

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of the Liberal Arts

“I’M SURE THEY DIDN’T MEAN IT”: RACIST INTENT AND THE ERASURE OF HARM

A Thesis in

Psychology

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

August 2008

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Abstract

I hypothesize that the threat of being seen as racist may lead to the increased relevance of racist intent to those under threat, when observing ambiguously racist interracial interactions. Previous research has shown that, when individuals assert non-racist intent, they are less likely to be judged as discriminatory (Swim, et. al, 2003). Thus, individuals under threat may be motivated to increasingly value the knowledge of information that can be used to avoid being judged as discriminatory – information regarding racist intent. Further, research on anxiety and memory has argued that anxiety about a negative outcome can draw ones attention to that which can help you avoid that negative outcome (Higgins, 1997; Seibt & Förster, 2004). Therefore, the attention of individuals under threat may be drawn to racist intent, as evidenced by more accurate memory of intent-related stimuli.

Two studies tested the hypothesis that the threat of being seen as racist may lead to both the increased value of racist intent, as measured by self reports, and an increased attention to racist intent, as measured by a memory task. Study 1 found that stereotype threat mediated an increased value of racist intent for those concerned with appearing racist. In addition, data indicates that, as the importance of intent increases, the importance of racial harms is diminished. Study 2 provided evidence that having a sense of shared fate with a stigmatized group member can attenuate the effects of stereotype threat, eliminating disparities in the value to racist intent and racial harms. Participants with a sense of shared fate with a stigmatized group member reported that both racist intent and racial harms are valuable. Memory tests over both studies revealed no relationship between stereotype threat and memory. Implications of the data are discussed, as well as ideas for future research.

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Introduction

“You can still call for me to be fired, that’s fine, but I think what makes a difference, a crucial difference is: What was my intent?”

-Radio personality Don Imus

Within the past two years, Michael Richards, Mel Gibson, and Don Imus have been publically condemned for making racist comments. Each deflected criticism by claiming that his actions were not motivated by racist intent, thus, he was not racist. These men’s assertions imply that racist intent is a necessary precondition of racism, assuming that their declarations of non-racist intent might divert negative evaluations for their actions. Previous research has shown that, indeed, when individuals assert non-racist intent, they are less likely to be judged as discriminatory (Swim, et. al, 2003). Perhaps, then, for anyone concerned with appearing racist, a conceptualization of racism that requires intent may also ease their anxieties.

Research indicates that Whites commonly suspect that the stereotype of being prejudiced dominates other groups’ perceptions of them (Vorauer, Main, & O’Connell, 1998). Witnessing an act that could be perceived as racist forces White onlookers to confront those anxieties. It has been suggested that an individual’s attitudes are shaped by the stereotypes they perceive out-group members have about them and their group (Vorauer et al., 2000). The stereotypes that individuals believe out-group members hold about their in-group are called “metastereotypes” (Sigelman, & Tuch, 1997). Vorauer and Kumhyr (2001) found that White participants spontaneously framed intergroup interactions in terms of metastereotypes. In addition, Vorauer and Kumhyr found that the presence of an out-group member was sufficient to activate metastereotypes. If merely being in the presence of an out-group member is

sufficient to activate the belief that members of your in-group are seen as racist, then watching an in-group member commit a potentially racist act would likely activate similar concerns. Thus, for onlookers who are concerned that their group – and by extension themselves – may be seen as racist, a definition of racism that requires racist intent may confer the same benefits that the perpetrators of the act receive. The following theories serve to identify the potential underlying mechanisms responsible for the effect that the concern with appearing racist has on the relevance of racist intent.

Stereotype Threat and Social Identity

The concern with appearing racist is one of the numerous anxieties explored by stereotype threat research. Stereotype Threat is defined as the concern that one might be evaluated in terms of a negative stereotype about one's group (Steele, 1992). Steele and Aronson (1995) examined the effects of Stereotype Threat by observing the academic performance of talented Black students under threat, relative to their White peers. Steele and Aronson found that Black students that are highly invested in academic domains can become threatened in evaluative contexts – such as high stakes aptitude testing – when the stereotype of Blacks as academically inferior is salient. Steele and Aronson report that, when concerned with confirming negative stereotypes about Black academic inferiority, Black students underperformed on a verbal GRE task relative to equally capable (i.e. matched by SAT score) White peers, and Black peers who were not under threat. Most importantly, the effects of stereotype threat, and not disparate ability, led to poor performance.

Stereotype threat effects have been replicated in a variety of contexts, including for women on math tests (e.g. Spencer et al., 1999), Latinos on math tests (e.g. Schmader & Johns,

2003), the elderly on memory tasks (Levy, 1996), low SES students on verbal tests (e.g. Croizet & Claire, 1998), and White men on athletic tasks (e.g. Stone et al., 1999). Recent research indicates that Whites can also experience stereotype threat in interracial interactions in response to the stereotype of Whites as racists (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008). Branscombe's taxonomy of social identity threats sheds light on why the potential to be seen as racist might be powerfully threatening.

Social Identity has been defined as an individual's knowledge of their membership in groups paired with an emotional investment in that membership (Tajfel, 1972). Focusing on the good characteristics of in-groups can be beneficial through establishing a positive social identity for in-group members—including the self—and consequently positive self-esteem (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998). In this way social identities can lead to an affirming sense of self. But they can also be threatening if paired with negative characteristics.

Branscombe and colleagues (1999) identified four potential threats to social identity. First, 'categorization threat' is the threat of being categorized against one's will in an undesirable social group. Second, 'acceptance threat' challenges one's membership within a desired group. These threats speak to the desire to have control over one's own identity. Third, 'value threat' occurs when the value of one's group is challenged. This is a threat to the worth of one's group as opposed to a threat to one's membership within that group. Fourth, 'distinctiveness threat' challenges the uniqueness of one's group. It is the threat that one's valued in-group is undifferentiated from an out-group.

Branscombe's taxonomy of social identity threats helps illuminate the variety of ways that the stereotype of Whites as racist can be threatening. For example, racist behavior by Whites may reinforce this stereotype. This, in turn would increase the likelihood that Whites

who are not prejudiced would be miscategorized as racist. Thus, the more often Whites perform racist acts, the greater categorization threat for other White people to be seen as racist.

Additionally, because racist attitudes are generally devalued, racist behavior in oneself or others may serve as a value threat to White racial identity. If Whites are generally seen as racist, then being White might be seen as an undesirable social identity in a world where racism still thrives. Further, if other peoples' racist behavior increases the likelihood that non-racist Whites are devalued, then those Whites who consider themselves not to be racist might experience an acceptance threat – a threat to being categorized as a moral human being. In this way, the concern with appearing racist can serve as a number of threats to a positive social identity.

Consequently, White Americans are often motivated to control their expressions of prejudice, in part to avoid confirming a stereotype of Whites being racist (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Plant & Devine, 1998). That is, Whites are aware of this stereotype, and may worry that they could be seen as prejudiced solely based on stereotypes about their racial identity. Research suggests that Whites commonly suspect that the stereotype of being prejudiced dominates other groups' perceptions of them (Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998).

Vorauer and Kumhyr (2001) found that the presence of an out-group member was sufficient to activate such metastereotypes. Goff and colleagues later advanced this idea, finding that White students experienced stereotype threat when anticipating having a conversation with a Black undergraduate on a sensitive topic such as racial profiling (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008). In Goff's research, the discomfort of stereotype threat led many of these students to sit farther away from imagined partners. Here, the experience of stereotype threat—and neither explicit prejudice (as measured by the Attitudes Towards Blacks scale

(Brigham, 1993)) or implicit prejudice (as measured by a standard Implicit Association Test, a test designed to measure implicit biases against Blacks (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998))—inspired aversive behavior that could be interpreted as prejudiced. It is of some importance that Goff and colleagues measured implicit prejudice before participants experienced stereotype threat.

This is because Frantz and colleagues (Frantz, et al., 2004) found that the fear of being seen as racist lead White participants to perform worse on the Implicit Association Test. Here, it was those most highly motivated to control prejudice that displayed the strongest anti-Black scores under threat. In this way, well-intentioned Whites have been shown to respond to the threat of appearing racist in undesirable ways. This phenomenon holds true when Whites are in the presence of racial minorities.

Recent research (e.g. Goff & Jackson, in prep; Goff, Nichols, & Jackson, in prep; Goff, Di Leone, & Spino, in prep) has examined the causes and consequences of stereotype threat for Whites during interracial conversations. Findings have suggested that one source of threat for Whites during interracial conversations is the concern that non-Whites have more expertise on issues of race (Goff & Jackson, in prep). During conversations with a Black confederate, White participants feared that their comments would be perceived as racially ignorant—and thus racist—confirming a negative stereotype of Whites as racist. Here, the authors also replicated previous findings indicating that stereotype threat led students to sit farther away when awaiting a one-on-one conversation with a Black conversation partner.

Subsequent examinations of interracial conversations have revealed that stereotype threat leads Whites to make more comments explicitly devaluing the use of racial categorizations when in mixed race conversations, as opposed to same race conversations

(Goff, Nichols, & Jackson, in prep). While such comments may aim to minimize interpersonal differences, these comments may also leave non-Whites feeling as if their racial and cultural identities are devalued.

In addition, White students under stereotype threat have been shown to be more likely to avoid discussing issues of group history or group power in mixed race conversations (Goff, Di Leone, & Spino, in prep). To help avoid such topics, White students were more likely to make comments equating the stigma experienced by different social groups (e.g. equating Black Americans' experiences with discrimination to that of blondes). Again, White students concerned with appearing racist made comments that minimized the salience of differences. But here, participants minimized the historical differences between racial groups, rather than challenging the utility of racial categorization altogether. Again, these tendencies may be intended to bring groups together through an increased focus on similarities, yet they may also threaten the distinctiveness of racial minority groups' unique histories and offend the minority interaction partners.

Considering the anxiety that can result from interracial interactions, and the negative consequences that can result from negotiating the concern with being seen as racist, it is easy to imagine that individuals would be highly motivated to alleviate that threat. Because indications of non-racist intent can prevent individuals from being seen as racist, it follows that those under threat should consider information indicating racist (or non-racist) intent as increasingly relevant. For someone involved in an ambiguously racist interaction, this might translate into a declaration of non-racist intent. For an observer of an ambiguously racist interaction, it is unclear whether the concern with appearing racist would also lead them to value information indicating racist (or non-racist) intent.

The present research examined whether or not the experience of stereotype threat increases the relevance of a perpetrator's intent for third party observers of ambiguously racist interactions. For White participants witnessing a racist interaction, I predicted that the concern with appearing racist would affect how much participants value information about that interaction. Specifically, participants would more greatly value information about the perpetrator's intent, relative to information regarding the harms experienced by the target. Conversely, participants who are not concerned with appearing racist would value the harms experienced by targets of prejudice most, as a reflection of the norms that find racial harms sufficient for diagnosing racism. This trend would be consistent with the legal definitions of racism found in America and abroad. Research on attention and memory indicates that stereotype threat may also affect an individual's attention to racist intent, in addition to affecting its value to those under threat.

Threat, Attention, and Processing

Research on attention and memory suggests that a change in focus may result from the experience of threat. Regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997) describes two distinct methods of goal pursuit that vary as a function of regulatory focus: concerns with achieving positive outcomes (promotion focus) and concern with safely avoiding negative outcomes (prevention focus). An individual with a promotion focus experiences success when accomplishing a goal, and experiences failure when a good opportunity is missed. One with a prevention focus experiences success when an undesired outcome is avoided, and experiences failure when they fail to avoid an undesirable outcome.

