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WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? EXAMINING
PREDICTORS OF WHITES' ENJOYMENT OF BLACK ENTERTAINMENT

A Dissertation in

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by

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ABSTRACT

Studies of race and media have established significant negative effects of stereotype on viewers, both Black and White. Audience reception studies have also revealed that regardless of perceived offensiveness of stereotype entertainment, audience consumption is not necessarily inhibited. Whereas ethnic humor scholars purport that groups disparaged through stereotype derive enjoyment through a sense of connection and identification, few studies have examined out-group members' enjoyment experience of the same disparaging content. The present study aims to examine possible predictors of Whites' enjoyment of stereotype entertainment when Black and Whites are the target. According to disposition theory, this study argued that negative attitudes towards Blacks through the lens of White racial superiority would predict greater enjoyment of Black disparagement. As a competing hypothesis, distinctiveness theory would imply that White audiences may be more likely to report enjoyment of stereotype, regardless of the target. However, these findings are argued to be influenced by a contemporary form of racism, aversive racism, such that in the case that audiences enjoy Neutral or White stereotype more than Black stereotype, this could be explained by higher motivations to control prejudice reactions. Consistent with similar research, findings reveal no significant effects of sense of racial superiority. However, Whites' perceived cultural competence emerged as an important indicator of enjoyment of Black entertainment. Findings suggest that viewers who are low in cultural competence experience less positive affect when exposed to stereotype, and more strongly prefer entertainment devoid of stereotype than those with a higher sense of cultural competence. While

preferences for neutral clips were significantly greater than preferences for Black and White stereotype, motivations to control prejudice reactions did not emerge as a significant predictor of this relationship. Implications of this study are discussed in more detail in the last chapter.

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What are You Laughing At? Examining Predictors of Whites' Enjoyment of Black Entertainment

Introduction

Of all of the entertainment genres, comedy has proven to be the most popular among media audiences (Zillmann, 2000). Comedy is also an intriguing topic to philosophers, psychologists, and communication scholars who, for centuries, have sought to better understand the dynamics of humor appreciation. Why do we laugh and what purposes do comedies serve in our interpretations of our social world? Several theories propose ideas about the process of humor enjoyment; nonetheless, it is a complicated phenomenon to fully comprehend. Even media consumers are unsure about the reasons they receive gratification from comedies (Zillmann & Bryant, 1980). Of concern to this project is the interest in understanding the gratification audiences receive from comedic articulations of racial identity. The goal of this research is to explore these issues with a specific focus on *context* and *content*. Specifically, this study aims to explore the enjoyment of Black comedies in which representations of African-Americans and White Americans are disparaged.

With emergent acts of racial discrimination, it is worth exploring how race relations are used as a comedic device, as well as comedy's function in shaping our understanding of other cultures. Further, it is worth examining how these humorous messages about racial identity are interpreted by both in-group and out-group members. The case of Comedy Central's *Chappelle's Show* effectively exemplifies this dilemma. In 2005, Comedy Central announced the cancellation of its successful hit series, *Chappelle's Show*. Popular for his crude, racial humor, Dave Chappelle often used

matters of race as material for his show. The Black comedian confessed to Oprah Winfrey on her talk show that he grew uncomfortable with the racial humor. He noted that, while filming one of his stereotypical Black characters, he noticed that his White cameraman's enjoyment of the disparaging depiction was unusually distinct (see Chappelle's Story, 2005). This suggests that the underlying mechanism of enjoyment of Black humor is unique for White audiences specifically.

An even more poignant illustration of the dissonance between Black humor and White contexts can be identified in a scene in the 2007 biopic film *Talk to Me* starring Don Cheadle. In this film, Cheadle plays Petey Greene, a D.C. deejay who used humor to soothe the Black community's sores of injustice during the civil rights era. Invited to perform stand-up comedy on Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show*, Greene (Cheadle) nervously confesses to the White audience:

“Ya’ll will forgive me if I’m a little nervous, but I aint been in front of this many white folks before...truth is, I’m just an ex-con. And the people from the world I live in can’t afford TVs. But they listen to me on the radio, cause they know I keep it real. And if I make ‘em laugh I know they’re laughing with me, not at me. But I look out at you, and I see a room full of white faces, waitin’ for some nigger jokes. . . .I aint got nothing to say to you. Y’all aint ready. . .(pg. 105, *Talk to Me* script)”

Suggesting again that White's enjoyment of Black humor is distinct from Black's enjoyment, both Chappelle and Greene asked a question that Black audiences have long asked about White audiences' consumption of Black media, “What are *You* laughing at?” In other words, racial comedy is not interpreted the same across racial groups. It seems that one's racial identity as White implies a biased interpretation of humor that characterizes Blacks in ways that are consistent to White perceptions of Blacks (Oliver, 1999). Consonant with these fears and concerns, this project poses the following research

question: *For White audiences, what is the relationship between White racial identity and the enjoyment of Black humor?* To understand the relevance of this question a brief discussion of race and media research follows.

Race and Media Research

Research on race and the media has long established inequities in racial portrayals such that ethnic minorities are subject to limited representations in mainstream media. African-Americans were typically misrepresented as homogeneous, monolithic characters, lacking true individuating traits in light of White characters (Bogle, 1974; Greenberg, Mastro, & Brand, 2002). Over time, Blacks became typecast as poor, inarticulate, complacent, comical, hypersexual, and violent characters (Bogle, 2001; Entman & Rojecki, 2000) entertaining White audiences. In contemporary Black entertainment, similar stereotypical representations are just as evident and more socially acceptable in comedy contexts (Means Coleman, 2000). Although Blacks are the identified target for this form of entertainment, such media fare is also accessible to White audiences, which could be problematic.

