challenge, and pluralistic orientation. Before the participants were instructed to begin working through this packet, they were told that the focus group discussion will be examining how racial/ethnic differences influence PSU student's experiences and perspectives.

Participants were also informed that they will be asked to discuss the racial incident described in their packets during the focus group. In addition, participants were notified that the other group of students participating in the focus group discussion all self-identify as African American, Black, or African. As articulated in the Chapter 1, prior research suggests that this experimental manipulation (i.e., this description of the theme party involving Blackface and racial stereotypes coupled with the information presented to the students about the specifics of the focus group discussion) may be enough to induce stereotype threat among participants (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008; Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998; Vorauer, Hunter, Main, & Roy, 2000). After everyone finished the second packet and all materials had been collected, the experimenter probed participants for any suspicions by distributing a two question survey, exposed the true purpose of the experiment, revealed the reasons for using deception, and thoroughly debriefed the students.

#### Experimental Condition Descriptions (See Appendix C)

##### *Condition 1 – No Response Condition*

In Condition 1, participants were presented with a written description of a fictitious college theme party at PSU that was based on racial/ethnic stereotypes. Although the incident did not actually occur at PSU, the described incident is a slightly modified version of a Clemson University student's Facebook.com account of a party that happened on that campus. Before this description is provided, participants were given some background information on these types of incidents and several pictures of college students posing for pictures at race-based theme parties. One picture displays a White student dressed as a police officer holding a firearm to the head of another White



student in Blackface posing as a Black slave, who is on his knees picking cotton and placing it into a bucket.

Following this introductory information was the actual description of the PSU party. Participants were informed that this description was taken, verbatim, from a PSU student's Facebook.com page. The race/ethnicity of the student, who posted the note on Facebook.com, was not specified and an androgynous name (Taylor Smith) was used to control for the possible effect of gender. This written account described a party on Martin Luther King Day where White PSU students appropriated behaviors stereotypically associated with Black Americans. In the description, some students were described as holding and drinking 40 ounce bottles of malt liquor and wearing gaudy jewelry, fitted baseball caps, jerseys, and fake "grills" (i.e., gold teeth). Moreover, some students were described as appearing at the party in Blackface. Following this description, there were several pictures of students engaging in these actions. Because participants did not receive any materials describing the administrative or collective student responses to this incident, this first condition is called the "No Response" condition. Also, it should be noted that all the pictures that were used in this experiment were pictures from actual situations that were posted on public internet websites.

#### *Conditions 2 and 3 – Collective Student Responses*

Conditions 2 and 3 were designed to examine the influence different collective student responses to race-based theme parties have on the dependent variables of interest. In Condition 2 the collective student response consisted of only Black students. Therefore, this second condition will be referred to as the "Black Student" condition. In contrast, White and Black students both participated in the collective response in

Condition 3. Therefore, this condition will be named the “Diverse Student” condition. In both of these conditions, participants were presented with the same description of the theme party described in the “No Response” condition. After reading this description, participants also read that several student groups had planned to demonstrate their outrage over the incident and their dissatisfaction with racism on campus. These plans included protesting, contacting alumni and media outlets, and disrupting campus events. In the “Black Student” condition, the names of the student groups planning to take action were names that are generally associated with Black students (e.g., NAACP & Black Caucus). Contrastingly, in the “Diverse Student” condition, one White student group (e.g., White Students for Social Justice) had planned to take collective action along with the other Black student groups.

Participants then read individual comments from six students that were supposedly taken from Facebook.com postings. All of these comments were, in some manner, speaking out against the party and overall campus climate. For instance, one student said the following:

This is an issue that should be handled immediately. To ANYONE who thinks that we should just ignore it and they are just exercising their free speech rights...well, maybe you should reconsider how it may feel to be the one being imitated. That stuff is not funny in any shape, form, or fashion. It is degrading and humiliating to African Americans. I really hope that no one takes this as a joke.

And what makes it worse is that they decided to do it on MLK Day.

Pictures of the students speaking out against the event were also placed next to their individual comments. Only comments that could have been said by both White and Black

students were chosen. In the “Black Student” condition, the pictures aligned with the six comments were all of Black students. In “Diverse Student” condition, four of the six pictures of Black students were replaced with pictures of White students (Note – All pictures of students were pretested to ensure similarity in attractiveness). Again, all pictures representing PSU students in this experiment were taken from public internet websites.

#### *Conditions 4 and 5 – Administrative Responses*

Conditions 4 and 5 were designed to examine the influence administrative responses to race-based theme parties have on the dependent variables of interest. In both of these conditions, participants were presented with the same description of the theme party described in the “No Response” condition. Next, participants read a letter from university administrators addressing and responding to the event. This letter expresses their concern and displeasure with the incident, reaffirms their position on discrimination and harassment, and outlines measures that will be taken to address the issue. In Condition 4, the letter indicates students will not be sanctioned for their participation in the event. Therefore, this condition was referred to as the “No Punishment” condition. In Condition 5, the letter announces the university’s plans to sanction and suspend the students involved in the incident. Thus, this fifth condition was referred to as the “Punishment” condition. In both conditions, pictures of six different university administrators were presented in the left margin of the letter. The pictures are identical in both administrative responses (Note – Pretesting was conducted to ensure these pictures and those used in the collective student response conditions were similar with respect to attractiveness). It should also be noted that, the administrative and student response

conditions have roughly the same number of words and are approximately the same length.

#### *Condition 6 – Control Condition*

The sixth condition was the “Control” condition, which is designed to obtain a baseline measure of the dependent variables of interest when no party or response is present. In this final condition, students were provided with a description of changes that have been made to on-campus dining by the PSU Office of Housing and Food Services. Pictures of students eating at various campus locations were also included. The materials in this condition were approximately the same in length and number of words as those presented to participants in the “No Response” condition (Condition 1). Moreover, the pictures in both conditions are the same in number and size.

### Hypotheses

#### *Stereotype Threat*

This experiment is based on the premise that the occurrence of a theme party based on racial stereotypes will cause White students to experience stereotype threat. It is this threatening experience that is expected to account for the change in students’ responses to questions about the racial climate and their attitudes toward diversity and interracial engagement. It is also believed that the environmental responses to this party (i.e., the collective response of administrators and students) have the potential to alter the experience of stereotype threat (i.e., increase or decrease the experience of threat) and its behavioral manifestations. Essentially, when threat is high it is expected that students will engage in behaviors or adopt philosophies that will help them personally negotiate the

threat of being perceived as racist. It is expected that threat will be highest in the “Black Student” and “No Punishment” conditions.

In the “Black Student” condition, it is expected that the sole participation of Black students in the collective response is likely to increase White students experience of stereotype threat. Participants may believe that the Black students may be blaming White students as a collective group instead of the individuals responsible for the act itself. If it is believed that White people are collectively being blamed for the theme party, participants may perceive this as a personal threat to their identity. Also, participants in the “Black Student” condition might evaluate this response as the “typical Black overreaction” to racial issues. This reaction may diminish the significance of the incident in the minds of the participants (i.e., White students). However, in the “Diverse Student” condition, White student engagement in the collective response may, in the minds of participants, provide some credibility to the communal outrage over the incident. In addition, if White students are involved in response, their participation may lead participants to believe that blame is not being placed on White students as a collective group but, instead, on the specific perpetrators. In participants’ minds, this removal of blame from their identity group may reduce their experience of stereotype threat. Therefore, it is expected that stereotype threat in the student response conditions will be highest for the “Black Student” response condition.

Between the administrative responses, it is believed that stereotype threat will be highest in the “No Punishment” condition. Akin to White student participation, punishment from administration is expected to decrease the experience of stereotype threat. When the institution fails to respond with some sort of sanction, students may feel

the situation needs closure and hasn't been adequately addressed. Without significant closure in the form of punitive sanctions, participants may believe that blame has not been properly dispensed. Without blame being placed on the particular individuals responsible for the incident, White students may in some capacity feel as if their racial group may be perceived as responsible by their different race-peers. If White students ascribe to this belief, it is possible that the resulting discomfort caused by the administrative response may trigger stereotype threat.

### *Perceptions of Campus Climate*

As previously mentioned, it is expected that participants will adopt philosophies or behave in ways that will help insulate themselves from the threat of being perceived as racist. Therefore, participants in the "Black Student" and "No Punishment" conditions, where threat is expected to be highest, will evaluate the campus climate in ways that personally help them cope with the experience of stereotype threat. Specifically, when students feel threatened, it is expected that they will report higher levels of personal experiences with racism, prejudice, and differential treatment. It is hypothesized that by highlighting and focusing on their own experiences with oppression, participants may be better able to negotiate the experience of threat by viewing themselves as victims. Perhaps, overemphasizing their own victim status may decrease the salience of the incident's reflection of the overall campus racial climate. In addition, it is expected that participants, under threatening conditions, evaluate the climate more positively. That is, students will diminish the prevalence of racism and discrimination on campus, evaluate the racial climate for racial/ethnic minorities more positively, and favorably assess the institution's commitment to and support for racial/ethnic diversity. By making these

evaluations, participants are essentially diminishing the influence race has everyday campus experiences. Therefore, devaluing this impact may decrease the likelihood that participants may be seen as racist or benefactors of and contributors to systemic racism. If there is no racism, how can they possibly be racists?

#### *Attitudes about Diversity and Interracial Engagement*

When asked about their attitudes about diversity and interracial engagement, it is expected that participants, under threatening conditions, will also provide answers that will allow them to mentally navigate the experience of stereotype threat. Again, in the “Black Student” and “No Punishment” conditions, where threat is expected to be highest, participants will minimize the importance of racial/ethnic diversity. Cheapening the value of this aspect of diversity diminishes the need for participants to engage in interracial interactions. By limiting their interactions with different-race peers, participants might be less likely to encounter situations where stereotype threat could be activated.

Furthermore, it is expected that participants, under threatening conditions, will report lower levels of de facto racial segregation on campus. By indicating low levels of racial segregation exist on campus, participants may be able to psychologically escape the reality that race is a problematic issue on campus. Again, this devaluation of race could potentially help reduce the likelihood that participants could be viewed as prejudice.

Participants may find solace in the idea that there cannot be any racists without racism.

Also, it is expected that participants will place the blame for segregation and the responsibility of ending segregation on racial/ethnic minorities. Blaming and placing responsibility on racial/ethnic minorities may allow the White participants to escape the ultimate responsibility for causing and fixing racial segregation. Displacing this

responsibility could help participants better negotiate the experience stereotype threat. Finally, it is expected that threat will cause students to be less open to diversity and challenge and report a lower perceived ability to interact across difference and negotiate challenge.



## Chapter 4: Data Analysis & Findings

After data collection, a database containing the participants' responses was created in Microsoft Excel. While working in Microsoft Excel, the data were prepared for statistical analysis. Next, the database was imported into SPSS, a statistical software analysis package. This chapter presents: 1) the sample characteristics, 2) the variables (constructs) used in the analysis, and 3) the findings from the exploration of the role of stereotype threat in this experiment. The final section of this chapter presents some unexpected findings regarding IATAA that emerged during the analysis of the data.