Seibt and Förster (2004) found that the activation of positive or negative stereotypes leads to a promotion or prevention focus, respectively. Seibt and Förster asked non-psychology participants to proofread a text containing 20 episodes in the life of a student. Each episode conveyed self-regulation using either approach or avoidance means. Before completing the task, participants were exposed to negative or positive stereotype ascriptions. In the positive stereotype condition, participants were told that non-psychology students typically outperformed psychology students on the task. In the negative stereotype condition, participants were told that psychology students typically outperformed non-psychology students on the task. It was hypothesized that being ascribed a positive stereotype should induce a promotion focus related to achieving stereotype consistent success on the proofreading task. Conversely, being ascribed a negative stereotype should induce a prevention focus related to avoiding stereotype consistent failure on the proofreading task. As found in previous research (i.e. Higgins et al., 1994), it was predicted that a promotion and prevention focus would be displayed through enhanced memory of approach and avoidance related items, respectively, on a surprise memory task.

The authors reported that participants who were exposed to positive stereotypes had better recall of approach related episodes than avoidance related episodes when completing a surprise memory task (Seibt & Förster, 2004). Alternatively, those who were exposed to negative stereotypes had better recall of avoidance related episodes than approach related episodes. The memory task revealed selective attention paid to stimuli that were consistent with participants' stereotype-activated regulatory focus. In this way, memory can serve as a valid proxy for selective attention.

According to regulatory focus theory, individuals selectively attend to different types of information based on their regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997). In the context of memory, individuals with a promotion focus are particularly motivated to accomplish “hits” (correct identification of a previously encountered stimulus) and to avoid “misses” (a loss of accomplishment via failing to correctly identify). In contrast, individuals with a prevention focus are particularly motivated to attain “correct rejections” (correctly discriminating novel items) and to avoid “false alarms” (making the mistake of identifying a novel stimulus as one that was previously encountered).

In the context of ambiguous racial conflict then, an individual with a promotion focus would seek to correctly identify racial offenses without missing any instances. Whereas, one with a prevention focus would seek to correctly reject non-offensive interracial encounters, without having any false alarms (the attribution of racism where racism doesn’t exist). Because stereotype threat activates negative stereotypes, one must predict that the experience of threat would induce a prevention focus, just as negative stereotypes induced a prevention focus in Seibt and Förster’s previous research (2004). Thus, those concerned with being seen as racist should pay closer attention to information that can assist in rejecting the attribution of racism where racism doesn’t exist, that of racist intent.

Based on the research reviewed above, it is reasonable to conclude that stereotype threat may induce selective attention to racist intent when observing ambiguously racist interracial interactions. Previous research has shown that a prevention focus increases attention to items related to avoidance strategies (Seibt and Förster, 2004). This increased attention resulted in increased memory for those items. Thus, I predict that participants will have increased memory for items related to racist intent on a memory task related to the

interaction. Because cognitive resources are limited, this increased focus on intent may result in a decreased attention to, and thus poorer memory of, other stimuli. Within this context, this decreased attention is predicted to translate into poorer memory of racial harms.

It should be noted that there are drawbacks to conducting memory tests during stereotype threat research, because stereotype threat interferes with working memory. Previous research has demonstrated that stereotype threat undermines performance on intellectual tasks by triggering a disruptive mental load (e.g. Croizet et al., 2004, Schmader & Johns, 2003). If stereotype threat interferes with memory, then accuracy for all types of information (i.e., intent related and harm related) may be reduced. If stereotype threat does not interfere with memory for all items, I predict to find increased attention to racist intent and decreased attention to racial harms. The hypothesized differences in attention are only predicted in the context that reflects their anxieties, that being when an in-group member is insulting an out-group member. If one's prevention focus is related to confirming a stereotype about in-group members harming out-group members, there is no a priori reason to predict selective attention in contexts where an in-group member is the target of harm.

Alternative Hypothesis

I have hypothesized that the concern with being seen as racist will motivate the predicted differences in the relevance of information related to racist intent. Ideomotor theory presents an alternative explanation to stereotype threat as the mechanism driving the predicted biases when watching a racist event. Stereotype threat and ideomotor mechanisms differ in that one focuses on "hot" cognition whereas the other focuses on "cold" cognition. The stereotype threat approach is a "hot" approach in that it emphasizes the affective motivational

states that can accompany stereotype activation. Steele (1997) emphasized the presence of emotional distress, pressure, anxiety, and evaluation apprehension, which suggests that stereotype threat is a consciously experienced affective phenomenon.

The additional affective component of “hot” cognition can bias the way observers interact with information. Kunda (1990) described the process as follows. An observer, aroused under threat, would think “I am concerned that X might be true.” This cognition leads one to search for conditions under which X might not be true, and the presence of such conditions then tends to be confirmed through biased belief construction and memory search. (Kunda, 1990). Thus, if observers of a racist event think “I am concerned that I may be seen as racist,” they may be biased towards belief construction and memory search related to disproving the occurrence of racism. Such a bias would be reflected in an increased belief in the importance of racist intent when defining racism, as well as a more accurate memory of intent related information. If this bias is motivated (i.e., a result of a “hot” process), then the predicted differences across participants should be correlated with measures of a conscious anxiety about being seen as racist. Conversely, if the predicted differences are not correlated with measures of conscious anxiety, a “cold” cognitive process may provide a better explanation.

Ideomotor theory is a cold cognitive approach in that it emphasizes the effect of stereotype activation on behavior in the absence of alterations in conscious motivations and feelings (Bargh, 1997). Ideomotor phenomena are generally characterized by either a direct or indirect activation of a behavioral representation, which in turn alters the observer’s behavior unconsciously (Wheeler & Petty, 2001). Because ideomotor effects are the result of the increased accessibility of stereotype-relevant behavioral schemas, ideomotor “cold” processes

should lack motivational mediators such as the evaluative anxiety associated with stereotype threat. Thus, biases due to ideomotor effects would be unrelated to conscious anxiety or other motivational states. Therefore, central to my thesis is the prediction that anxiety surrounding the experience of stereotype threat motivates the predicted biases. If participants' are consciously aware of the concern with appearing racist, and that anxiety is correlated with the predicted differences, I would have evidence that the biases are driven by motivated hot processes. Whereas, if participants are not consciously anxious, I would know that the predicted biases are driven by cold ideomotor processes.

Study 1

Study 1 was designed to test whether Whites' experience of stereotype threat leads to the increased relevance of racist intent. Study 1 examines this relationship by measuring participants' self-reports of the value of racist intent and racial harms, as well as measuring participants' selective attention to information regarding racist intent and racial harms when watching a third party. After manipulating participants' level of threat, I showed participants videos depicting an interaction where a racially insensitive remark was made. The relevance of racist intent was then measured in two ways. First, participants were asked to both rate (via scale) and rank (in order) the importance of information illuminating the intent of the perpetrator relative to information indicating the harms experienced by the target of the insensitive remark. I hypothesized that participants under threat would value information illuminating the intent of the perpetrator racist intent more than information indicating the harms experienced by the target. Second, participants completed a memory task to discover if

stereotype threat led to a more accurate recall of the portions of the video related to racist intent relative to the portions related to harm. Here, I hypothesized that participants under threat would attend to racist intent more than harms.

Methods

Participants

Eighty-seven undergraduate students enrolled at The Pennsylvania State University participated in this study in exchange for partial course credit. Forty-two of the participants (48%) identified as women and 45 of participants (52%) identified as men. All participants self-identified as White or Caucasian.

Design

Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 3 (dyad ethnicity: White perpetrator/Black target v. White perpetrator/White target v. Black perpetrator/White target) between subjects design. Two measures of selective attention served as the principle dependent variables.

Materials

Stereotype Threat Scale. Participants filled out an explicit stereotype threat scale (adapted from Goff, Steele, and Davies, 2008; $\alpha = .71$) to help test the hypothesis that anxiety surrounding the experience of stereotype threat would motivate the predicted increase in relevance of racist intent. The scale included questions such as “I worry that, because I know

the racial stereotype about Whites and prejudice, my anxiety about confirming that stereotype will negatively influence my evaluations.” If the responses to this scale are correlated with the predicted increases in the relevance of racist intent, this will provide evidence that these predicted results are motivated by the concern with appearing racist.

Memory recall form. Twenty-four memory recall questions presented participants with repeat statements that made during the video, as well as novel statements, and asked the participants to discriminate between the two. Half were related to the dyad perpetrator, while the other half were related to the dyad target. For each type of statement, one third were related to intent, one third were related to harms, and one third were unrelated. This created 2 questions for each of 12 memory question types (e.g. novel perpetrator intent, repeat target harm, novel target unrelated, repeat perpetrator intent). This form, and all other materials are included in the appendix.

Information Request form. Participants were asked to rank order what pieces of information they would most like to know about the people in the video. The four possible pieces of information were 1) the intent behind the comments of the perpetrator, 2) the harms experienced by the perpetrator, 3) the intent behind the comments of the target, and 4) the harms experienced by the target. Participants ranked the information from 1 – 4, with 1 being the most important piece of information and 4 being the least important. Thus, in terms of the mean rankings reported later, a lower mean indicates that the item was ranked as more important relative to the other information. In addition to ranking the four pieces of information, participants were asked to rate how important it was to get each piece of information on a scale from 1 (“not at all important”) to 7 (“extremely important”). Here, in terms of the data reported later, a higher mean indicates that the item was rated as more

important relative to the other information. Including each scale provided unique benefits. The ranking scale forced participants to make decisions as to which information was more important relative to one another. Whereas, the rating scale explored whether or not participants would rate items as equally important when given the opportunity. The order in which participants ranked and rated this information was counterbalanced across participants.

Lay conceptions of Intent and Harm form. I was also interested in capturing participants' lay conceptions about the importance of racist intent and racial harms. Thus, participants were asked to answer questions aimed to assess their interpretations of the relevance of intent and harm outside of the context of evaluating a specific incident. These questions formed an intent subscale ($\alpha = .67$) and a harm subscale ($\alpha = .64$). For example, in relation to the nature of racial harms, participants were asked about their agreement with the statement: "If a Black person is offended by a race-related comment made by a White person, they have just been the victim of racism." In relation to the nature of racist intent, participants were asked questions such as "If a White person *accidentally* makes a racist comment, they should always be forgiven." Possible responses ranged from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree").

Procedure

After obtaining written informed consent, participants completed an Identity Centrality scale (adapted from Sellers et al., 1997) in order to test how central racial identity was to participants. This measure was included to ensure that subsequent hypothesized differences could not be explained by the centrality of racial identity. Participants then completed a test designed to measure their explicit racial attitudes – the Attitudes Towards Blacks scale

(Brigham, 1993). Participants received false results of this test based on random assignment. Half were told that the results showed that they have low racial prejudice, and half were told that the results were inconclusive. In previous research, giving inconclusive feedback induced the threat of being seen as racist. Those receiving results indicating that they are low in prejudice did not experience stereotype threat (Goff, Di Leone, & Spino, in prep). Participants then completed a Stereotype Threat Scale to measure how concerned participants were that they may be perceived as racist.

Participants then watched one of three videos. Participants were told to approach the video as if they were a manager trying to settle a dispute. In the course of the interaction, one of the video actors makes a negative comment towards the target actor. In the first condition, the video shows a White person making a derogatory comment directed at a Black target. In the second condition, the video shows a White person making a derogatory comment directed at a White target. This condition served as the control. And in the third condition, the video shows a Black person making a derogatory comment directed at a White target. This condition was added to ensure that the hypothesized effects in the first condition are truly a result of concerns related to seeing a racial in-group member making an offensive comment, and not just from watching an interracial dyad. Thus, I predicted that this third condition (Black perpetrator) would mirror the control condition (all White dyad). After watching the video, participants completed the memory recall form, the information request form, and the intent vs. harm form described earlier. Finally, participants were probed for suspicions, fully debriefed, and thanked for their participation.