Of concern to media effects scholars is the influence of these messages about race on the majority population. Experimental studies have revealed significant social effects of these misrepresentations. For example, studies have shown that depictions of Blacks in news typically trigger White audiences to negatively stereotype Blacks (Oliver, 1999; Peffley, Shields, & Williams, 1996; Power, Murphy, & Coolver, 1996). Entertainment studies have yielded similar effects (Ford, 1997; Maio, Olson, & Bush, 1997). Further, stereotypical representations have been found to affect White viewers' social attitudes

towards Blacks and may inform their political attitudes as well (Oliver, Jackson, Moses, & Dangerfield, 2004; Tan, Fujioka, & Tan, 2000; Valentino, 1999).

In spite of the social concern raised by these findings, audience reception studies reveal that these perceptions do not necessarily inhibit audiences' media engagement. In other words, audiences are still consuming entertainment embedded with messages about racial identity. Further, research has shown that though audiences recognize the potential effects of these portrayals, they are still able to enjoy the media fare (Watts & Orbe, 2002). Particularly, in the area of comedy, studies have shown that both Whites and Blacks are able to engage with comedies containing stereotype-relevant content (Brigham & Giesbrecht, 1976; Park, Gabbadon, & Chernin, 2006). In fact, these representations are most salient in the context of humor. Therefore, we may conclude that comedy is a "safe context" for communication about an otherwise hot topic such as race. However, not all interpretations of ethnic comedies are equal.

Theories of ethnic humor that often thrives on disparaging depictions of marginalized groups posit that humor interpretation essentially boils down to in-group and out-group belongingness (Watkins, 1999). Black entertainment, characterized by the prevalence of cultural themes unique to the African-American community, is typically created for Black audiences' enjoyment. However, White audiences who may not fully comprehend the cultural context of Black humor are at risk for perceiving the humor in unintended ways. The purpose of this project is to explore how privileged groups, Whites specifically, perceive humor at the expense of disadvantaged groups (Blacks). In other words, this project examines White audiences' enjoyment of ethnic entertainment when a member of an ethnic minority group is characterized negatively. Further, this research

examines if there are any differences in enjoyment when the in-group is the target, as compared to when the out-group is the target of ethnic humor.

What follows next is an overview of ethnic humor, its conceptualization and historical development, and theories of humor appreciation. Based on established psychological and communication theories, I propose several possible outcomes of enjoyment when Whites are exposed to ethnic entertainment that thrives on stereotypical portrayals.

CHAPTER 1

Ethnic Humor

Humor, alone, has been challenging for researchers to adequately explicate. Defining ethnic humor has been even more challenging. However, given the historical development of this concept, ethnic humor can be defined as a communication of power that accentuates the peculiarities of a cultural/social group in comparison to another cultural/social group in order to evoke feelings of amusement. True to its qualifier, *ethnic*, it is a communication of identities that is best understood and accepted among groups that share a distinct, historic origin, language, and cultural symbols (in-group members) that differentiate them from other groups (out-group members) (Lowe, 1986). Although any person could communicate an ethnic joke, its interpretation and permissibility are largely dependent on group identification and group belongingness. Often thriving on exaggerated portrayals of the self and the Other, ethnic humor embellishes social differences between in-group members who are privy to the discourse of ethnic identity and out-group members who are mere outsiders to the conversation. This project will focus on the communication that exists among in-group members, as this is the context where it is most customary and less challenged. Specifically, I will examine Black entertainment where both Blacks and Whites are the target of disparaging humor as qualified by the assumptions of ethnic humor.

From the Fields to the Screen

Essentially, ethnic humor is about power, and its definition has often been rearticulated with shifts in power from private in-group communication to out-group exploitation, and then to ethnic re-articulations of self-identity. Though, not all ethnic humor histories are alike, each share a common antithetical relationship with mainstream culture. The historical development of Black humor, specifically, interconnects with other ethnic histories. Whereas Black slaves ridiculed their White masters amongst each other to elicit laughter, the popularization or public communication of Black humor in America began with the history of humor of another oppressed group, namely Jewish humor (Dorinson & Boskin, 1988; Watkins, 1999).

During the late 1800s, America experienced an influx of European immigrants, many of them Jewish, others Italian and Irish, who were clearly distinguished by cultural identity markers such as their dress, style, manners, and language. Immigrants, like African slaves, were rejected and belittled if they could not demonstrate acceptable assimilation through proper communication in English or proper engagement with technology (Lowe, 1986; Mintz, 1996). Given these disparities, immigrants quickly became victims of disparaging stereotypes and were often the target of American jokes. Concurrently, variety theatre was becoming a growing source of entertainment. In these shows, ethnics enacted socially ascribed stereotypes such as the drunken Irishman, lazy Dutchman, the vulgar Australian, the crooked Italian, and the complacent Negro which proved to be amusing and entertaining for mainstream audiences (Dorinson & Boskin, 1988; Green, 1999; Lowe, 1986). Soon, African-Americans would re-enact these

stereotypes on the minstrel stage, entertaining White audiences with characterizations modernly known as the Sambo and Jim Crow.

Through self-deprecation, minorities sought to gain control over these forms of disparagement. Consistent with psychoanalytic assertions of humor as argued by Freud (trans, 2003), the minority's use of ethnic humor expressed a simultaneous, subconscious acceptance and resistance to dominant social power. Herein was a power shift that began to redefine ethnic humor. Ethnicity not only sought power by owning these stereotypes, but they also used the opportunity to ridicule social dominance, and humor became an act of empowerment. For instance, Black humor was viewed as an early form of Black power including both self-ridicule, and comic ridicule of White America (Barksdale, 1983). Barksdale (1983) articulated this as "an offensive-defensive strategy in race relations that causes no radical alteration in the power relationships between a Black minority and a White majority" (pg. 359). In fact, the disparagement of ethnic groups essentially served to reinforce ideologies of White American supremacy (Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Juni & Katz, 2001; Lowe, 1986), as it perpetuated ideas of the minority as inferior and maladjusted. However, humor helped the minority cope with their oppression, and as a result, Black comedies continued and do continue to disparage Whites as a form of resistance (Gordon, 1998; Watkins, 2002).