### Sample Characteristics

One hundred twenty-four (124) students participated in this experiment. Participants were randomly assigned to the six conditions: "No response" (n = 22), "Black Student" (n = 20), "Diverse Student" (n = 20), "No Punishment" (n = 20), "Punishment" (n = 21), and "Control" (n = 21). Prior to engaging in the experiment, participants completed a demographic profile sheet. Nearly all of the participants were United States citizens (98.4%) and native English speakers (99.2%). One hundred five participants (84.7%) reported growing up in a traditional two-parent household, and 113 participants (91.1%) considered themselves to be middle or upper-middle class. Seventy percent of the students indicated Pennsylvania was their home state. Also, 97.6% of the participants identified as heterosexual.

Seventy-four participants (59.7%) were first-year students, and 32 (25.8%) were sophomores. Eighteen participants (14.6%) were juniors and seniors. Fifty-seven participants (46.0%) were men and 67 (54.0%) were women. The sample distribution for

academic majors included humanities (n=26, 21.1%); social sciences and education (n=32, 25.8%); science, technology, engineering, and math – STEM (n=22, 17.7%); business (n=20, 16.1%); and undecided (n=23, 18.5%). With respect to political orientation, 30 (24.2 %) participants identified as liberal, 24 (19.4%) as moderately liberal, 33 (26.6%) as moderate, 20 (16.1%) as moderately conservative, and 17 (13.7%) as conservative. In addition, forty (32.3%) participants reported they had taken some sort of diversity course that addressed issues related to gender, race, class, and sexual orientation. The other 84 (67.7%) participants indicated that they had taken no such course.

The distribution for father's education level was: no or some college (n=35, 28.9%), bachelor's degree (n=40, 33.1%), and graduate degrees (n=46, 38.0%). Participants reported their mother's education level as: no or some college (n=31, 25.8%), bachelor's degree (n=52, 43.3%), and graduate degrees (n=37, 30.8%). Also, using the hometown zip codes provided by each participant and the United States Census Bureau's Census 2000 database (United States Census Bureau, 2000), I determined (for each participant) the percentage of Blacks in their zip code and the percentage of their zip code that is considered rural. Ninety-four percent of participants were from zip codes where fewer than 10% of population was Black. In 2006, Blacks represent 10.7% of Pennsylvania's total population (United States Census Bureau, 2008). No participants were from predominantly Black home communities. Also of note, nearly half (48.7%) of participants were from home environments where less than 6% of the area in the zip code was considered rural. Only about 15% of participants were from areas where greater than

40% of the land is designated as rural. A summary table of select sample characteristics is listed on Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample Characteristics**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N(% of sample)</b>
<i>Year in School</i>	
First-year students	74 (59.7%)
Sophomores	32 (25.8%)
Juniors & Seniors	18 (14.6%)
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	57 (46.0%)
Female	67 (54.0%)
<i>Academic Major</i>	
Humanities	26 (21.1%)
Social sciences (including Education)	32 (26.0%)
STEM	22 (17.9%)
Business	20 (16.3%)
Undecided	23 (18.7%)
<i>Political Orientation</i>	
Liberal	30 (24.2%)
Moderately liberal	24 (19.4%)
Moderate	33 (26.6%)
Moderately conservative	20 (16.1%)
Conservative	17 (13.7%)
<i>Diversity Course</i>	
Yes	40 (32.3%)
No	84 (67.7%)
<i>Father's Education</i>	
No or some college	35 (28.9%)
Bachelor's degree	40 (33.1%)
Graduate degree	46 (38.0%)
<i>Mother's Education</i>	
No or some college	31 (25.8%)
Bachelor's degree	52 (43.3%)
Graduate degree	37 (30.8%)

## Variables

A distinct principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted for each of the four surveys measuring climate and interracial engagement that were created for this experiment (i.e., personal experiences with racism and discrimination, overall assessment of climate, institutional support and commitment for racial/ethnic diversity, and attitudes toward racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement – See Appendix A). Kaiser's rule and the Cattell scree test were the criterion used to identify potential constructs (Mertler & Vannatta, 2001). Kaiser's rule suggests that only constructs with eigenvalues greater than one should be considered. An eigenvalue is the amount of variance accounted for by each factor. The Cattell scree test is a visual examination of the scree plot (i.e., a plot of the eigenvalues). Stevens (1992) recommends that only factors with eigenvalues plotted on the sharp descent of the line should be considered. All factors that occur after the line levels should not be used in analysis.

After identifying the number of constructs, two other rules were used to strengthen the reliability of these constructs. First, individual items that did not load at or above .45 were not included in the final construct. Second, individual items that loaded on multiple constructs were eliminated. Finally, four items were eliminated because the questions were either difficult to interpret or did not logically fit with the other items in that specific construct (factor). These criteria were used to construct eight measures from the 49 questions measuring racial climate and attitudes toward diversity and cross-racial engagement that were administered to participants. Of these 49 items, only 30 items met

the selection criteria and were included in the 8 constructs that were created specifically for this experiment.

Additionally, separate principal components factor analyses were conducted for each scale that was taken from existing research [i.e., White Identity Centrality (Sellers et al., 1997), Motivation to Control Prejudice (Dunton and Fazio's, 1997), Attitudes Towards Blacks (Brigham, 1993), Interethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans (Britt et al., 1996), Stereotype Threat (Goff et al., 2008), Pluralistic Orientation (Engberg, 2007), & Openness to Diversity and Challenge (Pascarella et al., 1996)]. Again, Kaiser's test and the Cattell scree test were used to identify the number of factors. Items that did not load above .45 were not included in the final construct.

In total, the procedures outlined above resulted in four control variables and 12 dependent variables. In addition to these variables, several other control variables were created using the sample statistics data. These demographic control variables were needed to account for the effect of students' characteristics in the linear regression analyses exploring the predictive power of stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety. The rationale for including each of the variables is listed in the next section.

### *Control Variables*

The control variables used in this experiment were White Identity Centrality, Internal and External Motivation to Control Prejudice, Attitudes Towards Blacks, and several demographic constructs. More specific details regarding the composition, validity and measurement of these variables are provided in following subsections.

*White Identity Centrality.* During the experiment, participants were administered a modified version of Sellers et al's (1997) eight-item measure of identity centrality. A

confirmatory factor analysis revealed that one item did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the construct for this sample. Therefore, the final measure of White identity centrality was a seven-item scale with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Some items were reversed scored. High scores on this construct represent a strong racial identity, and low scores signify a weak racial identity. See Appendix D for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Motivation to Control Prejudice.* As described in Chapter 3, individuals are both internally and externally motivated to control the expression of prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998). Therefore, using both the theoretical rationale and the results of the factor analysis, two five-item scales were created. Items contributing to these constructs were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Some items were reversed scored. Cronbach's alpha for the internal and external motivation to control prejudice is 0.87 and 0.73, respectively. High scores on this construct indicate a higher desire to control expressions of prejudice while low marks represent a low desire to hide prejudicial behavior. See Appendix D for specific details about the items of each construct. When referred to in the text, IMCP will represent internal motivation to control prejudice and EMCP will represent external motivation to control prejudice.

*Attitudes Toward Blacks (ATB).* During the experiment, participants completed Brigham's (1993) ATB scale. This measure consists of 20 questions gauging participants' attitudes towards Blacks. Two of the 20 items did not meet the criteria needed for inclusion, so the remaining 18 items were used to create a single construct. This construct

has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.88. Items contributing to these constructs were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Some items were reverse scored. The scale is an explicit measure of participants' racial attitudes toward Blacks. High scores indicate more positive attitudes towards Blacks, while low scores represent more negative or racist feelings about Blacks. See Appendix D for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Demographic Controls.* The demographic control variables used in this study were gender, academic major, year in school, political ideology, father's educational background, mother's educational background, and diversity class. Each of these student characteristics have been found in previous research to be related to students' racial awareness and understanding or attitudes about diversity. For example, Springer, Palmer, Terenzini, Pascarella, and Nora (1996) determined that college women hold more favorable attitudes about diversity than college men. This gender difference remained significant while controlling for college major, which has also been found to be related to student's racial attitudes (Astin, 1993, Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, Springer et al. 1996). Moreover, a substantial amount of evidence also suggests college attendance and years of college completed is related to increased liberalism, which includes reported gains in racial tolerance, awareness, and understanding (Astin, 1993; Case & Greeley, 1990; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Parental educational background and enrollment in diversity-related courses have also been found to be related to students' racial attitudes (Astin, 1993, Chang, 2002, Gurin et al., 2002; Milem, 2003; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In addition to these demographic control variables, participant's performance on

the manipulation check was also used a control variable. Appendix E contains the variable type and codes for each of the demographic control variables.

#### *Dependent Variables*

*Stereotype Threat.* Goff et al's (2008) Stereotype Threat measure consists of five-items measuring participants' concern with being perceived as racist. However, the factor loading for one of the items did not meet the selection criteria. Therefore, only four items were used to create the stereotype threat construct for this sample. This construct has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. The four items were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores indicate a higher concern with being stereotyped as racist, and low scores signify very little concern with being perceived racist. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Interethnic Attitudes Toward African Americans (IATAA).* This construct measures the level of anxiety that individuals have in their personal interactions with Blacks. Ten of the eleven items on Britt et al's (1996) IATAA measure were used to create this construct. The factor loading for one item did not load at or above 0.45, so it was excluded. Cronbach's alpha for this construct was 0.85. The items in this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Some items were reverse scored. High scores on this construct signify higher levels of anxiety, and low scores indicate lower levels of anxiety. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Pluralistic Orientation.* Pluralistic orientation (Engberg, 2007) refers to an "ability to work cooperatively with diverse people; the ability to discuss and negotiate



controversial issues; openness to having one's views challenged; and tolerance of others with different beliefs" (p. 285). This construct consists of five items and has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79. The items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Higher scores on this construct indicate a more advanced pluralistic orientation among participants while lower scores signify a weaker orientation. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Openness to Diversity and Challenge (ODC).* This construct measures participants' "enjoyment from being intellectually challenged by different values, ideas, and perspectives as well as an appreciation for racial, cultural, and value diversity" (Pascarella et al., 1996, p. 179). Conceptually, this construct is similar to pluralistic orientation. Pluralistic orientation measures participants' perceived ability to negotiate challenge and diversity whereas ODC measures participants' enjoyment and appreciation of challenge and diversity. Pascarella and colleagues' (1996) original scale included eight items, but one item did not meet the criteria for inclusion. Cronbach's alpha for this construct is .90. The seven items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores indicate a higher degree of openness while low scores signify a low degree of openness. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Perceptions of Discrimination and Tension.* This construct measures students' perceptions of racial discrimination and tension among students on campus. This two-item construct was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Cronbach's alpha for

this construct was 0.79. Both items were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). One item was reverse scored. High scores on this construct indicate participants have high perceptions of racial discrimination and tension on campus, while lower scores signify that respondents perceive very little racial discrimination and tension on campus. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Racial Climate for Racial/Ethnic Minorities.* This construct measures participants' perceptions of the racial climate for racial/ethnic minority students. Stated another way, this construct measures White students' perceptions of how racial/ethnic minorities are treated on their campus. This four-item construct was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Cronbach's alpha for this construct was 0.82. All items in this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Some items were reverse scored. High scores indicate participants have a positive perception of the climate for racial/ethnic minorities, while low scores signify a perceptions that the climate is poor. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Institutional Support for Racial/Ethnic Minority Students.* This construct is designed to measure how well participants believe their institution supports racial/ethnic minority students. This three-item construct was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Cronbach's alpha for this measure was 0.85. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven

(strongly agree). High scores on this construct indicate participants perceive the institution is very supportive of racial/ethnic minority students, and lower scores suggest respondents believe the university is not very supportive. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Institutional Commitment to Racial/Ethnic Diversity.* This construct measures participants' perceptions of their institution's commitment to racial/ethnic diversity. The three items in this construct inquire about the institution's commitment to creating a racially diverse faculty and administrators, adequately handling incidents involving race, and educating students about diversity. This scale was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Cronbach's alpha for this construct is 0.73. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores on this construct represent participants' belief that the institution has a high commitment to diversity, while low scores indicate a weak institutional commitment. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Importance of Racial/Ethnic Diversity & Interracial Engagement.* This construct measures participants' personal attitudes about the importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interacting with racially/ethnically diverse peers. Items in this construct address the importance and usefulness of a racially diverse campus and diversity-related courses. This seven-item scale was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Cronbach's alpha for this construct is 0.85. Items contributing to this construct were

measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores on this construct indicate participants believe racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement is very important, and low scores indicate respondents feel racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement is of little importance. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Prevalence of Systemic Segregation.* This construct measures the extent to which students believe systemic segregation is a problem on campus. For this study, systemic segregation can be defined as subtle methods consciously or unconsciously done to exclude students of color from aspects of the university community. This three-item scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 and was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores on this construct signify a belief that systemic segregation is a significant campus problem, and low scores indicate systemic segregation is not a problem. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Prevalence of Minority Self-segregation.* This construct measures the extent to which participants believe minority self-segregation is a problem on campus. For this study, self-segregation can be referred to as racial minorities' tendency to separate themselves from the university community or culture. This two-item measure was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. This construct has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.63. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one

(strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores on this construct indicate a belief that minority self-segregation is a significant problem, and low scores signify self-segregation is not an issue. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

*Perceptions of Differential Treatment and Racial Insensitivity.* This construct measures participants' personal experiences with race-based differential treatment and racial insensitivity from their fellow students, faculty, and administrators. This construct consists of six items and has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. This scale was created using the procedures that were used to develop constructs from the 49 questions related to climate and interracial engagement. Items contributing to this construct were measured on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). High scores indicate high perceptions of differential treatment and racial insensitivity, and low scores signify very little differential treatment and racial insensitivity. See Appendix F for specific details about the items included in this construct.

#### The Role of Stereotype Threat

This experiment was based on the hypothesis that a theme party mocking racial stereotypes could cause White students to experience stereotype threat. It was also expected that the way a) students collectively react and b) the university administration responds to the situation could affect the experience of stereotype threat. In turn, it was this threat of being perceived as racist or prejudice that was expected to mediate participants' perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes about diversity and cross-racial engagement. Highlighted below are 1) findings describing the effects of experimental conditions on stereotype threat, 2) findings exploring the mediating effects

of stereotype threat on the other dependent variables of interest, and 3) findings explaining the predictive power of stereotype threat. Descriptive means for the stereotype threat measure are listed by condition on Table 2. These means will be referenced throughout this section.

**Table 2: Means by Condition for Stereotype Threat**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Sample (N)</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Condition 1 – No Response	22	1.10	4.08
Condition 2 – Black Student	20	1.30	4.35
Condition 3 – Diverse Student	20	1.21	3.94
Condition 4 – No Punishment	20	0.99	4.11
Condition 5 – Punishment	21	1.17	3.98
Condition 6 – Control	21	1.23	3.48

*Stereotype Threat by Condition*

As expected, the mean for stereotype threat was lowest in the “Control” condition and higher in all other conditions in which participants were presented with information about a race-based theme party. Two separate independent samples t-tests were conducted to determine whether the mean differences were statistically significant. The first test compared the means for the “No Response” ( $m = 4.08$ ) and “Control” ( $m = 3.48$ ) conditions. This test was conducted to determine if the occurrence of the theme party, independent of any student or administrative response, had an effect on participants’ experience of stereotype threat. The results show the mean difference in stereotype threat was moderately significant ( $p = .10$ ,  $t = 1.69$ ), but not significant at .05 significance level (see Table 3). The second test, compared the combined mean of all the experimental conditions ( $m = 4.09$ ) to mean of the “Control” condition ( $m = 3.48$ ). Like the first t-test,

this test was also trying to determine if the theme party had an influence on participants' experience of stereotype threat. The test result (see Table 3) indicates a statistically significant difference ( $p = .03$ ,  $t = 2.21$ ) in stereotype threat between participants who were exposed to the fictitious theme party mocking racial stereotypes and those participants in the control condition.

**Table 3: Independent t-tests for Stereotype Threat**

<b>Conditions Compared</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Std. Error Difference</b>	<b>T (df)</b>	<b>p value</b>
No Response vs. Control	0.60	0.36	1.69(41)	.10
Experimental vs. Control	0.61	0.28	2.21(122)	.03
Black vs. Diverse	0.41	0.40	1.04(38)	.30
No Punishment vs. Punishment	0.14	0.34	0.40(39)	.69

Given the basic premise that a race-based theme party has the ability to cause stereotype threat in White students, it was further hypothesized that the way students and administrators collectively respond to the incident might alter the level of threat experienced by participants. Three statistical tests were conducted to test this hypothesis. First, an independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if different student responses affected stereotype threat. As predicted, stereotype threat was higher in the “Black Student” condition ( $m = 4.35$ ) than in the “Diverse Student” condition ( $m = 3.94$ ). However, the result (see Table 3) revealed that the mean difference was not statistically significant ( $p = .30$ ). A second independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if the collective university response to the incident altered the experience of threat. Again,

as expected, the mean for stereotype threat was slightly higher in the “No Punishment” condition ( $m = 4.11$ ) than it was in the “Punishment” condition ( $m = 3.98$ ), but the result (see Table 4) revealed that this difference was not statistically significant ( $p = .69$ ). Finally, an ANOVA was run to determine if there were significant mean differences in threat among the “No response” condition, the two collective student response conditions, and the two administrative response conditions. The results from this test indicate that there were no significant between group differences in stereotype threat ( $p = .81$ ). In fact, further analysis revealed that there were no significant between group differences on any of the other dependent variables of interest.

#### *Mediating Effects of Stereotype Threat*

Steps were taken to determine whether stereotype threat mediated participants’ responses to the dependent variables. First, correlations were conducted among stereotype threat and the other dependent variables of interest (see the correlation matrix in Appendix G). Stereotype threat was negatively related to importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement ( $r = -.26, p = .00$ ) and positively related to IATAA ( $r = .47, p = .00$ ) and perceptions of minority self-segregation ( $r = .40, p = .00$ ). Because stereotype threat exhibited a statistically significant correlation with each of these four variables, tests were conducted to determine whether threat mediated the relationship between each of these variables and the occurrence of the theme party – the independent variable. Tests for mediation were conducted using the four steps outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986).

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), the first step involves regressing the mediator on the independent variable, and the second step entails regressing the



dependent variable on the independent variable. The third step involves regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and the mediator, and the final step involves conducting the Sobel test (1982). The Sobel test accounts for the effect of the multicollinearity between the mediator and independent variable in the third regression equation. The test is “an approximate significance test for the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable via the mediator” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1177). In order for mediation to occur, 1) the independent variable significantly influences the dependent variable in the first regression model, 2) the independent variable significantly affects the dependent variable in the second regression model, and 3) the mediator influences the dependent variable in third regression equation, controlling for the effect of the independent variable. Full mediation occurs when the independent variable has no influence on the dependent variable when controlling for the mediator. Partial mediation occurs when there is a noteworthy (about one-third) reduction in the predictive power of the independent variable and the significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is maintained.

While testing for mediation, the theme party was treated as the independent variable (occurrence of party versus no party). The four variables found to be correlated with stereotype threat (importance of racial/ethnic diversity, importance of interracial engagement, IATAA, & perceptions of minority self-segregation) were treated as dependent variables. Stereotype threat, of course, was tested for mediation using the methods outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). Using linear regression, the first criterion for mediation was established. However, the linear regression results testing the second criterion were found statistically insignificant for each dependent variable. Therefore, it

was determined that stereotype threat did not mediate participants' responses to the other dependent variables in this study.

#### *Stereotype Threat as a Predictor*

As described above, stereotype threat was found to be correlated with four of the dependent variables in this study (importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement, IATAA, & perceptions of minority self-segregation). Given these relationships, linear regressions were conducted to determine if stereotype threat acted as a predictor of these variables while controlling for the effect of Identity Centrality, IMCP, EMCP, ATB, IATAA, gender, year in school, academic major, parental educational background, diversity class, political ideology, and performance of the manipulation check (IATAA was not included in the regression equation for IATAA). Stereotype threat was not found to be a statistically significant predictor of importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement. However, the analysis revealed that stereotype threat, ATB, and mother's educational level were statistically significant predictor of IATAA. This regression model was statistically significant and explained 51% of the variance in participants' inter-ethnic anxiety. While mother's educational background ( $\beta = .26$ ), and stereotype threat ( $\beta = .34$ ) were positively related to IATAA, ATB exhibited an inverse relationship with IATAA ( $\beta = -.29$ ). In addition, stereotype threat was determined to be statistically significant predictors of participants' perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation. Again, this model was statistically significant but only explained 21% of the variance in participants' perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation. Stereotype threat exhibited a positive relationship ( $\beta = .39$ ).

To enhance interpretation, a second regression model for each dependent variable was constructed by regressing each dependent variable only on the variables that were statistically significant predictors in the first regression model. Measures from the social psychological literature (i.e., White Identity Centrality, ATB, Internal and External Motivation to Control Prejudice, and IATAA) were also included in the second regression models even if not found significant in the first model. Both of these regression models explained roughly the same amount of the variance in the dependent variables. In the second regression model for IATAA (see Table 4), mother’s educational background ( $\beta = .17$ ), ATB ( $\beta = -.35$ ), and stereotype threat ( $\beta = .33$ ) remained statistically significant predictors and maintained their directional influence on IATAA.

**Table 4: Predictors of IATAA**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Manipulation Check	-.153	-.070	-	-
Gender	-.217	-.126	-	-
Year in school	-.047	-.040	-	-
Humanities major	.215	.103	-	-
Social science major	.222	.113	-	-
STEM major	-.144	-.066	-	-
Business major	.025	.010	-	-
Political Ideology	.028	.042	-	-
Father’s Education	-.131	-.123	-	-
Mother’s Education	** .297	** .260	* .200	* .177
Diversity Class	.002	.001	-	-
Identity Centrality	.114	.122	.142	.073
ATB	*-.341	*-.292	**-.409	**-.353
Internal MCP	-.096	-.110	-.032	-.037
External MCP	.020	.023	.012	.014
Stereotype threat	** .256	** .344	** .248	** .334
* $p \leq .05$ , ** $p \leq .01$				

In the second regression model for perceptions of minority self-segregation (see Table 5), stereotype threat ( $\beta = .42$ ) remained the only significant predictor. The direction of stereotype threat was also maintained. The strength of this relationship should also be noted.