Results

Identity centrality. There were no differences found in how central participants considered their racial identity across condition. The overall mean was at the midpoint of the scale ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.07$), reflecting a lack of strong opinion about the centrality of being White. Because of the lack of group differences, identity centrality is ignored for the remainder of the analyses.

The experience of stereotype threat. It was hypothesized that individuals receiving inconclusive feedback concerning their level of racial prejudice would report higher scores on the stereotype threat scale than individuals who received low prejudice feedback. This predicted main effect on the Stereotype Threat scale was significant, such that individuals in the inconclusive feedback condition experienced greater stereotype threat ($M = 3.77$) than did people in the low prejudice feedback condition ($M = 3.29$) $F(1, 81) = 4.86$, $p < .05$. It is important to note that participants actual scores on the Attitudes Towards Blacks scale did not reveal actual differences in prejudice, $F(1, 81) < 1$, ns.

The Importance of the Intent of the Perpetrator. I conducted a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 3 (dyad ethnicity: White perpetrator/Black target v. White perpetrator/White target v. Black perpetrator/White target) between subjects ANOVA for each information request rating and ranking question. When analyzing the rankings of the importance of the perpetrator's intent, no main effects were found. There was a significant interaction as shown in Figure 1.1, $F(2, 81) = 4.33$, $p < .05$. Simple effects test revealed no significant differences resulting from the feedback manipulation on the all White dyad, $F < 1$, ns. However for the White perpetrator/Black dyad, participants who had received inconclusive feedback ranked information about the intent of a White perpetrator as more important ($M =$

1.27, with 1 meaning most important and 4 meaning least important of the four choices), than in the low prejudice feedback condition ($M = 2.18$), $F(1, 81) = 7.11$, $p < .01$. This pattern reversed for the Black perpetrator/White target video dyad. Here, the information about the Black perpetrator was less important after receiving inconclusive feedback ($M = 2.14$) as opposed to receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 1.62$), though this difference was not significant, $F(1, 81) = 2.02$, ns.

Analysis of the rating measure yielded a main effect of feedback, such that participants valued perpetrator intent more after receiving inconclusive feedback, than if they received low prejudice feedback, $F(1, 81) = 4.71$, $p < .05$. This effect was qualified by an interaction as shown in Figure 1.2, $F(2, 81) = 4.73$, $p = .01$. Simple effects tests revealed that, for the White perpetrator/Black target video dyad, participants valued information regarding the intent of a White perpetrator more when they received inconclusive feedback ($M = 6.20$) as opposed to low prejudice feedback ($M = 4.18$), $F(1, 81) = 12.80$, $p < .001$. Feedback was not a significant predictor in either other condition.

Mediational Analysis for Perpetrator Intent. Because participants experienced higher levels of stereotype threat after receiving inconclusive feedback, I followed the steps outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) to test the stereotype threat scale as the predicted mediator of all significant effects. Mediation was not able to be tested for the ranking measure, due to a lack of correlation between the mediator variable (stereotype threat score) and the dependent variable (ranking score) overall, $r = .02$, ns. A closer examination revealed differing relationships between threat and ranking scores for those who received inconclusive feedback ($r = -.56$, $p < .05$) versus low prejudice feedback ($r = .29$, ns). Thus, for those receiving inconclusive feedback

Stereotype threat was found to partially mediate effects found in the rating measure. The independent variable (feedback condition) significantly predicted the dependent variable (rating score), $B = 2.02$, $p < .005$. Second, the independent variable predicted the mediator variable (explicit stereotype threat score), $B = .88$, $p = .01$. Third, when controlling for the independent variable, the mediator variable still predicted the dependent variable, $B = 1.10$, $p < .001$. Finally, when the mediator was held constant, the independent variable predicted significantly less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = 1.06$, $p = .05$ (Sobel test, $Z = 2.27$, $p < .05$).

The Importance of the Harms to the Target A 2 x 3 ANOVA of the ranking measure revealed a main effect of dyad ethnicity, $F(2,81) = 8.25$, $p = .001$. Across feedback conditions, participants ranked the target's harm as less important for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad ($M = 2.75$), as opposed to the Black perpetrator/White target dyad ($M = 1.89$) or all White dyad ($M = 2.11$). This main effect was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction as shown in Figure 1.3, $F(2, 81) = 8.35$, $p = .001$. Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected the rankings for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback ranked information about the target harms as less important ($M = 3.40$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 2.18$), $F(1, 81) = 15.27$, $p < .001$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

This pattern of results was mirrored in the analysis of the rating measure. A 2 x 3 ANOVA of the rating measure revealed a main effect of dyad ethnicity, $F(2,81) = 6.47$, $p < .005$. Again, participants rated the target's harm as less important for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad ($M = 4.75$), as opposed to the Black perpetrator/White target

dyad ($M = 5.11$) or all White dyad ($M = 6.00$). This effect was qualified by the predicted interaction as shown in Figure 1.4, $F(2, 81) = 5.03$, $p < .01$. Simple effects tests revealed a similar pattern to the ranking measure, such that the feedback manipulation only affected the ratings in the White perpetrator/Black target dyad. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback rated information about the target harms as less important ($M = 4.00$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 5.41$), $F(1, 81) = 7.78$, $p < .01$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

Mediational Analysis for Target Harm. I tested stereotype threat as the predicted mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and the ratings of the importance of target harms. First, the feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -1.41$, $p < .05$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .88$, $p = .01$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -1.17$, $p < .001$. And fourth, when we controlled for the mediator, the independent variable no longer predicted the dependent variable's variance, $B = -.38$, n.s., (Sobel test, $Z = 2.26$, $p < .05$). A mediational analysis of the ranking measure suggested that stereotype threat may partially mediate the relationship between the feedback condition and the ranking measure (reducing from $B = 1.22$, $p = .005$ to $B = .88$, $p < .05$), however the Sobel test was only marginal (Sobel test, $Z = 1.75$, $p = .08$).

The Importance of the Harms to the Perpetrator A 2×3 ANOVA of the ranking measure revealed a main effect of dyad ethnicity, $F(2, 81) = 6.27$, $p < .005$. Across feedback conditions, participants ranked the information regarding harms experienced by the perpetrator as more important for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad ($M = 2.87$), as opposed to the Black perpetrator/White target dyad ($M = 3.33$) or all White dyad ($M = 3.64$). This main effect

was qualified by a two-way interaction as shown in Figure 1.5, $F(2, 81) = 4.90, p = .01$.

Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected the rankings for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback ranked information about the harms experienced by the perpetrator as more important ($M = 2.40$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 3.29$), $F(1, 81) = 8.34, p < .01$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

This pattern of results was similar in the analysis of the rating measure. A 2×3 ANOVA of the ranking measure revealed a main effect of dyad ethnicity, $F(2, 81) = 6.46, p < .005$. Here, participants rated the perpetrator's harm most highly for the Black perpetrator/White target dyad ($M = 4.62$), followed by the White perpetrator/Black target dyad ($M = 4.21$), then the all White dyad ($M = 3.21$). This effect was qualified by an interaction as shown in Figure 1.6, $F(2, 81) = 6.86, p < .005$. Simple effects tests revealed a similar pattern to the ranking measure, such that the feedback manipulation only affected the ratings for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback rated information about the harms experienced by the perpetrator as more important ($M = 5.40$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 3.18$), $F(1, 81) = 16.82, p < .001$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

Mediation Analyses for Perpetrator Harm. I tested stereotype threat as the mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and the ratings of the importance of harms experienced by the perpetrator. First, the feedback condition significantly predicted the ranking score, $B = 2.22, p < .001$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .88, p = .01$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the dependent variable, $B = .69, p = .01$. And fourth, when we

controlled for the mediator, the independent variable predicted less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = 1.61$, $p < .005$, (Sobel test, $Z = 2.26$, $p < .05$). A mediational analysis of the ranking measure suggested that stereotype threat may mediate the relationship between the feedback condition and the ranking measure (reducing from $B = -.89$, $p = .01$, to $B = -.57$, ns), however the Sobel test was only marginal (Sobel test, $Z = 1.69$, $p = .09$).

The Importance of the Intent of the Target There were no main effects or interactions associated with the intent of the target, across our manipulations. Accordingly, no mediational analyses were executed. Information regarding the intent of the target was not highly sought after (ranking $M = 2.9$ out of 4) and not rated as highly important ($M = 4.03$ on a seven point scale)

The Intent vs. Harm Form It was hypothesized that participants experiencing stereotype threat from receiving inconclusive feedback would value information related to perpetrator intent more than target harms when they watched an interracial interaction with a White perpetrator and a Black target. While the data supports this hypothesis, I also wanted to test how this experience of threat impacted ideas about the relative importance of racist intent and harms more generally, through the intent and harm subscales of a novel Intent vs. Harm questionnaire. The intent subscale was negatively correlated the harm subscale ($r = -.50$, $p < .001$) indicating that as the importance of racist intent increases, the relative importance of harms diminishes. How participants rated the relative importance of each varied by condition.

Analysis of participants' responses to the intent subscale revealed no main effects, however revealed a significant interaction as shown in figure 1.7 $F(2, 81) = 8.30$, $p = .001$. Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected the rankings in the White perpetrator/Black target condition. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive

feedback rated racist intent as more important ($M = 4.24$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 2.82$), $F(1, 81) = 14.10$, $p < .001$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

Similarly, analysis of participants' responses to the harm subscale revealed no main effects, however revealed a significant interaction as shown in figure 1.8 $F(2, 81) = 3.50$, $p = .05$. Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected the rankings for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback rated racial harms as less important ($M = 3.11$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 4.04$), $F(1, 81) = 5.83$, $p < .05$. Differences across the other two video conditions were not significant.

Mediational Analyses for the Intent and Harm subscales. I tested stereotype threat as the mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and the responses to the intent subscale, revealing a partial mediation. The feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = 1.42$, $p = .001$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .88$, $p = .01$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the dependent variable, $B = .53$, $p = .01$. And fourth, when I controlled for the mediator, the independent variable predicted less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = .95$, $p < .05$, (Sobel test, $Z = 1.93$, $p < .05$).

Stereotype threat fully mediated the relationship between the feedback variable and the responses to the harm subscale. The feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -.93$, $p < .05$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .88$, $p = .01$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the dependent variable, $B = -.80$, $p < .001$. And fourth, when I controlled

for the mediator, the independent variable no longer predicted the dependent variable's variance, $B = -.22$, ns, (Sobel test, $Z = 2.24$, $p < .05$).

Memory Task. Overall memory recall accuracy ($M = 71.6\%$ correct) was above chance (50%), one-sample $t(86) = 22.64$, $p < .001$. However, no main effects of feedback condition or dyad ethnicity were significant, and no interaction was found, $F(2, 81) < 1$, ns. Thus, the experience of stereotype threat did not reduce performance on the memory task. This finding does not necessarily contradict previous research citing that stereotype threat triggers a disruptive cognitive load. Considering the high overall accuracy across conditions, it is possible that the memory task utilized was too simple to reflect the taxing nature of stereotype threat.

I created an accuracy score for items related to the perpetrators intent and the harms experienced the target. The accuracy score was created by averaging the proportion of hits (items correctly recalled) and proportion of correct rejections (items correctly deemed novel). Participants were more accurate in discriminating items related to the perpetrator's intent ($M = 71.2\%$) than items related to the harms experienced the target ($M = 61.2\%$), paired-sample $t(86) = 4.08$, $p < .001$. I then created an accuracy difference score (perpetrator's intent score – target harm score) and submitted it to a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 3 (dyad ethnicity: White perpetrator/Black target v. White perpetrator/White target v. Black perpetrator/White target) between subjects ANOVA. Neither main effects nor a significant interaction were found, $F(2, 81) = 1.57$, ns, as displayed in figure 1.9. The pattern indicated that, for the White perpetrator/Black target video dyad, threat might lead to greater advantages in memory accuracy for items related to perpetrator intent relative to target harm related items.