Contemporary perceptions of ethnic humor are defined by the congruency of power between the source of the message and the target of the message (La Fave & Mannel, 1976). In other words, the identification between the deliverer of an ethnic message and the victim of the message must match. For instance, Blacks have more liberty to make jest of other Blacks because they share similar social positions. Moreover,

Blacks, victims of social oppression, can use humor to criticize White dominance. However, when jokes about a particular ethnic group are recited by people of an economic and political majority, it is less likely considered acceptable *ethnic* humor. It then has an offensive and *racist* undertone to it (Billig, 2001; Nilsen & Nilsen, 2006). For this reason, broadcast programming that employs ethnic humor typically involves an all-Black cast (Means Coleman, 2000).

This programming often takes various forms as there are many types of humor. The most popular types are wit and jokes. According to Wyer and Collins (1992) the distinctions between the two can be found in its reliance on contextual cues where wit is high-context and jokes are low-context. Wit requires the perceivers to have some inside information in order to effectively interpret the message. Jokes, on the other hand, are more forthright. Black entertainment often intertwines both wit and jokes, such that stereotype is inferred and/or articulated. This study aims to focus on the *representations* of race which require inference, as opposed to jokes about race which are articulated.

Some examples of these distinctions include programs like Aaron McGruder's *Boondocks* which can be viewed as political satire using wit and *Chappelle's Show* which was a sketch comedy inspired by the comedian's jokes, but often included skits where the representation of racial differences was blatant. As a situational comedy, comedian Chris Rock's *Everybody Hates Chris* depicts an authentic African-American experience, and includes stereotypical characterizations. Each of these is an example of modern ethnic humor—entertainment in various comedic formats that pronounces the differences

between racial groups and includes representations that stereotype the minority group, as well as ridicule the majority.

Interpreting Ethnic Humor

Historical accounts of the development of ethnic humor help us better understand the weight of historical *context* on the interpretive function of ethnic humor. For instance, Black humor served many functions in the Black community. According to Coleman (1984), Black comedy was used to “reinforce group solidarity, provide a context for the development of verbal and social skills, and even provide a means of coping with various adverse social and political circumstances” (pg. 67). In other words, comedy was used as a strategy for building community and providing support, and was more likely to be interpreted as a form of comfort or empowerment.

With that said, identification is critical to interpretations of ethnic humor. Embedded with cultural markers with which members who share a historical origin and cultural experience can connect, ethnic humor simultaneously excludes those who do not share that history or experience. Arguably, ethnic entertainment is not created for the enjoyment of the outsider. Instead, ethnic humor allows in-group members to enjoy the disparagement of the out-group (Juni & Katz 2001). Moreover, research has shown that such humor is best enjoyed by members of the in-group. Generally, humor messages are best interpreted when the perceiver has a pre-existing knowledge-base of the topic. As cited by Nilsen and Nilsen (2006), “to understand and appreciate ethnic humour, people must know the values and practices of a culture” (pg. 132). Without this knowledge-base, a perceiver is likely to misinterpret ethnic humor messages. Those who are subject to racial inequality in America are arguably more sensitive to issues pertaining to race

whereas Whites are not (Nakayama & Martin, 1999). How would Whites, then, interpret this humor?

Previous studies suggest significant differences in Whites' enjoyment of ethnic entertainment with the most pronounced effects among those who identify highly with authoritarian values (Altemeyer, 1988; Middleton, 1959; Oliver, 1996). Other studies have revealed that exposure to ethnic entertainment reinforces negative racial attitudes (Ford, 1997), but the most negative effects are observed when Whites themselves are the communicator of the ethnic joke (Maio et al., 1997). Maio et al. (1997) found that through recitation, Whites reported more stereotypical beliefs, suggesting that mere communication induces greater elaboration such that those who use ethnic slurs are more likely to think about it. Each of these studies has revealed effects of exposure to ethnic jokes on stereotyping. The present research, however, aims to go beyond joke-telling and explore interpretations of representations. Further, this study aims to identify a theoretical explanation specific to Whites' enjoyment of ethnic disparagement. Perhaps this can be explained by theories of humor appreciation.

Theories of Humor Appreciation

There are several theories that attempt to explain the reception of humorous communication, and several factors play a role in an individual's ability to discern humor messages. Generally, there must be a certain level of understanding with respect to the humor context in order to get the full benefits of humor enjoyment. Zillmann (2000) articulates this as a comic frame of mind which proposes a few essential conditions for the appreciation of humor.

First, a viewer must know not to take humor seriously. Though messages in this context may address serious issues, perceivers must be attuned to its playful form. That is, they must be sensitive enough to recognize the lighthearted nature of humor contexts. Secondly, perceivers must be able to identify the humor cues within a humor context. That is, a perceiver must be able to discern the elements that make something funny. As inspired by Freud, these cues include tendentious and nontentious types of humor. Nontentious humor thrives on silly antics whereas tendentious humor thrives on humiliation and hostility in the form of disparagement. Typically, audiences find tendentious humor more entertaining (King, 2003). However, studies have shown that the combination of the two more effectively yields feelings of amusement (Zillmann & Bryant, 1980). Innocuous elements applied to disparaging representations liberate the audience to enjoy a rather serious message.

In fact, Zillmann (1983) contends that disparagement is central to humor. Several theories speak to this assertion. For centuries, scholars have explored the process of humor appreciation which addresses the affective, cognitive and physiological components of humor enjoyment. Naïve theories conceive of humor as an expression of merriment which implies an affective state of happiness. However, philosophers and psychologists have long articulated humor as a self-regulatory strategy.

Beginning with the tradition of superiority theory created by Hobbes (1668), the notion of the interplay between self and the disparaged is introduced. Suggesting that humor is a communicative manifestation of social rivalry, superiority theories of humor contend that perceivers of humor derived gratification from disparaging humor by making downward social comparisons. Ultimately, another's inferior position reminds

perceivers of their superior status, and from this humor is elicited. This framework embraced the role that positive or negative affect played in one's reception to humor messages.