**Table 5: Predictors of Minority Self-segregation**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Manipulation Check	-.163	.265	-	-
Gender	-.148	-.067	-	-
Year in school	-.007	-.005	-	-
Humanities major	.223	.083	-	-
Social science major	.131	.052	-	-
STEM major	.301	.107	-	-
Business major	.031	.010	-	-
Political Ideology	-.020	-.024	-	-
Father's Education	-.023	-.017	-	-
Mother's Education	-.044	-.030	-	-
Diversity Class	-.048	-.020	-	-
Identity Centrality	-.130	-.108	-.157	-.127
ATB	-.226	-.151	-.234	-.157
Internal MCP	-.110	-.097	-.143	-.129
External MCP	-.066	-.058	-.096	-.084
Stereotype threat	** .376	** .393	** .400	** .424
IATAA	-.093	-.072	-.103	-.079
* $p \leq .05$ , ** $p \leq .01$				

### The Role of IATAA

The IATAA scale measures the anxiety individuals experience with African Americans in their everyday interactions. Essentially, IATAA can be understood as a trait-based measure of treat. Because the measure is trait-based, it should not be affected by situational circumstances, which in fact, was the case in this experiment. Exploratory

data analysis revealed that IATAA was correlated with several of the dependent variables of interest. IATAA exhibited moderate inverse relationships with importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement ( $r = -.31, p = .00$ ), ODC ( $r = -.44, p = .00$ ), pluralistic orientation ( $r = -.44, p = .00$ ), and, as detailed above, stereotype threat ( $r = .47, p = .00$ ). Given these correlations, tests were conducted to determine if IATAA predicted students' responses to these dependent variables (i.e., importance of racial/ethnic diversity and interracial engagement, ODC, pluralistic orientation, and stereotype threat). Again, linear regressions were conducted to determine if IATAA acted as a predictor of these variables while controlling for the effect of Identity Centrality, IMCP, EMCP, ATB, stereotype threat, gender, year in school, academic major, parental educational background, diversity class, political ideology, and performance of the manipulation check. IATAA only served as a predictor of ODC, pluralistic orientation, and stereotype threat.

The results from these tests indicated that political ideology, the manipulation check, EMCP, IATAA were statistically significant predictors of ODC. This model itself was significantly significant and explained 47% of the variance in participants' ODC. Political ideology ( $\beta = -.18$ ), EMCP ( $\beta = -.21$ ), IATAA ( $\beta = -.28$ ) were negatively related to ODC while the manipulation check ( $\beta = .16$ ) was positively related. Regression findings also revealed that IATAA, stereotype threat, and ATB were found to be statistically significant predictors of pluralistic orientation. Forty-five percent of the variance in students' pluralistic orientation was explained by this statistically significant model. While IATAA ( $\beta = -.31$ ) was negatively related to pluralistic orientation, the other variables – stereotype threat ( $\beta = .29$ ) and ATB ( $\beta = .27$ ) – exhibited a positive

relationships with IATAA. The findings from the third regression indicated that EMCP ( $\beta = .32$ ) and IATAA ( $\beta = .44$ ) were found to be statistically significant positive predictors of stereotype threat. The regression model was statistically significant and explained about 39% of the variance in participants' responses to the stereotype threat measure.

To enhance interpretation, a second regression model for each dependent variable was constructed by regressing each dependent variable only on the variables that were found to be significant in the first regression equation. Because stereotype threat was a principal focus of this study, the threat measure was included in the second regression equation for ODC even though it was not a statistically significant predictor in the first linear regression model. In addition, the social psychological control variables (i.e., White identity centrality, ATB, IMCP, EMCP, and IATAA) were also included in the second regression models even if they were not statistically significant in the previous models. All findings for both of the linear regression models for ODC, pluralistic orientation, and stereotype threat are listed on Tables 6, 7, and 8, respectively.

**Table 6: Predictors of Openness to Diversity and Challenge (ODC)**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Manipulation Check	*.389	*.194	.322	.128
Gender	.141	.072	-	-
Year in school	.202	.150	-	-
Humanities major	.109	.046	-	-
Social science major	-.192	-.085	-	-
STEM major	-.286	-.115	-	-
Business major	-.156	-.056	-	-
Political Ideology	*-.134	*-.176	**-.165	**-.224
Father's Education	-.126	-.103	-	-
Mother's Education	.122	.093	-	-
Diversity Class	.176	.084	-	-
Identity Centrality	.017	.016	.041	.038
ATB	.283	.213	.268	.204
Internal MCP	.180	.180	.193	.192
External MCP	*-.213	*-.214	*-.212	*-.210
Stereotype threat	.127	.150	*.171	*.203
IATAA	**-.324	**-.283	**-.339	**-.294
* $p \leq .05$ , ** $p \leq .01$				

**Table 7: Predictors of Pluralistic Orientation**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Manipulation Check	.233	.118	-	-
Gender	.078	.050	-	-
Year in school	.185	.174	-	-
Humanities major	.191	.102	-	-
Social science major	.138	.078	-	-
STEM major	.202	.103	-	-
Business major	.070	.032	-	-
Political Ideology	-.096	-.161	-	-
Father's Education	-.090	-.094	-	-
Mother's Education	.039	.037	-	-
Diversity Class	-.169	-.103	-	-
Identity Centrality	-.074	-.088	-.072	-.085
ATB	*.279	*.266	** .311	** .304
Internal MCP	.107	.136	.090	.115
External MCP	-.125	-.159	-.137	-.174
Stereotype threat	** .194	** .291	** .213	** .325
IATAA	** -.275	** -.306	** -.289	** -.321
* $p \leq .05$ , ** $p \leq .01$				



**Table 8: Predictors of Stereotype Threat**

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Manipulation Check	.081	.027	-	-
Gender	.127	.055	-	-
Year in school	.057	.036	-	-
Humanities major	-.163	-.058	-	-
Social science major	-.180	-.068	-	-
STEM major	.098	.033	-	-
Business major	-.475	-.146	-	-
Political Ideology	-.067	-.075	-	-
Father's Education	.067	.047	-	-
Mother's Education	-.100	-.065	-	-
Diversity Class	-.001	.000	-	-
Identity Centrality	.066	.053	.013	.010
ATB	.129	.082	.091	.058
Internal MCP	-.131	-.111	-.216	-.183
External MCP	** .372	** .316	** .375	** .310
IATAA	** .584	** .435	** .504	** .366
* $p \leq .05$ , ** $p \leq .01$				

In the second regression model for ODC, the statistically significant predictors were political ideology, EMCP, stereotype threat, and IATAA. The second regression equation likely reveals a more accurate assessment of each variables predictive power on ODC even though the model, which is statistically significant, accounts for 42% of the variance in ODC instead of the 47% that was explained by the first model. Interestingly, although stereotype threat was not a statistically significant predictor of ODC in the first regression equation, it was a statistically significant ( $\beta = .20$ ) positive predictor of ODC in the second model. Political ideology ( $\beta = .22$ ), EMCP ( $\beta = .21$ ), and IATAA ( $\beta = .29$ ) maintained their negative relationship with ODC in the second model. The differences

between the two models are most likely the effect of multicollinearity among variables in the first regression equation.

ATB ( $\beta = .30$ ), stereotype threat ( $\beta = .33$ ), and IATAA ( $\beta = -.32$ ) were still found to be statistically significant predictors in the second regression model for pluralistic orientation. This regression model explained 37% of the variance in pluralistic orientation instead of the 45% that was explained by the first model. In this second model of pluralistic orientation, it should be noted that ATB ( $\beta = .30$ ) was found to be a stronger predictor of IATAA. Finally, in this second model for stereotype threat, EMCP ( $\beta = .31$ ) and IATAA ( $\beta = .37$ ) were again found to be statistically significant predictors. Both of these variables maintained their positive relationship with the threat. Instead of 39%, this second model accounted for 31% of the variance in participants' responses to the stereotype threat measure.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, Future Research, & Conclusion**

In this study, a six cell between-subjects experimental design (n = 124) with random assignment was utilized to examine the relationship among campus racism, stereotype threat, and White students' perceptions of the campus racial climate and attitudes toward diversity. There were several hypotheses. First, it was expected that campus racism (theme party mocking stereotypes of Blacks) would cause White students to experience stereotype threat – the fear of personally affirming the stereotype that Whites are racist. Statistical evidence confirmed this hypothesis. Second, it was expected that the manner in which students and administrators responded to the campus racism would affect participants' experience of stereotype threat. No statistical evidence confirmed this second hypothesis. Stereotype threat was not influenced by the student and administrative responses to campus racism.

Finally, it was expected that stereotype threat would moderate participants' perceptions of the campus climate and attitudes toward diversity. This hypothesis was not confirmed. Stereotype threat did not moderate participants' responses to any of the dependent variables of interest. However, stereotype threat was found to be a positive predictor of perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation, openness to diversity and challenge (ODC), and pluralistic orientation.

Although the purpose of this experiment was to examine the nexus between stereotype threat, campus racism, and White students' perceptions of climate and attitudes toward diversity, one of the major findings from this dissertation did not involve stereotype threat. While analyzing the data, some unexpected findings regarding Inter-Ethnic Anxiety Toward African Americans (IATAA) emerged. IATAA was found to be

negatively related to White students' ODC and pluralistic orientation. The discussion section will explore these relationships in further detail after the findings related to stereotype threat are discussed.

### Discussion

Prior to discussing the findings from this experiment, it is important to first explain the relationship between IATAA and stereotype threat. The data presented in Chapter 4 indicate that stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety (IATAA) are strongly related ( $r = .473$   $p. < .05$ ). The more anxiety individuals experience in interracial contact with Blacks, the more likely they are to experience stereotype threat, and vice versa. Moreover, both stereotype threat and IATAA were found to be statistically significant predictors of one another when controlling for relevant variables (see Table 4 & Table 8).

Recall, stereotype threat describes the situational threat an individual encounters when they are placed in a circumstance where a negative stereotype about their identity group is at risk of being affirmed. IATAA, in contrast, is a constant trait measure of anxiety individuals experience in interracial contact with Blacks. Interpreted another way, IATAA can be conceptualized as a constant measure of threat (anxiety) individuals experience in their typical daily interracial encounters. For White students, this inter-ethnic anxiety can be compounded or heightened when individuals are placed in situations or environments where they are at risk of being labeled a racist. However, in situations where stereotype threat is not activated, IATAA serves as better predictor of perceptions and attitudes. Had stereotype threat been manipulated as expected in this experiment, it is likely that stereotype threat may have been just as, if not more, predictive than IATAA. Whether this assumption deserves merit or not, the close

theoretical and statistical relationship between stereotype threat and IATAA should be considered as readers interpret this discussion of the results.

### *Stereotype Threat and Campus Racism*

The findings from the t-tests examining stereotype threat by condition provide some statistical evidence that supports the hypothesis that racist theme parties may cause White students to experience higher levels of stereotype threat. However, it should also be noted that, even when placed in a threatening state, the overall threat level was relatively modest (i.e., approximately 4.1 on a 7-point Likert scale). Unfortunately, the findings revealed that the student and administrative responses to the theme party did not influence stereotype threat. It could be that the responses students and administrators make in the aftermath of a racist theme party do little to influence stereotype threat. Perhaps, such a blatant racial offense cannot be effectively altered by the series of environmental interventions described in an experiment. An alternative and more plausible explanation, however, could be that the ineffectiveness of the administrative and collective student reactions to influence stereotype threat can be attributable to challenges and flaws associated with the design of the experiment.