However the difference was not significant, independent-sample $t(30) = -.87$, ns. Furthermore, stereotype threat was found not to be correlated with accuracy across conditions.

Discussion. Across each information request measures, the conscious experience of stereotype threat influenced participants for the White perpetrator/Black target dyad, but in none of the other conditions. Across several measures, stereotype threat was found to partially or fully serve as a mediator. In response to the relative importance of racist intent and racial harms generally, as well as to their importance in assessing the interaction video, stereotype threat led White participants to value information regarding racist intent more and devalue information regarding racial harms. The only exception to this pattern was that, under threat, the racial harms experienced by White perpetrators making racially insensitive comments to Black targets was rated as highly important ($M = 5.4$ on a 7 point scale). These data support the hypothesis that the conscious experience of stereotype threat can affect reactions to negative interracial interactions for unrelated observers, when the offender is in the observer's racial in-group.

Here, a motivated concern about the intent of White perpetrators led to the devaluing of the harms experienced by Black targets of racism, as a result of participants' concern with themselves being seen as racist. When under threat, participants rated information regarding perpetrator intent as more important ($M = 6.20$) that information regarding the harms experienced by the target ($M = 4.00$). When not under threat the pattern reverses. Target harms are rated as more important ($M = 5.41$) that the perpetrator intent ($M = 4.18$). Further, the data indicate that there is a relationship between the value of racist intent and racial harms generally, such that as the value of one increases, the value of the other declines. Again, these patterns were not due to negative attitudes on the part of participants. Rather, they are an

unintentional consequence of the fear of being seen racist. This consequence is not trivial, however, as it may lead to the minimizing of harms that would otherwise be fully acknowledged.

The results from the memory task did not support my hypotheses. Participants did display greater accuracy towards items related to the perpetrator's intent. However this memory accuracy did not significantly vary with feedback condition or dyad type as predicted. This measure may have failed to capture differences due to the ease of the memory task. Alternatively, because of the small number of recall items per memory question type (e.g. novel perpetrator intent), there may not have been variation to capture real differences. However, due to the lack of correlation between stereotype threat and accuracy, it may be the case that stereotype threat is only affecting the relative value of information and not how that information is remembered. This lack of correlation suggests that memory differences may be related to an ideomotor process, or another variable unrelated to my hypothesis.

Study 2

In study 1, participants' concern with appearing racist increased their value of information related to racist intent relative to information related to racial harms. That is, stereotype threat caused a motivated shift in the relative value of information related to intent relative to information related to harms. The second study explored the possibility of attenuating this threat induced disparity by changing participants' motivational state. Here, I tested the hypothesis that linking the outcomes of the target of racism to the outcomes of the observer would eliminate the differential value of intent and harm related information. By inducing a motivation to view the outcomes of the target of racism as important, any harm that

the target experiences should also become important. Therefore, I predicted that linking the outcomes of the target and observer would reduce participants' tendency to value information related to racial harms less than information related to racist intent. While participants under threat should still value information about racist intent, those who felt that their outcomes were tied to the target of racism are predicted to equally value information related to the target's experience of harms.

Methods

Participants

Sixty undergraduate students enrolled at The Pennsylvania State University participated in this study in exchange for partial course credit. Thirty-two of the participants (53%) identified as women and 28 of participants (47%) identified as men. All participants self-identified as White or Caucasian.

Materials

Participants received the Attitudes Towards Blacks scale (Brigham, 1993), as well as a Stereotype Threat scale (adapted from Goff, Steele, and Davies, 2008). Participants also completed the information request task, the intent vs. harm scale, and the memory task described in study 1.

Procedure

Participant followed the same procedure as in study 1. Participants received randomly assigned feedback on a test of their prejudice prior to watching a video of an ambiguously

racist interaction. Because I was interested in attenuating the effects of stereotype threat reported in study 1, Study 2 focused only on videos of White actors making negative comments to Black targets. Prior to watching the video, half of the participants received a shared fate manipulation in order to make participants feel that their outcomes were tied to the outcomes of the target of racism. This resulted in a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 2 (fate condition: shared fate v. control) between subjects design.

Participants were asked to imagine taking on the role of a business manager evaluating personnel. Participants in the shared fate condition were told that their success as a manager was contingent upon maintaining good relationships between all employees, keeping everyone happy. In the control condition, participants were told that their success as a manager was only contingent upon their employee's final product.

As in study 1, participants were given artificial results to the attitudes towards Blacks scale (Brigham 1993), as a stereotype threat manipulation. All participants then watched a video where a negative comment was made by a White person directed at a Black target. Following the video, participants completed the previously mentioned intent vs. harm scale. Participants were then asked to rank and rate the 4 items from the information request form. Participants then completed the memory task. Finally, participants were probed for suspicions, fully debriefed, and thanked for their participation.

Results

The experience of stereotype threat. Again, it was hypothesized that individuals receiving inconclusive feedback concerning their level of racial prejudice would report higher scores on the stereotype threat scale than individuals who received low prejudice feedback.

This predicted main effect on the Stereotype Threat scale was significant, such that individuals who received inconclusive feedback condition experienced greater stereotype threat ($M = 4.16$) than did people who received low prejudice feedback ($M = 3.34$) $F(1, 56) = 11.93, p < .001$.

The Importance of the Intent of the Perpetrator. I conducted a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 2 (fate condition: shared fate v. control) between subjects ANOVA for each information request rating and ranking question. When analyzing the rankings of the importance of the perpetrator's intent, no main effects were found. There was a significant interaction as shown in Figure 2.1, $F(1, 56) = 6.59, p < .05$. Simple effects test revealed that absent the shared fate, participants who had received inconclusive feedback ranked information about the intent of a White perpetrator as more important ($M = 1.14$), compared to participants who had received the low prejudice feedback ($M = 1.92$), $F(1, 56) = 10.59, p < .005$. However, in the shared fate condition, no significant differences resulted from the feedback manipulation, $F = 1.24, ns$.

Analysis of the rating measure yielded a main effect of feedback, such that participants valued perpetrator intent more after receiving inconclusive feedback, compared to those who received low prejudice feedback, $F(1, 56) = 6.56, p = .01$. This effect was qualified by an interaction as shown in Figure 2.2, $F(1, 56) = 10.02, p < .005$. Simple effects tests revealed that, absent shared fate, participants valued information regarding the intent of a White perpetrator more when they received inconclusive feedback ($M = 5.79$) as opposed to low prejudice feedback ($M = 4.00$), $F(1, 56) = 18.95, p < .001$. Again, feedback was not a significant predictor in the shared fate condition.

Mediational Analysis for Perpetrator Intent. I tested stereotype threat as the predicted mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and each scale in the

condition without shared fate, as a replication of study 1 mediational findings. For ratings of the importance of perpetrator intent, the feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = 1.79$, $p < .001$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .87$, $p < .05$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -.72$, $p < .001$. And fourth, when we controlled for the mediator, the independent variable predicted less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = 1.15$, $p < .005$, (Sobel test for partial mediation, $Z = 2.07$, $p < .05$). A mediational analysis of the ranking measure was not significant.

The Importance of the Harms to the Target. When analyzing the rankings of the importance of target's harm, no main effects were found. There was a significant interaction as shown in Figure 2.3, $F(1, 56) = 10.33$, $p < .005$. Simple effects test revealed that absent shared fate, participants who had received inconclusive feedback ranked information about the harms experienced by the Black target less important ($M = 2.38$), than in the low prejudice feedback condition ($M = 1.38$), $F(1, 56) = 10.99$, $p < .005$. However, in the shared fate condition, no significant differences resulted from the feedback manipulation. $F = 1.29$, ns.

Analysis of the rating measure yielded a main effect of fate condition, such that participants valued target harm more with shared fate ($M = 6.03$), than absent shared fate ($M = 5.15$), $F(1, 56) = 7.72$, $p < .01$. This effect was qualified by an interaction as shown in Figure 2.4, $F(1, 56) = 7.79$, $p < .01$. Simple effects tests revealed that, absent shared fate, participants valued information regarding the harms experienced by target less when they received inconclusive feedback ($M = 4.50$) as opposed to low prejudice feedback ($M = 5.85$), $F(1, 56) = 8.70$, $p < .005$. Again, feedback was not a significant predictor in the shared fate condition.

Mediational Analysis for Target Harm. I tested stereotype threat as the predicted mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback and the ratings of the importance of target harms. First, feedback significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -1.35$, $p < .05$. Second, feedback predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .87$, $p < .05$. Third, controlling for feedback, the mediator variable significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -.73$, $p < .05$. And fourth, when we controlled for the mediator, the independent variable no longer predicted the dependent variable's variance, $B = -.71$, n.s., (Sobel test was marginal, $Z = 1.76$, $p = .08$). A mediational analysis of the ranking measure was not significant.

The Importance of the Harms to the Perpetrator. When analyzing the rankings of the importance of harms to the perpetrator, a main effect of feedback was found such that participants who had received inconclusive feedback ranked information about the harms experienced by the perpetrator as more important ($M = 3.29$), than in the low prejudice feedback condition ($M = 3.74$), $F(1, 56) = 5.25$, $p < .05$. This effect was qualified by a significant interaction as shown in Figure 2.5, $F(1, 56) = 4.25$, $p < .05$. Simple effects test revealed that, absent shared fate, participants who had received inconclusive feedback ranked information about the harms experienced by the perpetrator as more important ($M = 3.14$), than in the low prejudice feedback condition ($M = 4.00$), $F(1, 56) = 8.70$, $p < .005$. However, in with shared fate, no significant differences resulted from the feedback manipulation. $F < 1$, ns.

Analysis of the rating measure yielded no main effects. There was a significant interaction as shown in Figure 2.6, $F(1, 56) = 8.65$, $p = .005$. Simple effects tests revealed that absent shared fate, participants valued information regarding the harms experienced by perpetrator more when they received inconclusive feedback ($M = 4.71$) as opposed to low

prejudice feedback ($M = 2.92$), $F(1,56) = 8.96$, $p < .005$. Again, feedback was not a significant predictor in the shared fate condition.

Mediation Analysis for Harms to the Perpetrator. I tested stereotype threat as the mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and the ratings of the importance of harms to the perpetrator. First, the feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = 1.79$, $p < .005$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .87$, $p < .05$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the rating score, $B = .95$, $p < .05$. And fourth, when we controlled for the mediator, the independent variable predicted less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = .96$, $p = .09$, (Sobel test, $Z = 1.99$, $p = .05$). A mediation analysis of the ranking measure was not significant.

The Importance of the Intent of the Target There were no main effects or interactions associated with the intent of the target, across our manipulations. Accordingly, no mediation analyses were executed. Information regarding the intent of the target was not highly sought after (ranking $M = 3.01$ out of 4) and not rated as highly important ($M = 4.1$ on a seven point scale)

The Intent vs. Harm Form. It was hypothesized that participants experiencing stereotype threat from receiving inconclusive feedback would value information related to racist intent more than racial harms absent shared fate, as a replication of study 1. However, I predicted that the shared fate manipulation would reverse that pattern. Here, again, the intent subscale was negatively correlated the harm subscale ($r = -.59$, $p < .001$) indicating that as the importance of racist intent increases, the relative importance of harms are diminished. How participants rated the relative importance of each varied by condition.

Analysis of participants' responses to the intent subscale revealed a main effect of fate condition, where participants in the fate not shared condition rated racist intent as more important ($M = 4.04$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 3.51$), $F(1, 56) = 4.10$, $p = .05$. This effect was qualified by a significant interaction as shown in figure 2.7 $F(1, 56) = 14.54$, $p = .001$. Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected rankings absent shared fate. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback rated racist intent as more important ($M = 4.71$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 3.37$), $F(1, 56) = 11.89$, $p < .005$. Differences in the shared fate condition were not significant.