Other theories of humor posit that humor serves a physiological function. Relief theory, which assumes that perceivers seek to avoid discomfort, suggests that humor helps to relieve perceivers of their personal tensions. In their theory of humor elicitation, Wyer and Collins (1992) refer to this as arousal reduction, suggesting that individuals seek to minimize levels of anxiety by laughing. Zillmann rearticulates this strategy through the framework of mood management which suggests that viewers pursue comedy to adjust their mood states (Zillmann, 1988).

Another theory of humor addresses the cognitive components of humor interpretation. Incongruity theories, as derived from philosophers Kant and Spencer, posit that humor is derived from an unexpected solution to a posed conflict (Lowe, 1986). In other words, comedies are a form of drama with varying levels of conflict. Perceivers may pre-determine the outcome of a conflict, but humor is often elicited when the outcome isn't what they expect.

As it relates to communication studies, disposition-based theories of humor have been most widely applied to understanding humor appreciation (Zillmann & Cantor, 1976). Building on Hobbes' (1968) notion of superiority theory, Zillmann and Cantor (1976) argued that reactions to a target of disparaging humor are largely dependent on one's positive or negative attitudes (or dispositions) towards the victim and victor. Disposition-based theories propose that audiences enjoy humor more in situations when

the victim of disparagement humor is disliked and the victor is liked. Humor is experienced less when the opposite is true.

Of most relevance to the present study on the enjoyment of ethnic humor are the assertions of superiority theory, as it suggests that humor appreciation is a function of social comparison. When considering social classification, the mode in which humor is interpreted or enjoyed may vary. For instance, humor based on socio-economic classification would be perceived differently by those who are members of lower SES and those who are not. Similarly, though both racial groups may genuinely enjoy ethnic entertainment, the process of humor appreciation may vary depending on group belongingness.

La Fave's (1972) reference group theory accounted for these matters, arguing that enjoyment outcomes are dependent on identification classes which are a type of attitude-belief system on which perceivers rely when interpreting disparaging humor messages. Reference group theory contends that people make value judgments based on how they classify a particular category as positive or negative. Studies have shown that when groups form a negative attitude towards out-group members and carry positive attitudes about their own groups, they experience greater enjoyment when the out-group is disparaged (La Fave, Haddad, & Maesen, 1976).

One of the critiques of reference group theory is that it limits these reactions to identification classes. Zillmann and Cantor's (1976) disposition theory proposes that regardless of classification, viewers' resentment towards a victim ultimately determines humor effects. Further, Zillmann (1983) suggested that the theory does not adequately explain findings that revealed that targeted members of disparagement reported

enjoyment of seeing themselves disparaged. These findings are consistent with results in my research which found that Blacks reported high enjoyment of Black entertainment embedded with stereotypes (Banjo, 2008). Further, this research found that there were no significant differences in enjoyment of Black entertainment while in the presence of a White audience. However, Black audiences in this study did report a significant third-person effect which revealed concerns that White audiences may not perceive the humor like the Black audience for which it was intended. For in-group members, ethnic humor appears to serve a cathartic function, as it helps them cope with victimization (Boskin, 1997). However, it is not clear what the function of ethnic humor is for White out-group members.

The purpose of this project is to explore various theoretical assertions that may better explain Whites' enjoyment of Black disparagement in the context of ethnic entertainment. Integrating critical race theory and empirical methodology, this study aims to examine White racial identity as a predictor of enjoyment of stereotype.

Present Research

The focus of this project is to explore Whites' enjoyment of Black entertainment which is embedded with stereotypical messages about minority racial identity, as well as ethnic minorities' critique of the White majority. Whereas studies have shown that Black audiences' enjoyment of Black media fare is largely due to the ethnic's identification with embedded cultural cues (Appiah, 2001; Appiah, 2002; Dumas & Sundar, 1998), it is not exactly clear how White audiences interpret this form of programming. One way to

identify unique responses to disparagement of Blacks is to compare reactions to disparaging representations of Whites versus those of Blacks. Therefore, *target of humor* is an important independent variable to this question.

However, as entertainment theories posit, these reactions are predetermined by audiences' predispositions to a media character. For instance, Ford, Wentzel, and Lorion (2001) found that men exposed to sexist humor perceived sexism as normative and acceptable. These effects were most pronounced among men who already subscribed to beliefs about gender inequality. Further, Vidmar and Rokeach's (1974) study on *All in the Family* revealed a relationship between pre-disposition and humor interpretation such that high-prejudiced individuals viewed comical racial slurs in the show as more acceptable than those low in prejudice. It is then worth exploring the role that racial attitudes play in Whites' interpretations of ethnic humor.

Through the theoretical lens of whiteness, critical race theorists propose that Whites' interpretation and response to racial issues are biased by their personal reconciliation with their own racial identity (Carter, Helms, & Juby, 2004). Traditional views of whiteness purport that Whites internalize an identity that is fostered by systemic prejudice governed by racial hierarchy. Theoretical models also assert that Whites' identification with race varies at different levels and is personal to one's experience.

As inspired by Cross's (1971) Black Racial Identity theory, Helms' (1984) White Racial Identity theory proposes five stages of identity formation for White Americans:

- 1) Contact, describing Whites' avoidance of the centrality of race to everyday experiences
- 2) Disintegration, describing Whites' mystification with race and prejudice,
- 3) Reintegration, involving Whites' subscriptions to White superiority,
- 4) Pseudo-

Independence, defined by Whites' acknowledgement of whiteness and 5) Autonomy, Whites' disconnection from racist ideology. Each stage signifies a level of an individual's racial schema, and serves as an indicator of Whites' racial attitudes. Drawing inferences from the assertions of disposition based theories of enjoyment, Whites' racial identity is argued to influence enjoyment outcomes.