A challenge of or difficulty with conducting experimental research is replicating real-life situations within a laboratory setting. Presenting participants with both a believable and engaging representation of the theme party and the appropriate administrative or students response was a difficult task. Although the manipulation check suggested that participants believed the story that was presented to them, some participants were unable to answer some basic questions about the scenario they read. This suggests that a few of the students, 17 to be exact (13.7% of the sample), may not

have been completely engaged during the experimental procedure. Further investigation revealed that the 17 participants who failed this portion of the manipulation check were not evenly distributed across condition. Fifteen of the 17 participants were in the “Black” and “Punishment” conditions. This seems like more than a coincidence; however, any explanation is speculative.

Additionally, Goff et al’s (2008) research on stereotype threat used an anticipated one-on-one interaction instead of a focus group discussion to help manipulate participants’ threat level. Being asked to discuss the theme party within a focus group format could have affected participants’ experience of stereotype threat. In focus groups, participants with more outgoing personalities and stronger opinions on the topic can tend to dominate the discussions. This reality can allow other participants with dissenting or unpopular viewpoints to sit quietly and conceal their perspectives or offer socially desirable responses without fearing that their contributions may be challenged, questioned, examined, or probed in depth. However, when participants are expected to engage with others in a one-on-one setting, it is likely that these circumstances could exacerbate any perceived threat as participants’ individual actions could receive more examination, attention, or scrutiny.

In addition, participants’ belief that other White students would be in the room engaging in the focus group discussion could have also had a calming effect. In fact, Inzlicht & Ben-Zeev (2000, 2003) found evidence supporting this assertion. The researchers determined that the proportion of outgroup and ingroup members present during a threatening situation can influence the experience of stereotype threat. Specifically, the presence of ingroup members helped attenuate the effect of stereotype

threat. It is possible that participants may have believed or assumed that at least some of their peers would share their perspectives and could help support their statements. Such support would not be available in a one-on-one interaction, and individuals would be forced to assume sole responsibility for their actions without the hope of having any backing from peers. Given these possible explanations, it is reasonable that the experience of threat could have been much different had participants believed they would have been discussing the event by themselves with a Black peer or group of peers. In spite of these experimental complications, this experiment yields some substantial evidence that indicate campus racism, specifically theme parties mocking Black stereotypes, can cause students to experience stereotype threat.

#### *Understanding the Role of Stereotype Threat*

Two major findings related to stereotype threat warrant discussion. First, stereotype threat is predictive of White students' perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation. As stereotype threat becomes more intense, White students perceive racial/ethnic minority self-segregation to be a more prevalent. This finding suggests that when White students experience the threat of being viewed as racist, they begin to perceive or label non-White students as segregationists. Certainly, further investigation would be needed to understand this relationship. However, it seems plausible that the increased perception of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation may be a mechanism that White students use to negotiate stereotype threat.

In their studies, Goff et al (2008) determined that stereotype threat caused White students to physically distance themselves from Blacks. Perhaps something similar is at work here. By blaming racial/ethnic minority students for campus segregation, it is

possible that White students feel they are absolved of any responsibility for perpetuating campus segregation and, subsequently, the need to facilitate interactions across race. Because many Whites do not recognize the systemic nature of racism and the socio-historical factors that influence American race relations (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000), particularly segregation, this reasoning is compelling. Without this understanding, it is quite difficult to understand what may contribute to this perception of self-segregation. Ultimately, it is this lack of knowledge coupled with the need to negotiate threatening situations that can potentially be problematic for race relations among students at colleges and universities. If White students believe Black students are actively segregating themselves from the larger student population, why would they [White students] feel compelled to take an active role in facilitating cross-racial interactions or discussions on race? By blaming racial minority students for racial segregation, White students can escape the responsibility for actively pursuing or welcoming interracial engagement.

The second major finding related to stereotype threat involves ODC and pluralistic orientation. As a reminder, ODC is a measure of an individuals' "enjoyment from being intellectually challenged by different values, ideas, and perspectives as well as an appreciation for racial, cultural, and value diversity" (Pascarella et al., 1996, p. 179). Pluralistic orientation encompasses an individuals' belief that they are a) able to see another's perspective, b) tolerant of others with different beliefs, c) handle having their views challenged, d) discuss controversial issues, and e) work collaboratively with diverse people (Engberg, 2007). While, ODC measures enjoyment and appreciation of



challenge and diversity, pluralistic orientation is a measure of individual's perceived ability to perform these competencies.

The findings from this study suggest that stereotype threat is predictive of 1) ODC and 2) pluralistic orientation. These relationships remained constant while controlling for several important factors, such as explicit racial attitudes (ATB) and having taken a diversity course. The relationship between these two variables and stereotype threat is positive. That is, as threat increases so do White students' ODC and their pluralistic orientation. The nature of this relationship does not support the hypothesis presented in Chapter 3. It was expected that threat would decrease participants' ODC and pluralistic orientation. However, it seems that as threat becomes more intense, participants were more likely to report higher ODC and pluralistic orientation.

It is plausible that the literal interpretation of this finding is correct. However, the research of Bonilla-Silva offers an alternative explanation. As discussed in Chapter 2, his research (Bonilla Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000) has found that Whites have a tendency provide politically correct responses to survey questions regarding race. Upon further qualitative probing, however, these politically correct responses have not been found to be completely reflective of their views. In fact, direct contradictions to their survey responses were often presented. It is possible that a similar phenomenon is at work here. Perhaps, the threat of being viewed as racist motivated students to exaggerate, consciously or subconsciously, their ODC and pluralistic orientation in an attempt to negotiate feelings of threat and appear non-racist. Further investigation of these relationships is definitely warranted.

*Understanding the Role of IATAA*

Perhaps the most, important finding in this dissertation is related to White students' inter-ethnic anxiety. IATAA was found to be a predictor of White students' 1) ODC and 2) pluralistic orientation. These findings held true even while controlling for several key variables. For this sample, high inter-ethnic anxiety was related to low reports on the ODC measure. This suggests that White students who experience more inter-ethnic anxiety seem to be less likely to enjoy and appreciate diversity and challenge. Additionally, White students who experience more inter-ethnic anxiety report lower levels of pluralistic orientation. Simply stated, anxiety seems to negatively influence students' perceptions about their own ability to negotiate diversity and challenge.

The intriguing aspect of this finding is that IATAA remains a significant predictor of ODC and pluralistic orientation even while controlling for ATB, an explicit measure of prejudice. In both regression models, IATAA was a stronger predictor of ODC and pluralistic orientation than prejudice. This finding suggests that identifying, challenging, and ultimately changing racist ideologies cannot be the sole aim of educators whose work focuses on promoting diversity and interracial engagement. Because inter-ethnic anxiety is also predictive of diversity related attitudes and the perceived ability to interact across difference, educators should also focus on ways to improve individual's comfort with interracial contact, particularly in threatening situations. Since ATB exhibits a statistically significant negative relationship with IATAA, it seems logical to think that changing racist attitudes will likely help ease individuals' anxiety and discomfort in interracial interactions. Yet, it seems naïve to believe that stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety could be reduced only by eliminating racist and prejudicial attitudes.

## Implications

The findings from this experiment indicate that White students can experience stereotype threat when forced to deal with acts of racism on campus. As discussed in the opening chapter, campus racism is not an infrequent occurrence at many colleges and universities. Typically, when campuses are riddled with turmoil over racist or discriminatory behavior, attention is geared toward supporting the individual or community who were the targets of the bigotry. This type of response is a justifiable necessity. However, the results from this study suggest that other measures should be done to mend campus communities.

If campus racism can cause White students to feel threatened by the White racist stereotype, which was found to be positively related to perceptions of racial/ethnic minority self-segregation in this experiment and Black avoidance behaviors by Goff and colleagues (2008), it seems reasonable to expect that educators implement efforts to prevent racial segregation and avoidance when acts of racism are committed on campus. Educators should incorporate strategies into their administrative responses to campus racism that allow safe and realistic discourse on race to occur. Because stereotype threat may cause White students to avoid racial interaction and discourse, it seems critical that educators seize prime opportunities to aggressively orchestrate programs on race. Such programming may be particularly effective if this study's findings related to stereotype threat and ODC have not been affected by politically correct responses. If higher levels of stereotype threat are associated with higher ODC, racial turmoil on campus may, ironically, present an ideal occasion for racial progress to be made. Prudent educators should seize these critical moments.

In addition to taking advantage of prime opportunities to bring students together to discuss race, consistent efforts must also be made to encourage interracial engagement. In a meta-analysis of 515 studies supporting Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) determined that a significant body of research suggests that repeated interracial contact can reduce feelings of anxiety. Given these findings, it is imperative that diversity-focused educators intentionally seek opportunities to facilitate racial discourse and encounters across race. As Chang, Chang, and Ledesma (2005) argue, educators cannot simply assume that interracial engagement among students will occur through magical means. In a multi-campus qualitative investigation, Harper and Hurtado (2007) found that both White and racial/ethnic minority students expressed frustrations about their institutions lack of assistance and guidance in promoting interactions across race. One student in their study indicated:

Why should I be expected to know how to do this on my own? And the university expects us to talk about something as sensitive as racism without helping us. This is unrealistic and actually unfair. (p. 16)

Such reports from many of the students in their study led Harper and Hurtado (2007) to conclude that colleges and universities have become "negligent in the educational processes leading to racial understanding both inside and outside the classroom" (p. 19). Such institutional negligence in this domain coupled with the effects of inter-ethnic anxiety and stereotype threat could render useless many of the potential benefits of having a diverse student body.

As described in the opening chapter, cross-racial engagement is positively associated with myriad positive educational outcomes. Although many of these positive

gains hold across race, the research literature indicates that White students seem to gain the most from interactions across race (Gurin et al., 2002; Milem, 2003). However, if White students are disengaged from racial discourse and cross-racial interaction, it is impossible for these students to benefit from the many of the educationally meaningful outcomes associated with the benefits of a racially diverse student body. Gurin and colleagues (2002) asserted: “The impact of racial/ethnic diversity on educational outcomes comes primarily from engagement with diverse peers in the informal campus environment and in college classrooms. Structural diversity is a necessary but insufficient condition for maximal educational benefits” (p. 333). For this reason, educators must seriously commit to intentionally constructing safe learning environments that facilitate positive and meaningful cross-racial engagement and learning about how stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety influence racial dialogue and interracial interactions.

#### Directions for Future Research

There are very few studies published in the higher education literature that specifically examine how White students make sense of and deal with race, racism, prejudice, and diversity. This study contributes to this small body of literature, yet further research in this area is absolutely necessary if educators are serious about actualizing the benefits of a racially diverse student body and truly creating campuses where racial/diversity and other forms of difference are valued and appreciated. This research should be generated not only to enhance our understanding and knowledge in this domain but to also inform our practice as student educators. Perhaps, a national study of White college students’ racial attitudes and sense-making is in order.