Analysis of participants' responses to the harm subscale revealed no main effects, however, revealed a significant interaction as shown in figure 2.8 $F(1, 56) = 8.26$, $p = .01$. Simple effects tests revealed that the feedback manipulation only affected the rankings absent shared fate. In this condition, participants receiving inconclusive feedback rated racial harms as less important ($M = 3.34$) than those receiving low prejudice feedback ($M = 4.31$), $F(1, 56) = 5.68$, $p < .05$. Differences in the shared fate condition were not significant.

Mediational Analyses for the Intent and Harm subscales. I tested stereotype threat as the mediator variable of the relationship between the feedback variable and the responses to the intent subscale, revealing a partial mediation. The feedback condition significantly predicted the rating score, $B = 1.35$, $p = .005$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .87$, $p = .05$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the dependent variable, $B = .77$, $p = .001$. And fourth, when I controlled for the mediator, the independent variable predicted less of the dependent variable's variance, $B = .68$, $p < .05$, (Sobel test, $Z = 2.14$, $p < .05$).

Stereotype threat fully mediated the relationship between feedback and responses to the harm subscale. Feedback significantly predicted the rating score, $B = -.97, p < .05$. Second, the feedback condition predicted the mediator, stereotype threat, $B = .87, p = .05$. Third, controlling for the feedback condition, the mediator variable significantly predicted the dependent variable, $B = -.82, p < .001$. And fourth, when I controlled for the mediator, the independent variable no longer predicted the dependent variable's variance, $B = -.25, ns$, (Sobel test, $Z = 2.10, p < .05$).

Memory Task. Overall memory recall accuracy ($M = 73.0\%$ correct) was above chance (50%), one-sample $t(60) = 24.95, p < .001$. A main effect of fate was found, such that participants who received the shared fate manipulation were more accurate overall than participants who did not receive the manipulation, $F(1, 56) = 4.19, p < .05$. However, a main effect of feedback was not found, and no interaction was found, $F(1, 56) < 1, ns$. Again, stereotype threat did not predict overall accuracy. Thus, the experience of stereotype threat did not reduce general performance on the memory task.

As in study 1, I created an accuracy score for items related to the perpetrators intent and the harms experienced the target. Participants were more accurate in discriminating items related to the perpetrator's intent ($M = 69.2\%$) than items related to the harms experienced the target ($M = 62.5\%$), paired-sample $t(59) = 2.02, p < .05$. I then created an accuracy difference score (perpetrator's intent score – target harm score) and submitted it to a 2 (feedback condition: inconclusive v. low prejudice) X 2 (fate condition: shared fate v. control) between subjects ANOVA, as displayed in figure 2.9. A main effect of threat emerged, such that the discrepancy between perpetrator intent accuracy and target harm accuracy is greater in participants who received inconclusive feedback ($M = 14.3\%$), relative to those who received

low prejudice feedback (1%) $F(1, 56) = 4.24, p < .05$. There was not a main effect of fate condition, and the interaction was not significant. The stereotype threat scale was not correlated to the accuracy difference score, thus no mediational analysis was conducted. These differences indicate that participants under threat have more accurate recall of items related to the perpetrators intent, relative to items related to the target's harms. Because accuracy wasn't correlated with stereotype threat, this indicates that separate process may be influencing the memory of participants under threat.

Discussion. Across each of the measures, stereotype threat influenced participants absent shared fate – a replication of study 1 – but not in the shared fate condition. Again, stereotype threat was found to partially or fully mediate the relationship between threat and the importance of racial intent/harms. Stereotype threat led White participants to value information regarding racist intent more, and devalue information regarding racial harms. These data further support the hypothesis that the conscious experience of stereotype threat leads participants to increasingly value racist intent at the cost of the value of racial harms.

However, in the shared fate condition, the effects of stereotype threat were attenuated. Here, regardless of feedback, target harms were rated as more important ($M = 6.03$) than the perpetrator's intent ($M = 4.39$). Having a motivation to value the outcomes of the target prevented participants from allowing a motivated concern about the intent of White perpetrators to lead to the devaluing of the harms experienced by Black targets of racism. Interestingly, participants receiving low prejudice feedback absent shared fate answered each measurement similarly to participants who received low prejudice feedback in the shared fate condition. Simple effects tests comparing those cells revealed no significant differences (all F 's $< 2.12, ns$). That is, when not under threat, participants responded as if they maintained a

sense of shared fate, even if not asked to do so. The effects of stereotype threat absent shared fate indicate that when under threat, participants may generally operate under the assumption that their fate is separate from racial out-group members who are the targets of racism.

General Discussion

These data support the claim that stereotype threat influences how third party onlookers interpret potentially racist contexts. It is clear from study 1 that witnessing different kinds of interactions evokes unique responses. Only when witnessing an in-group member offend an out-group member did the anxiety about appearing racist influence participants' responses. Within that context, the experience of stereotype threat motivated a shift in what information was deemed valuable. Consideration of the targets harms became less urgent to threatened individuals, while consideration of racist intent moved to the forefront. In fact, information regarding the harms that the perpetrator experienced was ranked higher than the target of racism. Evidence indicates that the conscious experience of stereotype threat contributes to the differential value of intent and harm, as opposed to automatic cognitive functioning. If automatic cognitive functioning was responsible, participants would not have had conscious access to their anxieties. Across two studies, participants reported that they did have conscious access to their anxieties. And absent a sense of shared fate, these anxieties led participants to value information about racist intent and devalue information about racist harm.

Having a sense of shared fate reduced the impact of stereotype threat on participants' value of intent and harm related information. Further, shared fate reduced the tendency to devalue information about racist harm. This effectively ended disparities during the pursuit of

racism-related information. With a sense of shared fate, both the perpetrators' intent and the targets' harm were ranked as highly important. Obtaining information about racist intent no longer precluded attention to racial harms.

Participants' recall of racism related statements was affected in the presence of stereotype threat. This relationship was only found to be significant in the second study, but the trends in the data are reflected in both studies. Participants under threat were more vigilant to information related to racist intent. This vigilance was reflected in an increased performance on a memory task that took into account both hits and correct rejections. Increases in accuracy were not mediated by the experience of stereotype threat, yet occurred when participants were under threat. Thus it may be the case that stereotype threat has consequences that are unconscious and automatic. Because these memory effects weren't related to the conscious experience of stereotype threat, it is not surprising that the shared fate manipulation did not moderate the relationship between threat and accuracy. Shared fate did increase overall accuracy; however that was driven by accuracy related to filler items.

One limitation of the current research is that it does not address the participants' interpretation of the interactions. Future research should ask participants to articulate their understanding of the interracial interactions. In addition, research should explore the attributions participants make about information regarding those interactions (e.g. how will information about a perpetrator's intent help you?). Because the participants that received low prejudice feedback in study 2 responded similarly across fate conditions, future research should also directly test the possibility that stereotype threat reduces a sense of shared fate with racial out-group members.

The current research has attempted to provide of a better understanding about how stereotype threat affects the interpretation of racist interactions. The data provides evidence that stereotype threat can lead observers to privilege information regarding racist intent over that of racial harms when evaluating potential acts of racism. However, defining racism as requiring intent runs counter to formal conceptualizations of racism in both American and international law. For example, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled racial segregation unconstitutional in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision largely because the plaintiffs convincingly argued that school segregation caused psychological harm to Black children (Kluger, 1975). If intent was seen as the central determinant in defining racism, then foregrounding racial harms would not have been necessary, since evidence of racist intent was ubiquitous in 1954.

International law similarly reflects the integral role racial harms – and not intent – play in common definitions of racism. In 1966, The United Nations adopted an international treaty, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) that defines racial discrimination as:

Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (660 UNTS 195, reprinted in 5 ILM 352 (1966).)

When CERD defines racial discrimination in terms of “purpose or effect,” the treaty makes explicit that either racist intent or racial harms are sufficient conditions to identify

racism. That is, evidence of racial harms is sufficient proof that racism has occurred even absent malicious intent. One hundred twenty eight countries have ratified CERD—including the United States in 1997—suggesting that the global community shares this definition.

Considering the robust support for framing racism in terms of racial harms, one might expect onlookers to reject claims of non-racist intent when evaluating an offensive act. The opposite was true when the website TMZ.com asked their viewers to rate the video footage of Michael Richards' outburst. TMZ.com was first to post the clip displaying Richards rampant use of racial slurs, his allusions to lynching, and the angry responses of offended onlookers. Afterwards it polled its users with this question: Was Richards racist? 44% of respondents answered "no." A poll of celebrity news website viewers is likely not a representative sample of the larger population. Yet the question remains: Why would onlookers agree with Richards' evaluation – that his non-racist intentions made him not racist – when conventional definitions of racism do not? The current research offers evidence that onlookers may deviate from conventional definitions of racism as a motivated response to the concern with appearing racist themselves. Such anxieties may create a motivation to frame racism in terms of intent, in order to ease those concerns.

A threat-induced focus on the intent of the perpetrators within these interactions may prevent attention from being paid to the harms experienced by the targets of racism, and result in an underestimation of the prevalence of racial harms. This can contribute to mistrust across racial groups, contributing to that which makes normal interracial interactions a threatening endeavor in the first place. Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Leonard Pitts Jr., a Black American, responded to the fact that so many Americans labeled Michael Richards' outburst as non-racist in his nationally syndicated column (2006, November 27), saying: "If so many of

my White countrymen refuse to recognize racism when it is this blatant and unmistakable, what expectation can we have that they will do so when it is subtle and covert?" In other words, when it is what it usually is." The inability to agree on what constitutes racism poses a threat to the potential targets of racism.

Just as Michael Richards' rant had implications for other Whites and their concern with being seen as racist, such racial attacks have implications for minority onlookers, even when they aren't the individual the attack was directed towards. Every racial outburst that makes the news, and every hanging noose (See: Jena 6) and other recurring artifact of America's racist past serves as a cue to minorities that such histories find life today. And if there is not agreement on what constitutes racism, then there can be little hope of successfully moving beyond that past together. This research has attempted to provide information that may help us better understand the causes of differing definitions of racism. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the literature that informs efforts to foster intergroup communication, trust, and rapport.