As a result, I propose a model that demonstrates the process of Whites' enjoyment of ethnic disparagement, with racial attitudes moderating the effects of exposure to target on enjoyment.



Figure 1: Racial attitudes will moderate enjoyment outcomes.

In addition, in order to identify if there is a significant effect of ethnic humor as qualified by disparaging representations, it would be worth exploring differences in reactions to disparaging representations as compared to non-disparaging portrayals—representations that are devoid of racial disparagement. This condition will serve as the control, yielding a 2(Racial Attitudes: *high negative*, *low negative*) x 3(Target: *Black*, *White*, *Control*) between-subjects factorial design.

I postulate one of three outcomes may occur when Whites are exposed to ethnic entertainment that features stereotypical portrayals. White audiences will either report greater enjoyment of Black disparagement, equal enjoyment of Black and White disparagement, or no enjoyment of ethnic disparagement. The following are theoretical explanations for each proposed outcome.

Disposition Theory of Comedy

As mentioned above, disposition theory is grounded in the superiority-theory tradition which argues that when viewing disparaging humor, viewers engage in some form of comparison. This includes comparisons between the self and target of disparagement. Studies reveal that it is easier to laugh at others than to laugh at oneself. (Cantor, 1976). We can infer from this theory that audiences will enjoy disparagement of minorities more than they would disparagement of the self.

Further, disposition theory suggests that pre-existing attitudes towards the deliverer and the victim of humor ultimately determine enjoyment outcomes. We can infer from this that audiences have preconceived notions about themselves as superior to those disparaged in a comedy. Relating this to the present study, the degree of enjoyment would be dependent on Whites' view of themselves as superior to African-American characters. Furthermore, as proposed by disposition theory, negative attitudes towards the character determine strength of enjoyment such that when a viewer strongly dislikes a character, they experience greater enjoyment at the character's expense. Considering the notion of White privilege, it can be assumed that Whites who adopt this ideology are likely to compare themselves to Blacks who are typically classified as inferior. In fact, disparagement effects have been most evident when the group that is being disparaged is low in social status (Ford & Ferguson, 2004).

Consistent with the assumptions of this perspective, I postulate the following hypotheses:

H1: Negative racial attitudes towards Blacks will predict greater enjoyment of minority ethnic disparagement.

H1a: Those who report higher negative racial attitudes towards Blacks will report greater enjoyment of minority ethnic disparagement than those who report lower negative racial attitudes.

H1b: Those who report higher negative racial attitudes towards Blacks will report lesser enjoyment of White disparagement than those who report lower negative racial attitudes.

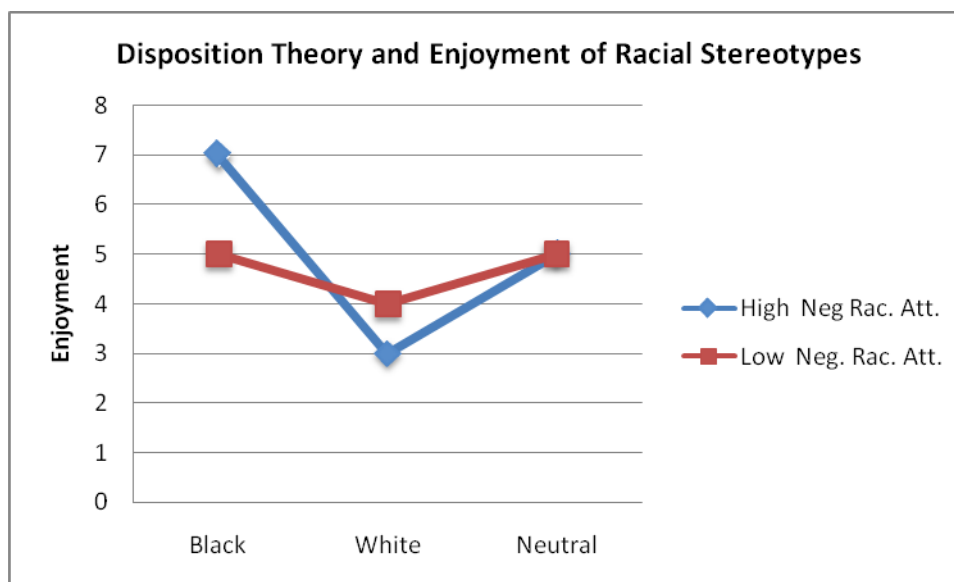


Figure 2 : Those who report higher negative attitudes will enjoy Black Disparagement more and White Disparagement less than those low in negative racial attitudes. Those low in negative racial attitudes will still prefer Black (out-group) disparagement to White (in-group) disparagement although differences between the two will not be as drastic as it is for those high in negative racial attitudes.

Identity Salience and Distinctiveness theory

Identity salience is operationalized as the likelihood that one's self-concept is primed in a given situation. Specifically, distinctiveness theory presupposes that one's racial identity will be primed in contexts where the individual is the minority and will experience a need for inclusion (Brewer, 1991). In Black-context media we can then assume that out-group onlookers become aware of their distinctiveness. In doing so, out-

group members' subconscious attitudes towards Blacks along with self-perceptions as unaffiliated with Black culture are made salient and may inevitably influence evaluations of the cultural product.

Priming theories assume that there are underlying attitudes that exist in our subconscious such that when exposed to an object, these pre-existing attitudes are triggered and reinforced. Ideas that are not already present in one's subconscious cannot be primed. However, heuristics that depend on context cues and other social information cues are more readily accessible, and thus more easily primed. As it pertains to communication, "when subjects encounter a stimulus event, they interpret it in terms of previously formed concepts and schemata that exist in memory" (Wyer & Collins, 1992, pg. 670). Such events can be seen in the area of social perception, where cognitive models of social identity are present such that racial stereotypes are not only embedded in viewers' memory, but they more than likely emerge when exposed to racial representations. Moreover, these "awakened" attitudes then serve to determine how people evaluate a person or related object (Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005; Goidel, Shields, & Peffley, 1997).