In this experiment, stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety were found to be predictive of White students' openness to diversity and challenge and their perceived ability to interact across difference. These findings provide useful implications for educational practice, but also raise more questions about stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety and their role in shaping White students' interactions across race. Here are five directions for future research that should help provide a more complete understanding of stereotype threat and inter-ethnic anxiety. The complexities and challenges associated with conducting this type of research will likely call for various investigation methods, particularly experimental and qualitative. First, researchers should seek to identify what types of situations and interactions cause White students to feel threatened by the White racist stereotype. This first step is absolutely critical. Without a better understanding of what conditions trigger stereotype threat, it will be difficult for educators to help students positively negotiate this threat. Second, more steps should be taken to determine what coping strategies White students employ when confronted with situations that induce stereotype threat. Third, researchers must seek to determine what can be done to provide White students with a safe, threat-free space to openly and honestly discuss issues pertaining to race. This information could help educators deconstruct barriers that impede open and honest discourse on issues pertaining to race. Additionally, such knowledge would allow educators to be more intentional in their attempts to facilitate constructive interracial dialogues about race. Fourth, researchers should seek to examine how and why inter-ethnic anxiety impedes openness to diversity and challenge and cross-racial engagement. Finally, researchers should seek to develop a

more sound understanding of how inter-ethnic anxiety can be minimized. Facilitating interracial engagement may prove useless if this interaction is hindered by anxiety.

In addition to the implications for research previously provided, it seems necessary that this study be adjusted and replicated. Although this study yielded some valuable findings, the experiment did not go as hypothesized, especially regarding the effect of the collective student and administrative responses on stereotype threat. These responses, as presented to students in this experiment, had no statistically significant effect on students' experience of stereotype threat. To determine whether this finding is accurate or the result of an experimental design flaw, adjustments should be made and replication is necessary. As discussed earlier, having participants expect to participate in an individual interaction with a Black peer instead of the focus group discussion may result in different findings, especially with respect to stereotype threat. Moreover, it may be helpful to tell participants before the experiment that there will be a brief "quiz" (i.e., manipulation check) at the conclusion of the study. Informing students of the "quiz" may cause some students to pay more attention to detail throughout the experiment.

### Summary

The findings from this study support Goff et al's (2008) conceptual model of White stereotype threat. Some modest statistical evidence suggests that racial incidents on campus, specifically a racist theme party, can place White students under threat of being perceived as racist. No causal effects of this threat were discovered; however, stereotype threat was found to be a positive predictor of White students' perceptions of racial/ethnic minority segregation. In addition, stereotype threat was found to be a positive predictor of openness to diversity and challenge and pluralistic orientation in

White students. The idea that increases in stereotype threat would be related to increases in these measures was unexpected and should be interpreted carefully, and further investigation of these statistical relationships is needed. The most interesting finding in this study was that White students' inter-ethnic anxiety was negatively related to openness to diversity and challenge and pluralistic orientation. This finding underscores the need for educators to be more intentional about facilitating interracial engagement among undergraduates since repeated contact with diverse others is known to decrease anxiety in interracial contact. If such intentional means are not taken, inter-ethnic anxiety could circumvent the plentiful educational outcomes associated with a diverse student body.



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**Appendix A: Materials**

**White Identity Centrality**

**Instructions:** Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements by circling your response on the scale below.

1. Overall, being a member of my racial group has very little to do with how I feel about myself (R).

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

2. In general, being a member of my racial group is an important part of my self-image.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

3. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other members of my racial group.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

4. Being a member of my racial group is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am (R).

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

5. I have a strong sense of belonging to my racial group.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

6. I have a strong attachment to members in my racial group.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

7. Being a member of my racial group is an important reflection of who I am.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

8. Being a member of my racial group is not a major factor in my social relationships (R).

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree









9. I favor open housing laws that allow more racial integration of neighborhoods.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

10. It would not bother me if my new roommate was Black.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

11. It is likely that Blacks will bring violence to neighborhoods when they move in.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

12. I enjoy a funny racial joke, even if some people might find it offensive.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

13. The federal government should take decisive steps to override the injustices Blacks suffer at the hands of local authorities.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

14. Black and Whites people are inherently equal.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

15. Black people are demanding too much too fast in their push for equal rights.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

16. Whites should support Blacks in their struggle against discrimination and segregation.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree

17. Generally, Blacks are not as smart as Whites.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Strongly Disagree                      Neither Agree                      Strongly Agree  
Nor Disagree









**Campus Climate: Personal Experiences with Racism & Discrimination**

**Instructions:** Please respond to the following statements by circling your response on the scale below.

1. Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by my fellow *students*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

2. Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by *university faculty*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

3. Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by *university staff and administrators*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

4. I experience racial insensitivity from my fellow *students*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

5. I experience racial insensitivity from *university faculty*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

6. I experience racial insensitivity from *university staff and administrators*.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

7. While in class, I have heard negative words about people of my own race.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

8. While on campus (not in class), I have heard negative words about people of my own race.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

9. Because of my race, I have been the target of racist/discriminatory words or actions.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always

10. Because of my race, I feel excluded from activities at this institution.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Never Sometimes Always















19. What best describes race relations among students on your campus? (Rank your responses from 1 to 4, where 1 = most relevant and 4 = the least relevant)

- Segregation
- Self-segregation
- Racially integrated
- Not a problem

20. Who is most responsible for facilitating or initiating interracial interactions among students? (Rank your responses from 1 to 3, where 1 = most responsible and 3 = the least responsible)

- White students
- Racial minorities
- University faculty, staff, and administrators

**Rate the salience of each term on this campus:**

21. **Subtle segregation** – systemic segregation caused by subtle methods consciously or unconsciously done to exclude students of color from the university community.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Not a Somewhat Very Big  
Problem at Problematic Problem  
All

22. **Self-segregation** – segregation caused by racial minorities' tendency to separate themselves from the university's predominantly White student body.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7  
Not a Somewhat Very Big  
Problem at Problematic Problem  
All

23. Please provide 5 reasons why you believe students may not interact with students from different racial backgrounds:

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)
- E)

## Appendix B: Script

**Before you begin, place two informed consent sheets on the desks and one demographic profile.**

Hi...is everyone here for the focus group discussion on Penn State student life? (*Pause*)  
Great! May I have your names please?

Pretend to check off only the names of students that appear to be White. If a student does not appear to be White, tell them their name isn't on the list and ask them nicely if they could please step aside for a moment and I will be right with them.

If your name was on the list could you please come in and have a seat (*Wait for everyone to be seated*).  
Please make yourself comfortable. I will be right back.

Go back outside and talk with students who "weren't on the list." Tell them that there must have been some sort of mistake with the subject pool because we don't have your name(s) on the list. Tell them that they will still receive full credit for participating, but you can't allow them to participate in the experiment. Apologize for the mistake and ask them for their name and student ID# and write it on the back of the script.

*Go back inside the room and begin the experiment.*

Hey everyone. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Today we will be engaging in a focus group discussion about PSU student life. A focus group is a loosely structured group discussion where people are asked to express their opinions and perspectives on a particular topic. These groups are useful in determining where there is consensus or disagreement on the subject of interest. Before we engage in this group discussion, however, you will be asked to respond to a series of surveys and read some material about PSU student life.

So...on your desk there are some materials, please read and sign the informed consent sheets and fill out the demographic profile. The second informed consent sheet is yours to keep for your own records. If you don't want it, you can just give it back to me unsigned.

After you have completed the consent sheet and demographic profile, you will be asked to fill out the surveys that I am about to distribute. Please remember that all responses are confidential and anonymous. Also, please note that many of the questionnaires are double-sided, so make sure you fill out both sides.

Before I hand out the surveys, you should know that there is another group of students who will be joining us for the focus group discussion. They should be upstairs with another experimenter. While you are finishing the handouts, I am going to go check to see that everyone has arrived and things are in order. When you finish, please place and seal the materials in the envelope so you can remain anonymous and your answers cannot be linked to you. You may then wait quietly. Please do not discuss the questions or your answers with anyone in the room. I will be back in 4 minutes. Here are the surveys. (**now hand out packet #1 and envelope**). See you in a bit.

Leave room and return in exactly 4 minutes to collect materials and label materials appropriately by condition.

O.K., it seems like the other group of students are here, so we can continue. Today, everyone will be reading some information about student life here at PSU. After reading this information, you will be asked to respond to several questionnaires. Once all the questionnaires have been completed, please place and seal the materials in the envelope so you can remain anonymous and your answers cannot be linked to you. Once all of the materials have been collected, we will join the other group of students for a brief focus group discussion on the information discussed in your packets.

The purpose of this experiment is to gauge the degree to which different students perceive student life here at Penn State. Today we will be focusing on how racial/ethnic differences shape students' experiences or perspectives of the campus environment. Since we are examining racial differences, the other group of students who will be participating in this focus group discussion with you are all Black or African American students from Penn State. We invited these students to participate in the focus group to see if their perspectives and opinions are different than yours. Now, I will hand out the materials. (At this time, hand out the appropriate experimental condition and the 2<sup>nd</sup> packet of materials).

When you are finished raise your hand and I will come collect your materials. When everyone is finished, we will head upstairs and join the Black students for the focus group discussion.

Please stay in the room to make sure students are not talking about their individual scenarios.

After roughly 10 or 15 minutes, ask, "Does anyone need more time?" If everyone has completed the surveys, collect and label the materials appropriately by condition. If students need more time, provide them with about 5 or 10 more minutes.

Once all students have finished and the materials are collected, proceed with the manipulation check then debrief.

So is everyone ready to go upstairs for the focus group? (mentally take note of their verbal and non-verbal response).

Okay, fill this last sheet out and we can go. (hand out the manipulation check and when they are completed collect and label the materials appropriately by condition).

Debrief.

## Appendix C: Experimental Conditions

### No Response Condition

Over the past several years, there have been various incidents that have created racial tension on many college and university campuses. Many of these incidents have involved “ghetto,” “gangsta,” or costume theme parties where White students have adopted and mimicked stereotypes commonly associated with African Americans and low-income racial/ethnic minorities. Below are a few of the more disturbing pictures of students at these parties.



Typically, when these parties occur, they receive a considerable amount of press. However, a party thrown by a group of Penn State students this past year on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day didn't receive much press because pictures from the party did not surface until early in the first summer session. Below is a PSU student's description of and response to the event and several pictures of students who attended the event (This information was taken from Facebook.com) Original URL:

[http://psu.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=2237999335&id=23116758&ref=share](http://psu.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=2237999335&id=23116758&ref=share)

Racism at PSU!!!

by Taylor Smith (notes) 1:39pm Tuesday, Jun 3, 2007

PLEASE READ THIS & SHARE

I am appalled, hurt, and disappointed at the PSU students who organized and attended this party. I've heard about these types of parties on other campuses, but I never thought it could happen here! Apparently, this past spring on MLK Jr. Day, these students had the audacity to throw a party to celebrate the day. This was not a party celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. King Jr., but instead, a party mocking “ghetto” life and low income Blacks. On the events page of this party, this event's tagline was named “Living the Dream.” The event creators also asked everyone to bring their own 40s of malt liquor and Black & Milds.

A friend of mine, found these pics on Facebook and forwarded the pictures to me (SCROLL DOWN TO SEE A FEW OF THE PICS FOR YOURSELF). Some students were holding 40s of malt liquor, wearing ‘stereotypical black attire’ (fitted caps and jerseys), smoking Black & Milds, and rocking gaudy jewelry. Some even went a step further, with fake “grills”, fake afros, and fake butts imitating Blacks. The most appalling however were the pictures of white boys with black paint on their bodies. This is Blackface!!!!!!!!!! This is racism!!!!!!

This might be okay to some, but to me this is disrespectful to all of those who died for equality. Martin Luther King died...he was murdered for this! You do not under any circumstances have the right to belittle this holiday or use it as an excuse to get drunk and disrespect a whole race of people. This just shows what some of the White students at PSU think about Blacks and how far we have to go as a country. This type of behavior is not cool. For those of you who don't know, RACISM IS REAL AND IT IS RIGHT HERE AT PSU!!!!!!