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Figures

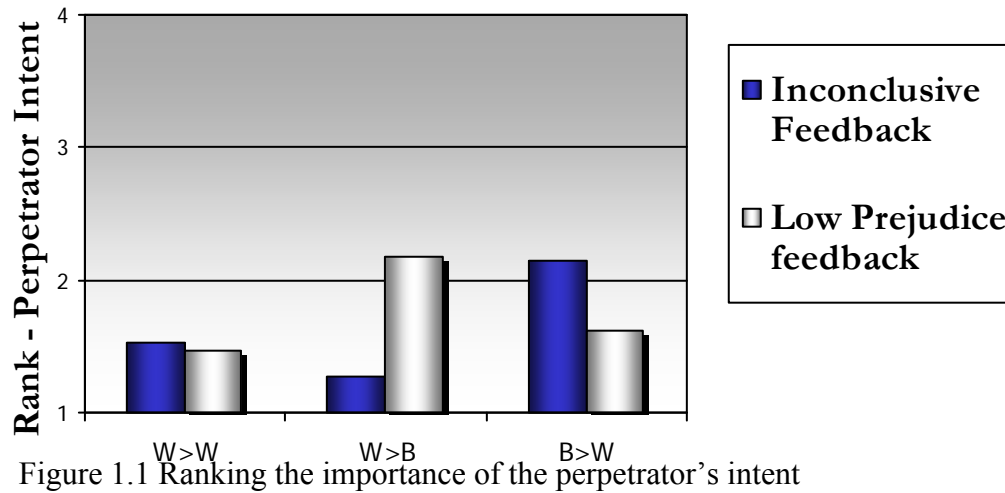


Figure 1.1 Ranking the importance of the perpetrator's intent

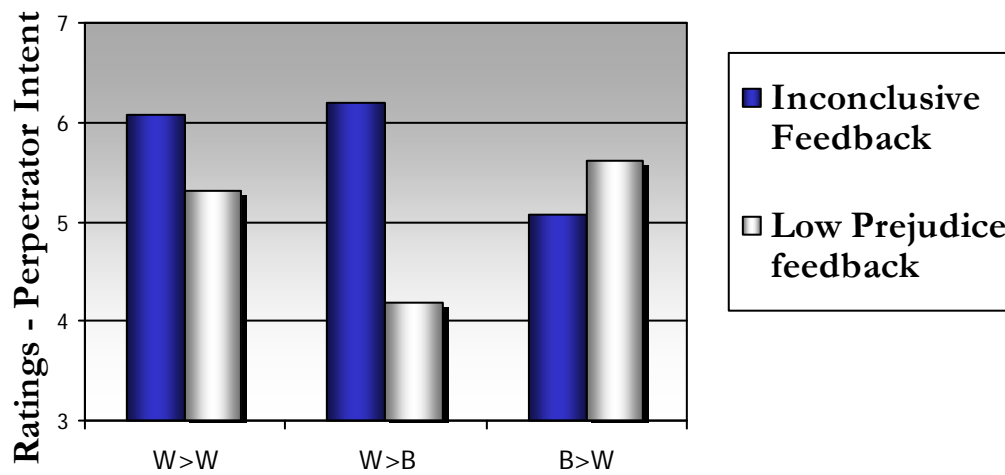


Figure 1.2 Rating the importance of the perpetrator's intent

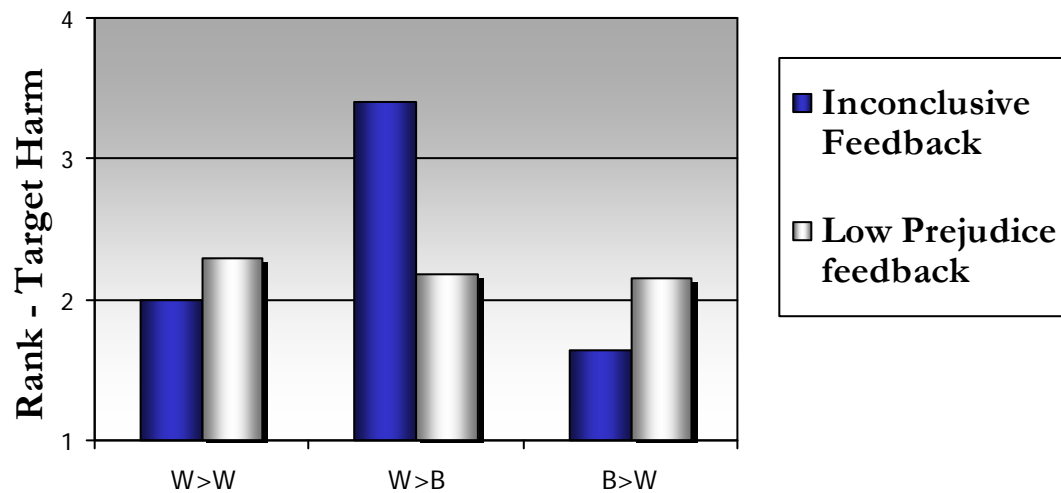


Figure 1.3 Ranking the importance of harms to the target

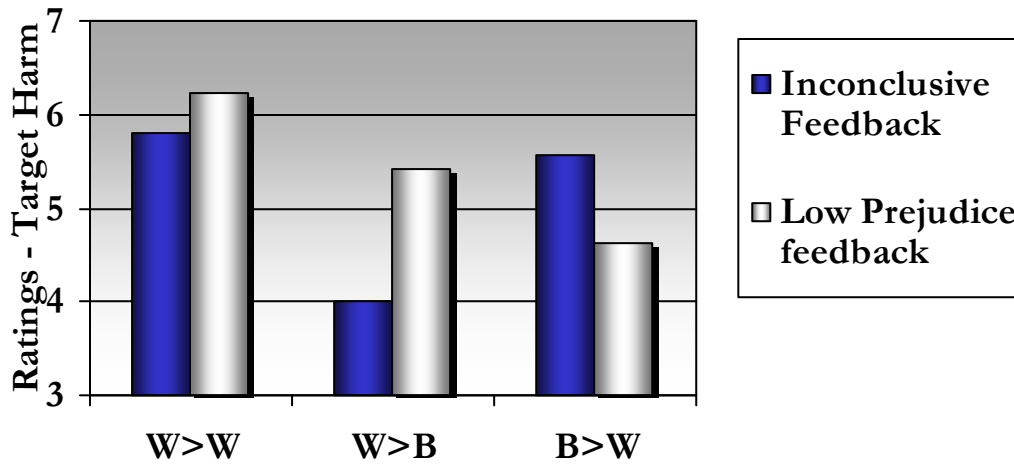


Figure 1.4 Rating the importance of harms to the target

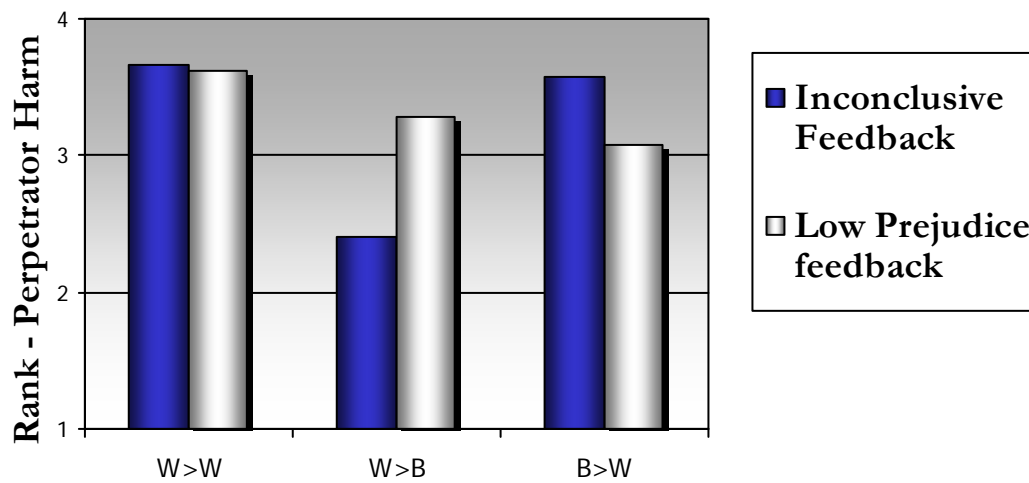


Figure 1.5 Ranking the importance of harms to the perpetrator

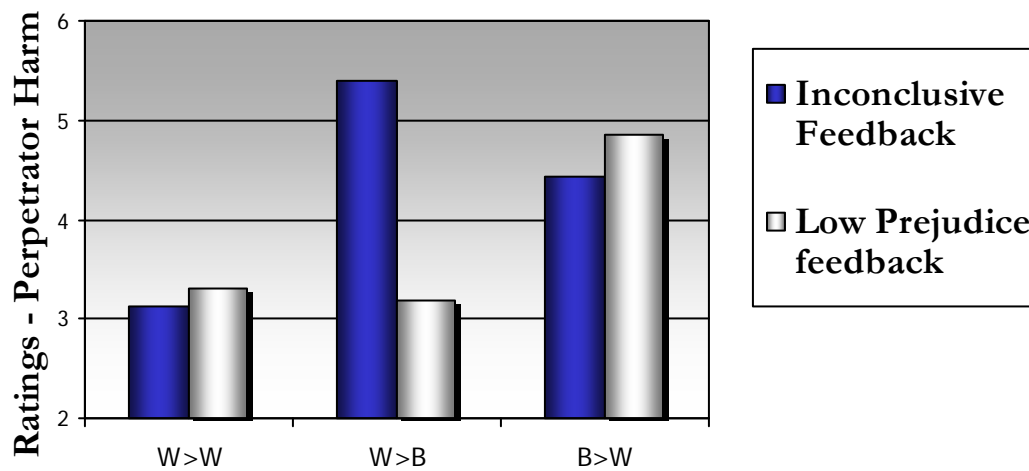


Figure 1.6 Rating the importance of harms to the perpetrator

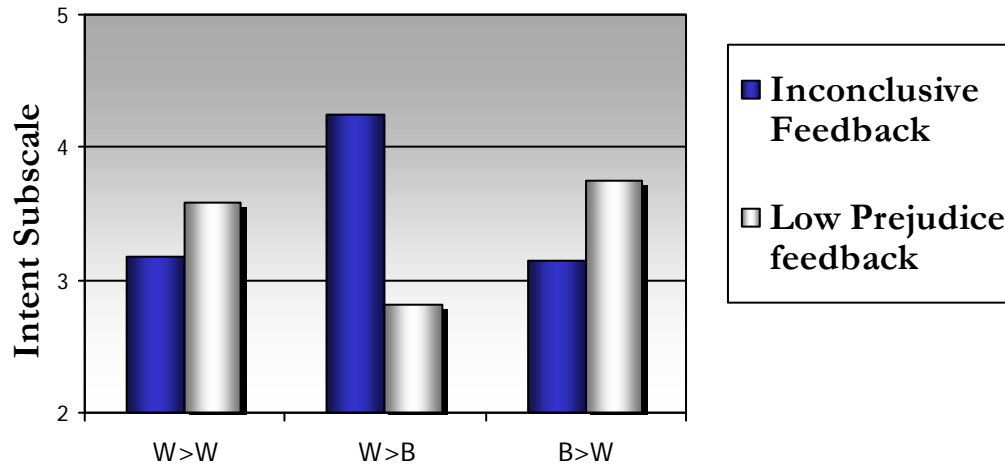


Figure 1.7 Lay perceptions of the importance of racist intent

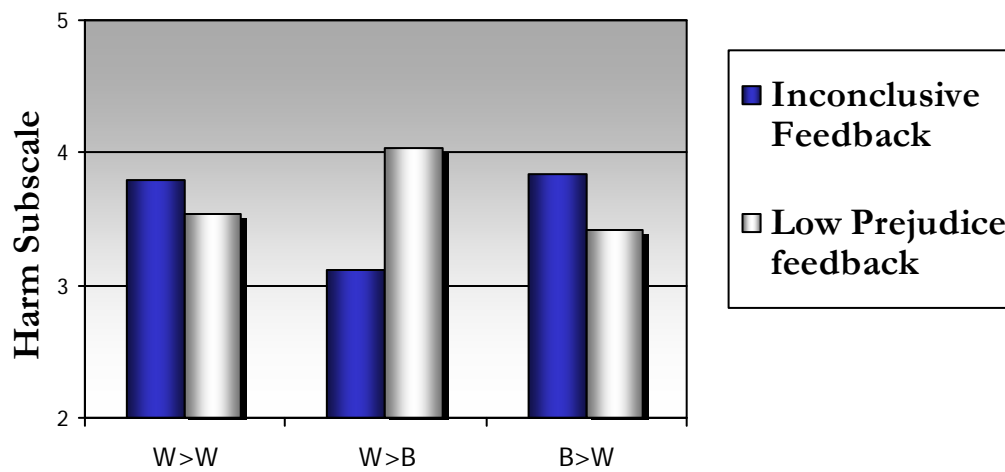


Figure 1.8 Lay perceptions of the importance of racial harms

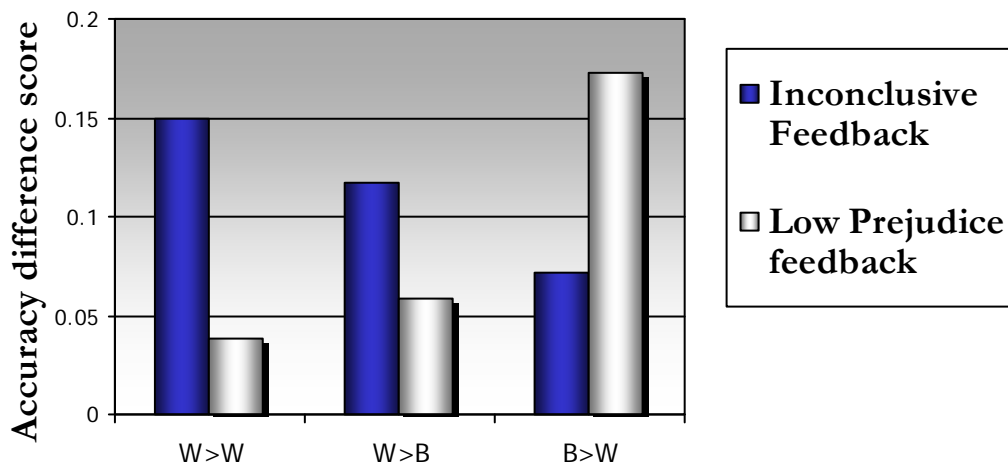


Figure 1.9 Accuracy difference score (Perpetrator intent - Target harm)