Therefore, we can argue that entertainment embedded with messages about racial identity is likely to awaken one's pre-existing model of race such that an audience member will evaluate a minority character's consistency with pre-determined attitudes about race. For minority viewers, the process may not be as elaborate since race is already salient to them. Further, film depictions of Whites in mainstream media reinforce systemic notions of whiteness such that minority viewers are almost desensitized to these representations (Staiger, 2005). However, for White viewers to whom racial identity is

not as salient, the process of consuming messages about race through a humorous context is more likely to raise the issue of race to Whites' consciousness. Therefore, regardless of whether or not the target of disparagement is Black or White, ethnic humor is likely to make a White viewer conscious of their whiteness.

Whereas disposition theories propose that negative attitudes towards Blacks will predict Whites' enjoyment of Black disparagement specifically, priming theories propose that one's model of race along with their own racial self-concept will predict Whites' enjoyment of stereotypical humor. Therefore, another possible outcome of Whites' exposure to ethnic humor might be that White audiences enjoy disparaging representations of both targets more so than comedy that doesn't rely on these characterizations. This assertion is not too far off from empirical findings which show very little differences in enjoyment of ethnic media between Blacks and Whites (Appiah, 2001; Banjo, 2008; Middleton, 1959). It seems White audiences enjoy stereotype, and priming would suggest the reason is because stereotypical representations are consistent with cognitive models of racial identity and therefore evaluated more positively. Presumably, stereotypes of Whites in a Black context serve only to reinforce notions of White superiority such that mock representations of Whites are perceived to be both unrealistic and laughable. Furthermore, it is quite likely that stereotypes of Whites in a Black context are perceived as a mockery of Blackness instead.

Viewers may see themselves as above the racist ideology, having the ability to laugh at both representations. If this is the case, we can argue that through the lens of priming, attitudes about racial identity become salient and enhance one's enjoyment experience such that they see themselves as superior to the representations, which in turn

increases their enjoyment. However, the degree of enjoyment is largely dependent on the level of one's pre-existing racial attitudes such that those who report higher negative racial attitudes will report greater enjoyment, and those who report lesser negative racial attitudes will report less enjoyment. I propose the following:

H2: Those who report higher negative racial attitudes will report high enjoyment of both targets of disparagement.

H2a: Those who report higher negative racial attitudes will report greater enjoyment of disparagement of both targets than those who report low negative racial attitudes.

H2b: For those who report lower negative racial attitudes, there will be little differences in enjoyment in each condition.

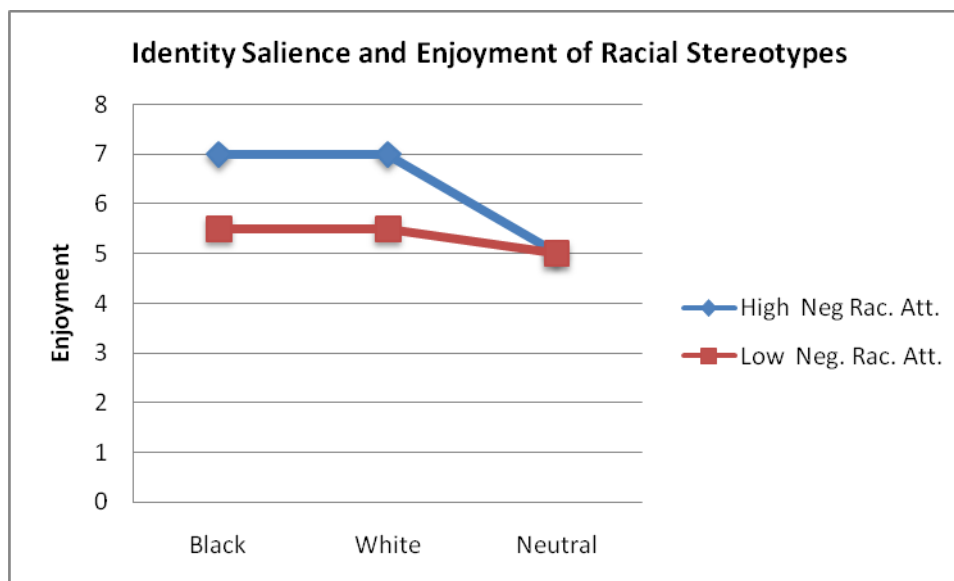


Figure 3: Both groups will enjoy stereotype however there will be significant difference in enjoyment between those who report low and high negative racial attitudes

The Issue of Aversive Racism

In a post-civil rights era, Black representations in entertainment appear less hostile than those expressed in early burlesque and even in cartoons as recent as the 1950s. As the hostility of racial imagery has arguably diminished, the presence of racial aggression has seemingly decreased along with it. Nonetheless, social psychologists conclude that although blatant acts of racial discrimination have become more infrequent, subtle forms of racism are still in operation. Contemporary models of racism, such as modern racism (McConahay, 1986) or symbolic racism (Kinder & Sears, 1981) contend that though Whites may not express racial hostility, Whites hold implicit negative racial attitudes that have been constructed by racial ideology and reinforced by systemic prejudice.

Through the framework of aversive racism (Kovel, 1970), Gaertner and Dovidio, (2005) propose that Whites unconsciously hold negative feelings and unfavorable beliefs about minorities, even though they may act favorably towards minorities. This form of racism is most often associated with liberal and erudite White Americans. Wanting to reflect an egalitarian self-concept, these individuals are likely to sympathize with Blacks endorsing equal-opportunity initiatives. Although they are aware of negative stereotypes associated with Blacks, they choose not to subscribe to the ideologies that govern racism (Devine & Elliot, 2000). Instead, they prefer to disassociate from racist values by avoiding contexts that prime negative racial attitudes (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986).