The only way to overcome racism and prejudice is to stand up for your dignity and demand your respect. I will leave you with my favorite quote from Eleanor Roosevelt “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent”. Believe in yourself, all of you.



To my black people, there is nothing wrong with you if you dress 'urban' and you have gold in your mouth. This is you. Never be ashamed.

Here are some of the pics.



### **Black Condition**

Over the past several years, there have been various incidents that have created racial tension on many college and university campuses. Many of these incidents have involved “ghetto,” “gangsta,” or costume theme parties where White students have adopted and mimicked stereotypes commonly associated with African Americans and low-income racial/ethnic minorities. Below are a few of the more disturbing pictures of students at these parties.



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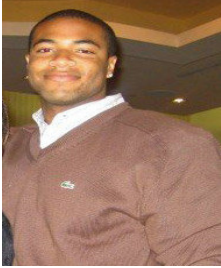
In response to the incident described above, several student groups (*Black Caucus & NAACP*) have organized meetings with some key campus administrators to discuss the event and possible outcomes. In addition, these student groups have been working together to orchestrate some demonstrations throughout the fall semester. For instance, these groups have scheduled to publicly demonstrate their dissatisfaction with campus racism by disrupting this year's homecoming football game. Moreover, they intend on calling alumni, parents, and local and national media outlets to express their displeasure.

Here are some student's Facebook.com responses to the incident:





This is an issue that should be handled immediately. To ANYONE who thinks that we should just "leave them the hell alone" and they are just exercising their free speech rights...well, maybe you should reconsider how it feels to be the one that is being imitated. That stuff is not funny in any shape, form or fashion. It is degrading and humiliating to the African American culture and race. I really hope that no one takes this as a joke. And what makes it worse is that they decided to do it on MLK Day...wow!



This is absolutely disgusting! Who are the freaking idiots who did this!!! I just understand how they could possibly think that this would be a good idea!!! You have to be stupid to not know that this would be offensive. WOW! I hope they get punished!



I hate to say this, but some white people have a tendency to believe that certain elements of the black "culture" are cool and entertaining. As a result, they attempt to bring it into the mainstream...no matter how inaccurate and degrading it may be to black folks. That's how TV sitcoms starring black people and written by white people come about. (i.e., Good Times, That's My Mama, Different Strokes) The party was racist!



It is unbelievable how this is an incident- so blatant, so overt and people still don't understand how awful this is. This is a big deal. People should not look the other way. It is absolutely horrible. Something must be done.



I'm baffled by the ignorance of the people who threw this party, literally baffled. I hope they are given some sort of punishment for their doings. These types of parties happen all the time. They just happened to get caught this time. What an embarrassment!!!



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### Diverse Condition

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#### Racism at PSU!!!

by Taylor Smith (notes) 1:39pm Tuesday, Jun 3, 2007

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I am appalled, hurt, and disappointed at the PSU students who organized and attended this party. I've heard about these types of parties on other campuses, but I never thought it could happen here! Apparently, this past spring on MLK Jr. Day, these students had the audacity to throw a party to celebrate the day. This was not a party celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. King Jr., but instead, a party mocking “ghetto” life and low income Blacks. On the events page of this party, this event's tagline was named “Living the Dream.” The event creators also asked everyone to bring their own 40s of malt liquor and Black & Milds.

A friend of mine, found these pics on Facebook and forwarded the pictures to me (SCROLL DOWN TO SEE A FEW OF THE PICS FOR YOURSELF). Some students were holding 40s of malt liquor, wearing ‘stereotypical black attire’ (fitted caps and jerseys), smoking Black & Milds, and rocking gaudy jewelry. Some even went a step further, with fake “grills”, fake afros, and fake butts imitating Blacks. The most appalling however were the pictures of white boys with black paint on their bodies. This is Blackface!!!!!!!!!! This is racism!!!!!!

This might be okay to some, but to me this is disrespectful to all of those who died for equality. Martin Luther King died...he was murdered for this! You do not under any circumstances have the right to belittle this holiday or use it as an excuse to get drunk and disrespect a whole race of people. This just shows what some of the White students at PSU think about Blacks and how far we have to go as a country. This type of behavior is not cool. For those of you who don't know, RACISM IS REAL AND IT IS RIGHT HERE AT PSU!!!!!!

The only way to overcome racism and prejudice is to stand up for your dignity and demand your respect. I will leave you with my favorite quote from Eleanor Roosevelt “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent”. Believe in yourself, all of you.

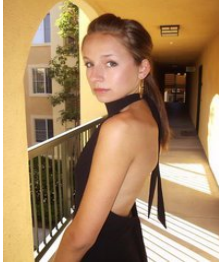
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### **No Punishment Condition**

Over the past several years, there have been various incidents that have created racial tension on many college and university campuses. Many of these incidents have involved “ghetto,” “gangsta,” or costume theme parties where White students have adopted and mimicked stereotypes commonly associated with African Americans and low-income racial/ethnic minorities. Below are a few of the more disturbing pictures of students at these parties.



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The administration responded with the following statement:



Dear Penn State Community,

Recently, we became aware of pictures that had been posted on the internet depicting scenes of a party that took place on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, 2007. The scenes in some of these photographs depicted White students dressed in attire they considered representative of African Americans. Furthermore, several students were made up in Blackface.



These images are shocking, repugnant, and unacceptable. Penn State students ought not engage in such offensive behavior. Our university is a community where students of many races, ethnicities, and religions work hard every day to bridge the gaps between them, to unify rather than to polarize. Our students are generally mature, responsible and hard-working. On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students we apologize deeply for the hurt that has been caused for so many by the insensitive acts of a few students.



As the student handbook reads, “The Pennsylvania State University will not tolerate discrimination or harassment of its students. Any form of discrimination or harassment related to a student's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or physical or mental handicap or disability is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter. The policy includes a broad definition of harassment, including but not limited to slurs, jokes or other graphic or physical conduct related to a student's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability.”



*After conducting a thorough review of the facts, the administration has determined that disciplinary action will not be taken. Although the actions of these students are highly offensive and disrespectful, their behavior does not merit disciplinary action. Instead, we encourage the larger campus community to utilize this unfortunate incident to facilitate dialogue on issues related race, ethnicity, diversity, and multiculturalism.*



The institution is determined that this moment should serve as a positive opportunity for The Pennsylvania State University to reaffirm its position on issues of diversity and discrimination, and to embody that position in loud and clear public statements of policy. The university will host several public forums to discuss this incident and related issues. Most importantly, this is a time for us to do what we do best. That is to educate ourselves, about the values this university embraces and the behaviors that we find acceptable.



Sincerely,

University Public Relations  
The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs

### **Punishment Condition**

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*We are currently still investigating this matter and expect to administer substantial sanctions on the students responsible for this event. At this point, we will not release all of the details; however, seven students will be suspended for participating in this act. Their return to the university will be contingent upon their completion of diversity training seminars and research projects on multiculturalism.*



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## Control Condition

Sections of this document were taken from the following source: <http://live.psu.edu/story/25422>

When time-pressed students hit the dining halls this fall at Penn State, they won't have to gulp and go. They can get a takeout meal by picking up a set of Styrofoam containers from the cashier, selecting what they want from the menu and rocketing off to eat their meal elsewhere. The takeout option will be available at four of University Park's seven dining halls.

The program, the brainchild of Housing and Food Services, was in test mode last year at McElwain Hall's dining unit, where it was an immediate hit, according to Lisa Wandel, director of residential dining. About 200 students or 40 percent of the diners are now using it, she said. "Today's students aren't always interested in sit-down eating with others," she said. "They want to grab their food, take it back to their room and sit in front of their computer."



Indeed, Jo Ann Marker, manager of dining commons operations at McElwain Dining Hall where the program was tested, said she watched students come, get takeout and scurry off, some to stow their meal in their fridges for later consumption, some to other commons to hang out with friends. "They loved it," she said. "It gives them the option to have a well-balanced hot meal whenever they choose to have it."

Takeout meals are just one indication that this is not your father's dining hall. The generation that remembers powdered eggs, mystery meatloaf and gray gravy should consider these facts about the seven dining commons on the University Park campus:

- Food services are open between 7 a.m. and 1 a.m. during the week and 9 a.m. to 1 a.m. on weekends. The eateries are open late because today's students have much busier schedules and it is not uncommon to see a herd of hungry folks heading off to eat at midnight.
- The dining halls feature made-to-order stations where students can chow down on sushi, pizza, subs, Mongolian grill, pancakes, waffles and omelets.
- Upscale dinner menus show up featuring steak weekly and seafood monthly.
- Tuesday night is fresh fish night at the commons. Consider some of these menu items: tilapia with orange celery salsa, seared mako shark with scallions, sautéed monkfish and Cajun catfish.
- The Penn State bakery provides fresh artisan breads on weekdays. Here are some of the choices: herb foccaccia, rosemary garlic bread, oat and flax seed bread, sun-dried tomato rolls, ciabattas and braided challahs.
- The salad bars go beyond the green standards to include such trendy fare as edamame, roasted soy nuts, cashews, walnuts, almonds, hummus, trail mix and tomato baked tofu.



Penn State works hard to remain on the cutting edge in food service, according to Wandel. "We have to be because it's what the students are used to," she said. "We're feeding the generation that grew up in restaurants."

That's not all. Starting this fall all Housing and Food Services dining commons will be changing to zero trans fat recipes and products where possible. The dining commons also accommodates special requests for students with allergies and students with special dietary needs due to religious restrictions. Wandel also expressed interest in increasing food services' environmentally friendly profile. Those styrofoam takeout containers that students like so much? "We're not thrilled with the Styrofoam," she said. "We're looking for an alternative environmentally friendly container."