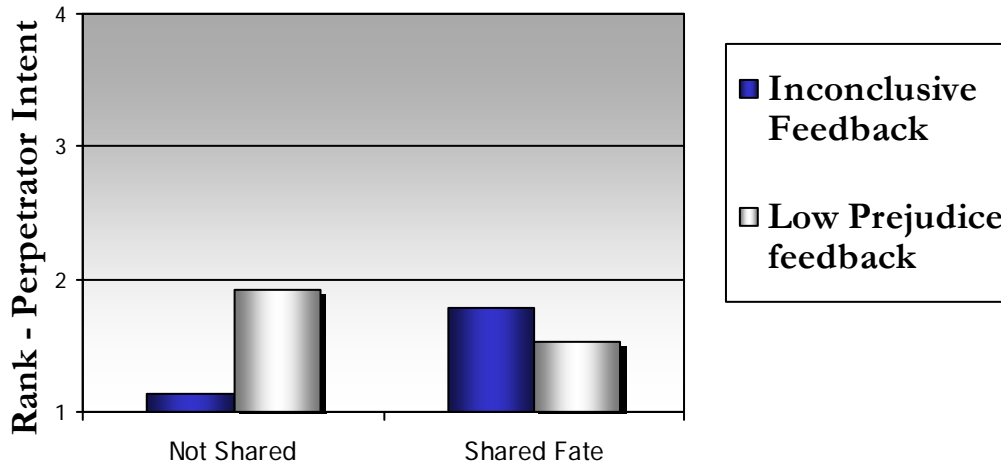


Figure 2.1 Ranking the importance of the perpetrator's intent

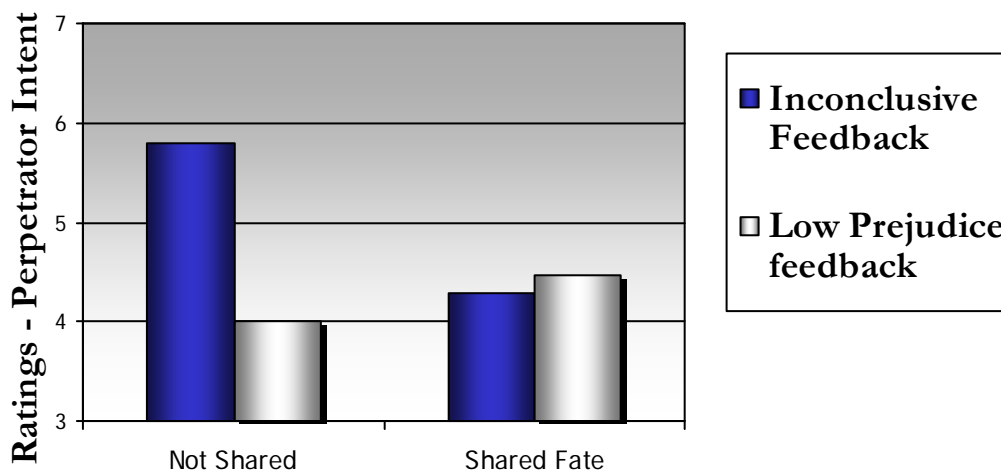


Figure 2.2 Rating the importance of the perpetrator's intent

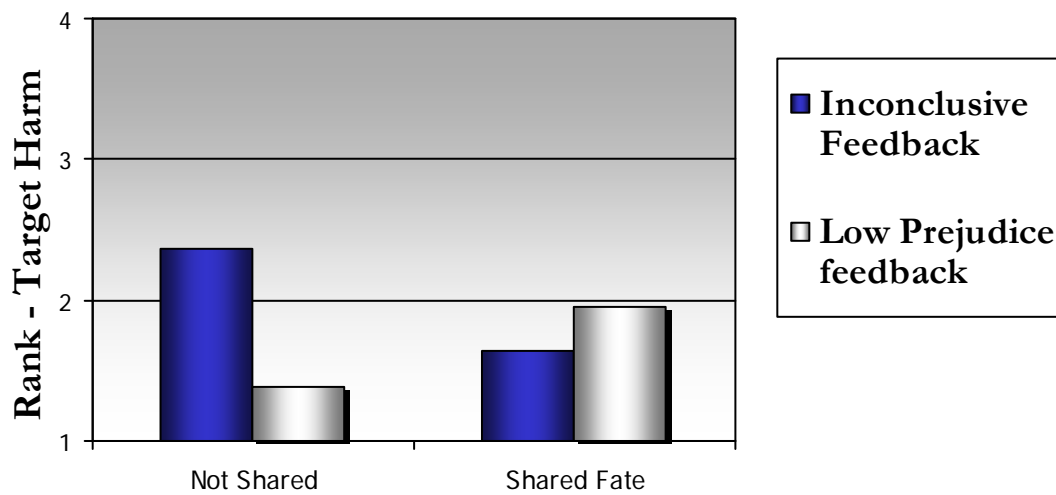


Figure 2.3 Ranking the importance of harms to the target

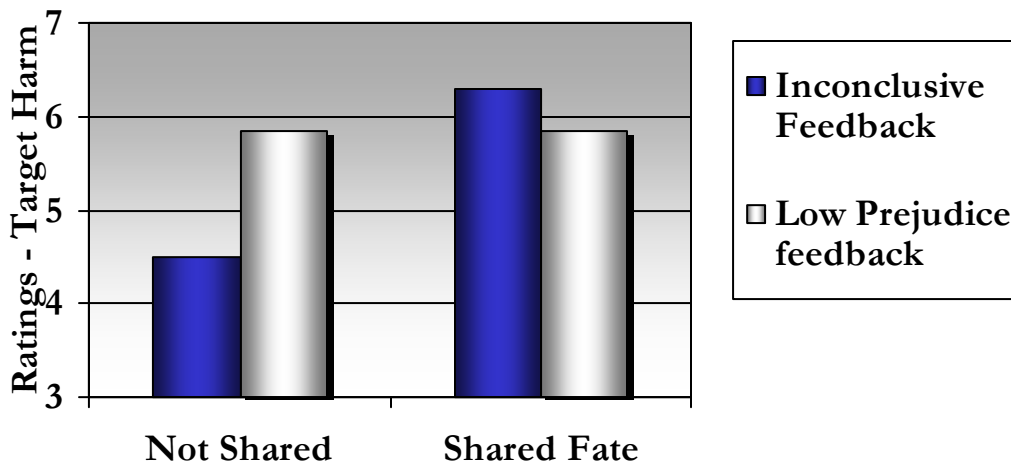


Figure 2.4 Rating the importance of harms to the target

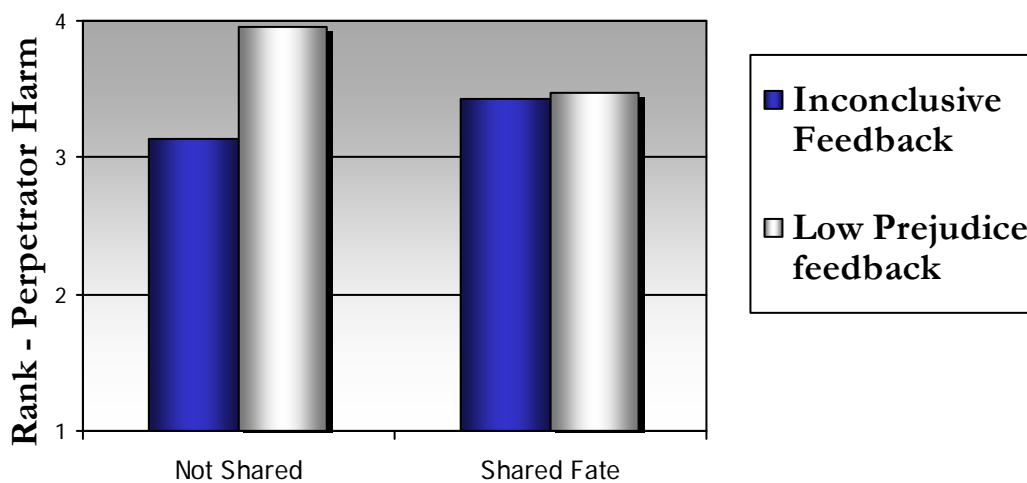


Figure 2.5 Ranking the importance of harms to the perpetrator

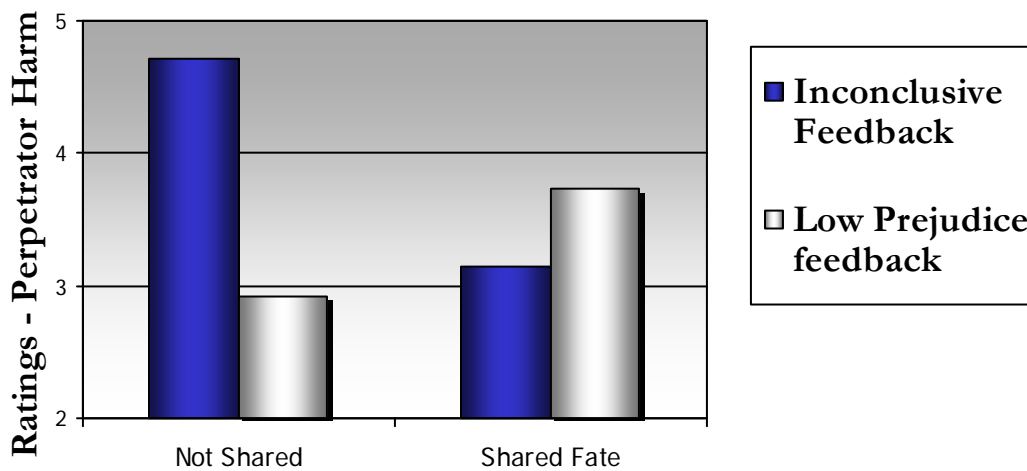


Figure 2.6 Rating the importance of harms to the perpetrator

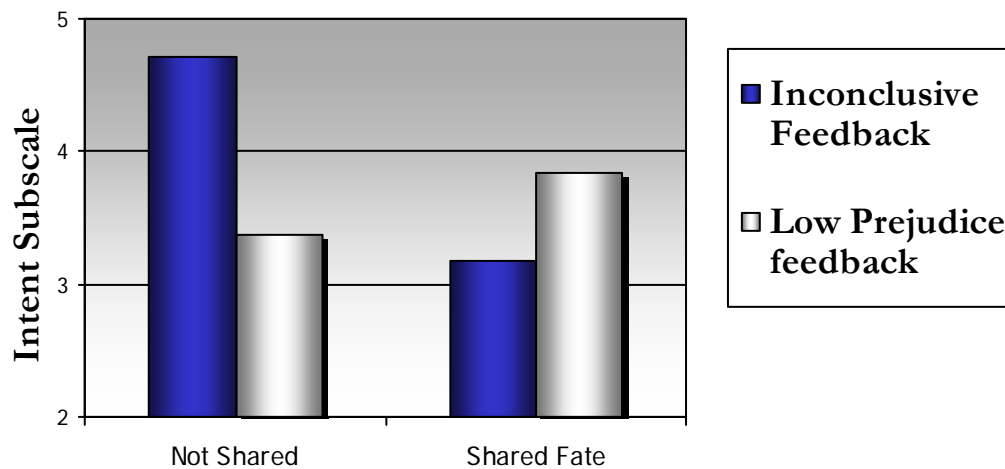


Figure 2.7 Lay perceptions of the importance of racist intent

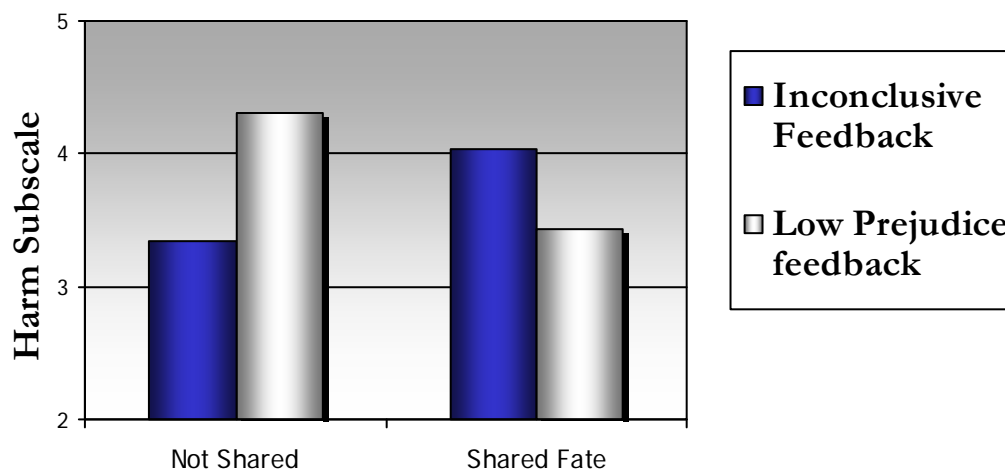


Figure 2.8 Lay perceptions of the importance of racial harms

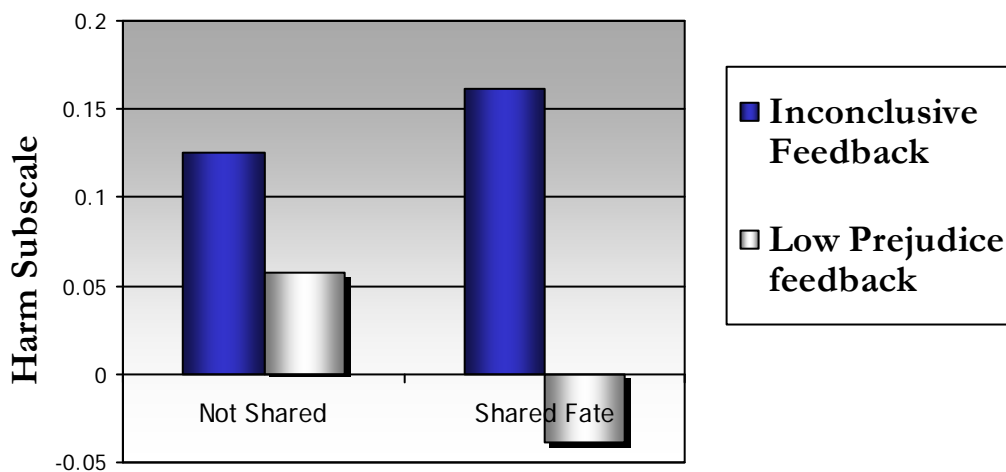


Figure 2.9 Accuracy difference score (Perpetrator intent - Target harm)

Appendix

INTENT / HARM SCALE

Please answer the following questions by circling the best response on scale of 1 to 7.

1 = I strongly disagree, 4 = neutral, 7 = I strongly agree

1. If a White person *accidentally* makes a racist comment, they should always be forgiven. (INTENT)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

2. No White person could ever understand the pain of a racist comment. (HARM)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

3. It is okay for a White person to refer to a Black friend as “nigga” as long as they are joking around. (INTENT)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

4. If a Black person is offended by a race-related comment made by a White person, they have just been the victim of racism. (HARM)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

5. If a White person makes a comment which is interpreted by a Black person as being hurtful and racist, the White person is automatically a racist, no matter what. (HARM)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

6. If you called a Black person “ghetto” it would be stupid of them to think it was a racist comment. (INTENT)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

7. It is o.k. to tell racist jokes if everyone knows you are joking. (INTENT)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

8. Racist jokes are always hurtful. (HARM)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

9. The Black victim should *always* get the final say on whether a comment made by a White person is racist or not. (HARM)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

10. Black people should stop complaining about race because no one tries to be racist anymore. (INTENT)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

INTENT / HARM MEMORY TASK

Please put an X in front of any statements that were said in the video.

1. ____ I'm having a bad day. (Perpetrator, not said, irrelevant)
2. ____ That was pretty unnecessary. (Target, said, harm)
3. ____ I was just kidding. (Perpetrator, not said, intent)
4. ____ I didn't mean anything by it. (Perpetrator, said, intent)
5. ____ It still hurt. (Target, said, harm)
6. ____ No offense. (Perpetrator, not said, intent)
7. ____ I work too much. (Target, not said, irrelevant)
8. ____ You're in a bad mood today. (Perpetrator, not said, irrelevant)
9. ____ Why did you say that? (Target, said, intent)
10. ____ I wasn't being serious. (Perpetrator, said, intent)
11. ____ I don't care if it was a joke. (Target, not said, intent)
12. ____ It doesn't matter why you said it. (Target, said, intent)
13. ____ So if you don't mean it, that makes it okay? (Target, not said, intent)
14. ____ Excuse me? (Target, said, irrelevant)
15. ____ Are you serious? (Target, not said, irrelevant)
16. ____ That was really offensive. (Target, not said, harm)
17. ____ I was just working on it. (Target, said, irrelevant)
18. ____ It's 5 now. (Perpetrator, said, irrelevant)
19. ____ That was a really mean thing to say. (Target, not said, harm)
20. ____ I really don't feel like getting bitched at today. (Perpetrator, said, intent)
21. ____ Since when are you so sensitive? (Perpetrator, not said, harm)
22. ____ I'm sorry. (Perpetrator, not said, intent)
23. ____ Are you upset or something? (Perpetrator, said, harm)
24. ____ Are you mad at me? (Perpetrator, not said, harm)

Information Request Form

Instructions: Please rank order the information you would most like to have in evaluating the students (1 being the information you want the most – 4 being the information you want the least):

_____ How hurt the student who was sitting down felt during the interaction

_____ How hurt the student who was standing up felt during the interaction

_____ What the student who was sitting down intended by their comments during the interaction

_____ What the student who was standing up intended by their comments during the interaction

Instructions: Please indicate how important each of the following pieces of information are to you in evaluating the students by circling your response on the scale below:

1. How hurt the student who was sitting down felt during the interaction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not At All			Somewhat Important			Extremely Important
Important						

2. How hurt the student who was standing up felt during the interaction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not At All			Somewhat Important			Extremely Important
Important						