Whereas Whites' detachment from dominative racism masquerades itself as culturally tolerant behavior, the underlying mechanism of aversive racism is revealed in Whites' avoidance behaviors. For example, in Gaertner's (1973) wrong number field

experiment, the researcher set out to examine differences between Liberal and Conservative Whites' helping behavior towards Black or White stranded motorists. As expected, Conservative Whites were less likely to help the Black motorist. However, the study revealed that although Liberal Whites were equally helpful to Black and White motorists, they were also more likely to disengage with the Black motorist prematurely. Likewise, studies have also shown that when in a group setting, Whites were significantly more likely to avoid helping Black victims as compared to White victims (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1977).

True to its denotation, aversive racism connotes Whites' tendency to evade circumstances in which racial identity is an issue. This avoidant behavior is reflective in their discomfort or anxiety about race, as well as their fears of appearing prejudiced. Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) argue that Whites avoid discriminatory behavior when they are aware that discrimination could take place, and they could be associated with it. For instance, in Gaertner and Dovidio's (1977) helping study, Whites helped Black victims when they were the sole witnesses. However, given an opportunity to diffuse responsibility, Whites' were less likely to offer help when others were present. The authors suggest a bystander effect where the increase of bystanders affords Whites an excuse to diffuse responsibility of offering help to Black victims because "someone else will do it." Interestingly in a follow-up study, the researchers found that even in the presence of others, Whites managed to help White victims significantly more than Black victims (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1977). Theoretically, Whites' offer of help when they were the sole witness to a Black victim was incited by a deep concern with being associated

with dominant racists. Otherwise, not offering help in such a situation would imply a subscription to overt racism.

Social psychologists contend that because of Whites' concern with appearing non-prejudiced self-report measures of racial attitudes are problematic. If Whites are uneasy with matters pertaining to race, and are oblivious to their true disposition towards race, responses to explicit measures may prove to be ineffective.

The issue presented here is that genuine attitudes about a particular racial group may not be reported by my sample, as Whites may prefer to disaffiliate themselves with blatant racial discrimination. Therefore, it is possible that I will not find the effects proposed by disposition theory where Whites are predicted to report greater enjoyment of Black disparagement. Instead, White audiences may choose not to report enjoyment of Black stereotypes in an attempt to mitigate associations with White superiority. In such a case, aversive racism will moderate the relationship between exposure to stereotypes and enjoyment.



Figure 4: Aversive racism as a moderator

Aversive racists are argued to suppress their unconscious, but readily accessible, racial attitudes. Devine (1989) suggests that through automatic and controlled processing, such people are more likely motivated to control expressions of their racial attitudes such that they report lower negative racial attitudes. Regardless of their self-report, studies have found that even among those who report low negative racial attitudes, bias is

evident (Devine, Plant, Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Vance, 2002; Dunton & Fazio, 1997).

Based on the theoretical assertions of aversive racism, and the motivation to control prejudice behavior, I propose the following

H3: Among those with low negative racial attitudes, motivation to control prejudiced reactions will moderate enjoyment.

H3a: Among those who report low negative racial attitudes, those who report higher motivation to control prejudiced reactions should enjoy disparagement of Blacks *less* than disparagement of Whites as compared to those who report lower motivation to control prejudice.

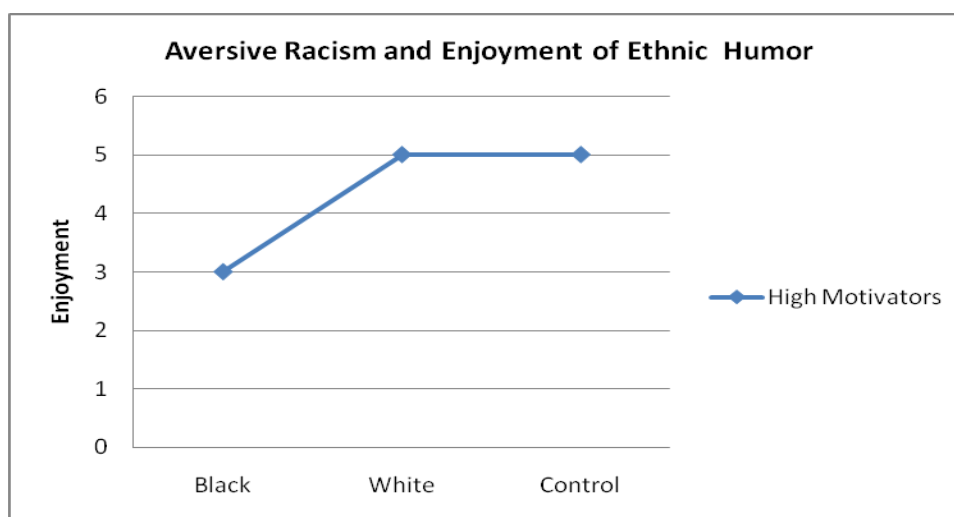


Figure 5: Provided disposition theory is correct, those who report low negative racial attitudes (High Motivators) should report more enjoyment of White and Neutral

H3b: Among those who report low negative racial attitudes, those who report higher motivation to control prejudiced reactions should enjoy non-disparaging entertainment more than disparaging content as compared to those who report lower motivation to control prejudice.