## **Appendix D: Control Variable Constructs, Alpha Values, & Component Items with Factor Loadings**

### **Identity Centrality ( $\alpha = .788$ )**

- Overall, being a member of my racial group has very little to do with how I feel about myself (R). (.538)
- In general, being a member of my racial group is an important part of my self-image. (.738)
- My destiny is tied to the destiny of other members of my racial group. (.669)
- Being a member of my racial group is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am (R). (.606)
- I have a strong sense of belonging to my racial group. (.720)
- I have a strong attachment to members in my racial group. (.584)
- Being a member of my racial group is an important reflection of who I am. (.796)

### **Internal Motivation to Control Prejudice ( $\alpha = .874$ )**

- I attempt to act in non-prejudiced ways toward Black people because it is personally important to me. (.822)
- According to my personal values, using stereotypes about Black people is OK. (R) (.772)
- I am personally motivated by my beliefs to be non-prejudiced toward Black people. (.882)
- Because of my personal values, I believe that using stereotypes about Black people is wrong. (.827)
- Being non-prejudiced toward Black people is important to my self-concept. (.753)

### **External Motivation to Control Prejudice ( $\alpha = .733$ )**

- Because of today's politically correct standards I try to appear non-prejudiced toward Black people. (.681)
- I try to hide any negative thoughts about Black people in order to avoid negative reactions from others. (.675)
- If I acted prejudiced toward Black people, I would be concerned that others would be angry with me. (.654)
- I attempt to appear non-prejudiced toward Black people in order to avoid disapproval from others. (.823)
- I try to act non-prejudiced toward Black people because of pressure from others. (.614)

### **Negative Attitudes Toward Blacks ( $\alpha = .880$ )**

- If a Black were put in charge of me, I would not mind taking advice and direction from him or her. (.560)
- If I had a chance to introduce Black visitors to my friends and neighbors, I would be pleased to do so. (.593)
- I would rather not have Blacks live in the same apartment building I live in. (R) (.523)
- I would probably feel somewhat self-conscious dancing with a Black in a public place. (R) (.493)
- I would not mind it at all if a Black family with about the same income and education as me moved in next door. (.576)
- I think that Black people look more similar to each other than Whites people do. (R) (.597)
- I get very upset when I hear a Whites make a prejudicial remark about Blacks. (.642)
- I favor open housing laws that allow more racial integration of neighborhoods. (.730)
- It would not bother me if my new roommate was Black. (.700)
- It is likely that Blacks will bring violence to neighborhoods when they move in. (R) (.562)
- I enjoy a funny racial joke, even if some people might find it offensive. (R) (.473)
- The federal government should take decisive steps to override the injustices Blacks suffer at the hands of local authorities. (.610)
- Black and Whites people are inherently equal. (.518)
- Black people are demanding too much too fast in their push for equal rights. (R) (.553)
- Whites should support Blacks in their struggle against discrimination and segregation. (.723)
- Generally, Blacks are not as smart as Whites. (R) (.622)
- Racial integration (of schools, businesses, residences, etc.) has benefited both Blacks and Whites. (.608)
- I worry that in the next few years I may be denied my application for a job or a promotion because of preferential treatment given to minority group members (R) (.466)



**Appendix E: Demographic Control Variables**

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>Variable Type</i>	<i>Scale Range/Code</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Dichotomous	Male = 0 Female = 1
<i>Year in School</i>	Ordinal, Three Items	First Year Student = 0 Sophomore = 1 Junior or Senior = 2
<i>Academic Major</i>	Dummy Coded	Not major = 0 Humanities, Social Sciences, STEM, Business = 1
<i>Political Ideology</i>	Scaled Index, Five Items	Liberal = 0 Moderately Liberal = 1 Moderate = 2 Moderately Conservative = 3; Conservative = 4
<i>Father's Educational Background</i>	Scaled Index, Three Items	No or Some College = 0 Bachelor Degree = 1 Graduate Degree = 2
<i>Mother's Educational Background</i>	Scaled Index, Three Items	No or Some College = 0 Bachelor Degree = 1 Graduate Degree = 2
<i>Diversity Course</i>	Dichotomous	No Diversity Course = 0 Yes Diversity Course = 1
<i>Manipulation Check</i>	Dichotomous	Pass = 0 Fail = 1

## **Appendix F: Dependent Variable Constructs, Alpha Values, & Component Items with Factor Loadings**

### **Stereotype Threat ( $\alpha = .860$ )**

- I worry that focus group participants may stereotype me because I am White. (.859)
- I worry that something I may say might be misinterpreted as prejudiced by the focus group participants. (.833)
- I worry that the focus group participants' evaluations of me might be affected by my race. (.870)
- I worry that, because I know the racial stereotype about Whites and prejudice, my anxiety about confirming that stereotype will negatively influence my interactions with the group. (.800)

### **Interethnic Anxiety toward African Americans ( $\alpha = .852$ )**

- I would feel nervous if I had to sit alone in a room with a Black person and start a conversation. (.689)
- I just do not know what to expect from Black people. (.716)
- Although I do not consider myself a racist, I do not know how to present myself around Black people. (.760)
- My lack of knowledge about the Black culture prevents me from feeling completely comfortable around Blacks. (.715)
- I can interact with Blacks without experiencing much anxiety. (R) (.719)
- If I were at a party, I would have no problem with starting a conversation with a Black person. (R) (.694)
- I experience little anxiety when I talk to Blacks. (R) (.667)
- The cultural differences between Blacks and Whites make interactions between Blacks and Whites awkward. (.472)
- I would experience some anxiety if I were the only White in a room full of Blacks. (.508)
- I worry about coming across as a racist when I talk with Blacks. (.634)

### **Pluralistic Orientation ( $\alpha = .794$ )**

- I am able to see the world from someone else's perspective. (.557)
- I am tolerant of others with different beliefs. (.794)
- I am open to having my views challenged. (.870)
- I am able to discuss and negotiate controversial issues. (.753)
- I am able to work cooperatively with diverse people. (.728)

### **Openness to Diversity and Challenge ( $\alpha = .898$ )**

- I enjoy having discussions with people whose ideas and values are different from my own. (.683)
- The real value of a college education lies in being introduced to different values. (.799)
- I enjoy talking with people who have values different from mine because it helps me understand myself and my values better. (.864)
- Learning about people from different cultures is a very important part of my college education. (.862)
- I enjoy taking courses that challenge my beliefs and values. (.784)
- The courses I enjoy the most are those that make me think about things from a different perspective. (.751)
- Contact with individuals whose background (e.g., race, national origin, sexual orientation) is different from my own is an essential part of my college education. (.798)

### **Perceptions of Discrimination and Tension ( $\alpha = .791$ )**

- There is little or no racial discrimination on this campus. (R)
- There is racial tension among students on this campus.

### **Racial Climate for Minorities ( $\alpha = .816$ )**

- The university environment on this campus is hostile for racial/ethnic minority students. (R) (.819)
- The surrounding community is a hostile environment for racial/ethnic minority students. (R) (.755)
- I believe individuals at this university are friendly and welcoming to racial/ethnic minority students. (.822)
- I believe individuals at this university are accepting of racial/ethnic differences. (.873)

### **Institutional support for Racial/Ethnic Minority Students ( $\alpha = .852$ )**

- The university provides adequate support for racial/ethnic minority students on this campus. (.772)

- The university makes special efforts to help racial/ethnic minority students feel like they belong on campus. (.882)
- The university is committed to improving the collegiate experiences of racial/ethnic minority students. (.876)

**Institutional Commitment to Racial/Ethnic Diversity ( $\alpha = .726$ )**

- Educating students on issues related to race/ethnicity is a top priority for this university. (.917)
- Discriminatory actions and racist events are adequately addressed by the university. (.922)
- Creating a racially/ethnically diverse faculty, staff, and administration is a high priority to this university. (.662)

**Importance of Racial/Ethnic Diversity & Interracial Engagement ( $\alpha = .854$ )**

- It is important to have a racially/ethnically diverse student body. (.817)
- It is important to have a racially/ethnically diverse faculty, staff, and administration. (.827)
- The university should require students to take a diversity course that includes topics on race. (.654)
- Students can learn substantial amounts by interacting with students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. (.653)
- It should be a goal of the university to ensure that its students are able to interact and work with students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. (.749)
- It is important for students to interact with peers from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. (.854)
- Learning to interact and work with individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds will be a beneficial skill to have in your post-college life. (.754)

**Prevalence of Systemic Segregation ( $\alpha = .695$ )**

- I believe White students exclude racial minorities from their social networks. (.745)
- I believe White students should do more to make racial minorities feel welcome and included on this campus. (.781)
- I believe university faculty and staff should do more to help facilitate interactions between White and racial minority students. (.851)

**Prevalence of Minority Self-segregation ( $\alpha = .629$ )**

- I believe racial minorities segregate themselves from the larger university community.
- I believe racial minorities should do more to make themselves a part of the larger campus community.

**Perceptions of Differential Treatment & Racial Insensitivity ( $\alpha = .885$ )**

- Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by my fellow students. (.617)
- Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by university faculty. (.909)
- Because of my race, I am treated differently or unfairly by university staff and administrators. (.858)
- I experience racial insensitivity from my fellow students. (.710)
- I experience racial insensitivity from university faculty. (.932)
- I experience racial insensitivity from university staff and administrators. (.907)

Appendix G: Correlation Matrix

Construct	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1 Identity Centrality	3.423	0.901	-	**-.339	**-.276	*.192	**-.245	**-.395	**-.302	*-.205								
2 ATB	5.523	0.749		-	**-.694		**-.261	**-.509	**-.497	**-.508					**-.616	*.187	**-.274	
3 Internal MCP	5.669	0.997			-	*.192	*-.226	**-.380	**-.374	**-.399					**-.525	*.220	**-.285	
4 External MCP	4.113	0.971				-	*.350	*.202										
5 Stereotype Threat	3.986	1.176					-	**-.473							**-.256		**-.396	
6 IATAA	2.921	0.855						-	**-.435	**-.441				*.188	**-.305		*.183	*.195
7 Pluralistic Orientation	5.628	0.771							-	**-.531				**-.401				
8 Openness to Diversity & Challenge	5.251	0.989								-	*.205			**-.591	**-.339			
9 Perceptions of Discrimination & Tension	4.149	1.299									-	**-.448	*.183	**-.317		**-.254		
10 Climate for Racial/Ethnic Minorities	5.404	0.960										-	*.198	**-.238		**-.329	*.181	
11 Institutional Commitment to Racial/Ethnic Diversity	4.487	1.013											-	**-.465				
12 Institutional Support for Racial/Ethnic Minorities	5.016	0.929												-				
13 Importance of Racial/Ethnic Diversity and Interracial Engagement	5.589	0.873													-	**-.476	**-.275	
14 Systemic Segregation	4.140	0.929														-		
15 Minority Self-segregation	4.488	1.111															-	
16 Personal Experiences with Differential Treatment & Racial Insensitivity	1.395	0.614																-

\*\* p ≤ .01

\* p ≤ .05

## VITA – ANDREW HOWARD NICHOLS

### Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education  
The Pennsylvania State University, 2009

Master of Education in Postsecondary Education and Student Affairs  
The University of Southern California, 2005

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology  
Vanderbilt University, 2003

### Current Employment

Senior Research Analyst, The Pell Institute (2009-Present) – The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, sponsored by the Council for Opportunity in Education, conducts and disseminates research and policy analysis to encourage policymakers, educators, and the public to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for low-income and first-generation students and persons with disabilities.

### Relevant Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Robert D. Reason  
Center for the Study of Higher Education, 2007-2008

Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Shaun R. Harper  
Center for the Study of Higher Education, 2005-2007

Research Associate  
Rankin and Associates Consulting, 2007-Present

### Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

Harper, S. R., & Nichols, A. H. (2008). Are they not all the same? Racial heterogeneity among Black male undergraduates. *Journal of College Student Development*, 49(3), 247-269.

Museus, S. D., Nichols, A. H., & Lambert, A. D. (2008). Racial differences in the effects of campus racial climate on degree completion: A structural equation model. *The Review of Higher Education*, 32(1), 107-134.

Museus, S. D., Harper, S. R., & Nichols, A. D. (In Press). Racial/ethnic differences in high school students' educational expectations and the mediating role of self-perceptions: A structural model. Manuscript Accepted for Publication in *Teachers College Record*.

### Select Awards & Service

Bunton-Waller Graduate Fellowship, Penn State University (2005-2008)

Edward and Susan Wilson Graduate Scholarship, Penn State University (2006-2007)

ACPA Award for Excellent Organizational Service (2006)

Paul Robeson Cultural Center Award for Outstanding Service (2007)

Journal of Negro Education, Young Scholars Editorial Board (2008-Present)

Higher Education in Review, Reviewer (2007-2008)

Association for the Study of Higher Education, Member