3. What the student who was sitting down intended by their comments during the interaction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not At All			Somewhat Important			Extremely Important
Important						

4. What the student who was standing up intended by their comments during the interaction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not At All			Somewhat Important			Extremely Important
Important						

Attitudes Towards Blacks scale

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

1. If a black were put in charge of me, I would not mind taking advice and direction from him or her.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

2. If I had a chance to introduce black visitors to my friends and neighbors, I would be pleased to do so.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

3. I would rather not have blacks live in the same apartment building I live in.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

4. I would probably feel somewhat self-conscious dancing with a black in a public place.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

5. I would not mind it at all if a black family with about the same income and education as me moved in next door.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

6. I think that black people look more similar to each other than white people do.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

7. Interracial marriage should be discouraged to avoid the "who-am-I?" confusion which the children feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

8. I get very upset when I hear a white make a prejudicial remark about blacks.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

14. Black and white people are inherently equal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

18. Racial integration (of schools, businesses, residences, etc.) has benefited both blacks and whites.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

19. 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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

20. Some blacks are so touchy about race that it is difficult to get along with them.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

Identity CentralitySubject # _____
Comp # _____

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.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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 nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Agree nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

VIDEO SCRIPT 1— Black Target

SCENARIO: Two business majors are trying to complete a group project together.

White Worker: [*Approaching Black Worker, who is asleep at his desk*] Hey—[*trying to hide the fact that he is pissed off*] Did you finish entering those figures for our finance report?

Black Worker: [*startled*] Uh. . . actually I was just working on it.

White Worker: Professor Pierce *did* say we had to submit them by 5pm today.

Black Worker: I know, I know.

White Worker: [*Looking at watch*] Well, it's almost 5 now, and I've been entering most of them by myself.

Black Worker: I'm working on it.

White Worker: Well, wake up there, Africa, I really don't feel like getting an F because of you.

Black Worker: [*very awake now*] Excuse me??!

White Worker: [*confused*] What?

Black Worker: [*incredulous*] What did you say??

White Worker: I said I really don't feel like failing this thing—especially because of you.

Black Worker: [*annoyed*] No, before that...

White Worker: Africa? I wasn't being serious. Are you upset or something?

Black Worker: [*shocked*] Yeahhhh. Wow. Why did you say that? ...THAT was totally unnecessary.

White Worker: [*angry*] What?? You're mad at me?? Why?? YOU'RE the one sleeping.

Black Worker: That's not the point—it doesn't matter WHY you said it. It was a pretty rude thing to say!

White Worker: Well, I didn't mean anything by it.

Black Worker: Yeah, well. It still didn't feel good.

VIDEO SCRIPT 2 – White Target

SCENARIO: Two business majors are trying to complete a group project together.

White Worker 1: [*Approaching White Worker 2, who is asleep at his desk*] Hey—[*trying to hide the fact that he is pissed off*] Did you finish entering those figures for our finance report?

White Worker 2: [*startled*] Uh. . . actually I was just working on it.

White Worker 1: Professor Pierce *did* say we had to submit them by 5pm today.

White Worker 2: I know, I know.

White Worker 1: [*Looking at watch*] Well, it's almost 5 now, and I've been entering most of them by myself.

White Worker 2: I'm working on it.

White Worker 1: Well, wake up there, NASCAR, I really don't feel like getting an F because of you.

White Worker 2: [*very awake now*] Excuse me??!

White Worker 1: [*confused*] What?

White Worker 2: [*incredulous*] What did you say??

White Worker 1: I said I really don't feel like failing this thing—especially because of you.

White Worker 2: [*annoyed*] No, before that...

White Worker 1: NASCAR? I wasn't being serious. Are you upset or something?

White Worker 2: [*shocked*] Yeahhhh. Wow. Why did you say that? ...THAT was totally unnecessary.

White Worker 1: [*angry*] What?? You're mad at me?? Why?? YOU'RE the one sleeping.

White Worker 2: That's not the point—it doesn't matter WHY you said it. It was a pretty rude thing to say!

White Worker 1: Well, I didn't mean anything by it.

White Worker 2: Yeah, well. It still didn't feel good.