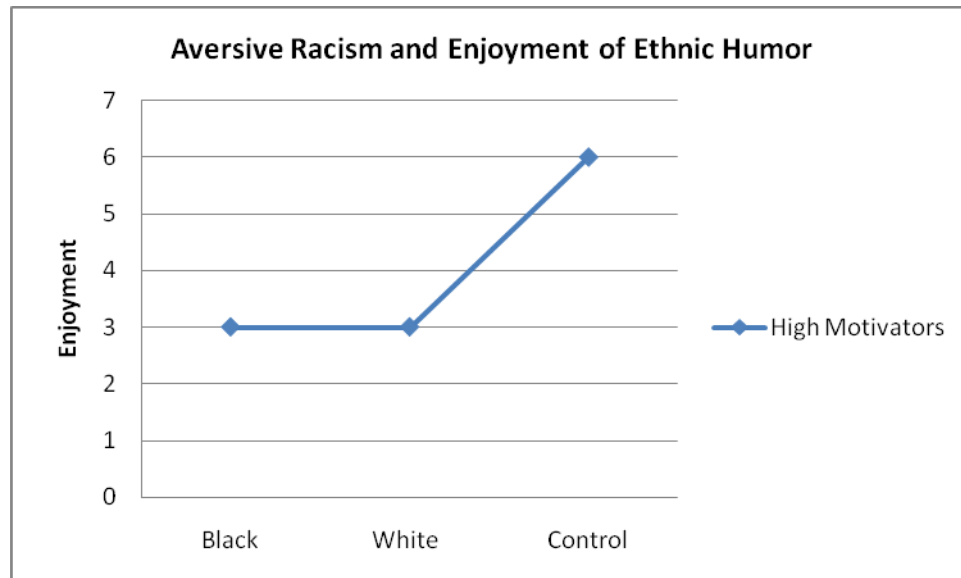


Figure 6: Provided identity salience theories are correct, High motivators will report enjoyment of both stereotypes

Despite the effects of aversive racism among people who score low on negative racial attitudes, the greatest enjoyment of Black disparagement is still expected to be the most prominent among people who score high on negative racial attitudes.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Before running a full experiment, a pre-test was conducted to identify possible stimuli to employ in the actual experiment. The following is a description of the two-stage experimental design, beginning with the pre-test and ending with the actual in-lab experiment.

Pre-test

Stimuli

A series of Black entertainment television programming was reviewed to identify disparaging (stereotypical) and non-disparaging (non-stereotypical) representations. Black entertainment, by definition, is programming starring a majority Black cast and embedding Black cultural themes and topics oriented towards Black culture (Appiah, 2001; Dates, 2001; Wolseley, 1990). Employing multiple instantiations, two examples of both Black and White stereotype were implemented to avoid effects that are particular to a specific program.

Disparaging portrayals of Blacks, guided by established literary and psychological research, included characterizations of Blacks as loud, users of Black English, and members of lower socioeconomic status (Coleman, 1984; Devine & Elliot, 2000; Fine, Anderson, & Eckles, 1979). Moreover, characterizations depict Blacks as unassimilated to mainstream culture and lacking in cultural capital.

Disparaging portrayals of Whites were more challenging to identify as few studies have explored such representations. Therefore, articulations of whiteness in African-

American folklore traditions (Barksdale, 1983; Boskin, 1997) as well as those identified in Black context films as argued by Banjo and Fraley (2008) guided identifying representations of Whites. These representations include Whites as unassimilated into Black culture, fearful of Blacks, enactors of cultural appropriation, and/or abusers of power. Non-disparaging programs consist of those that were devoid of stereotypical representations and/or overshadowed negative depictions with more positive portrayals (i.e. career-oriented, family-oriented).

The four programs selected for pretesting were *Chappelle's Show*, *Martin!*, *My Wife & Kids*, and *Girlfriends*. These shows were considered because of their long running market success (Haggins, 2007; Means Coleman, 2000). Four 3-minute clips of each treatment program were extracted and converted into streaming video. Two of the clips represent examples of Black disparagement; the other two represent examples of White disparagement. Two clips for the neutral condition from two different episodes were extracted for use in the pre-test. What follows is a description of each program.

Martin!. *Martin!* which aired on Fox Broadcasting (FOX) in the mid 90s, is a situation comedy about the experiences of a Black radio talk show host (comedian Martin Lawrence) at an urban radio station, WZUP in Detroit, Michigan. The character Martin, known for his signature salutations including a serial cadence of *Whasaaaaps!*, has been characterized by race scholars as a modern form of the Coon archetype whose childish antics and self-disparaging expressions position him as inferior to its audience (Gray, 1995; Means Coleman, 2000).

The series, abundant with a host of stereotypical characters, is consistent with negative mainstream media representations of Black as poor, lazy, and uncivilized. For

example, Bruh Man's character is a nomadic, free-loading neighbor who occasionally finds his way into Martin's apartment for free food. This character's lack of education is clear to audiences when he asserts that he lives on the "fifth" floor while displaying only four fingers. Sheneneh Jenkins, another stereotypical character in this long running show, adorns herself with gaudy jewelry and wears intricate, urban hairstyles. Martin Lawrence, the comedian himself, plays this character and continues in the tradition of Black comedians' critique of the Black woman similar to other popular, cross-dressing comedians like Flip Wilson and Eddie Murphy (Littleton, 2006).

For the Black disparagement condition, two clips were extracted from this program. The first clip, "Sheneneh's Shop" contained stereotypical Black female identity images which include being illiterate, easily angered, and overly extravagant in appearance (i.e. hairstyles.) In this scene, Gina, Martin's girlfriend, who hails from the North, is forced to work in a Detroit hair salon saturated with a host of street characters. The interactions between these opposing characterizations are comedic with humor deriving from the incongruity between the two.

The second clip considered to represent Black disparagement occurs in the episode "Family Reunion" in which Gina surprises Martin by inviting his Uncle Junior and cousin, Sonny, for Thanksgiving dinner. Unbeknownst to Gina, Martin's mother has tried for years to hide from this side of the family because of their associations with crime. Portraying the traditional hypersexual Black male stereotype, Martin's uncle is a lascivious character with a violent temper. After sweet talking Pam, Gina's best friend, he almost immediately bursts into a rage when Pam makes a comment about the patch over his eye. Martin's cousin, Sonny, is a cunning character who has a criminal record for

thievery. This character is consistent with the Sambo stereotype articulated by race scholars as the trickster in Black folklore. Both scenes are threaded with Black cultural themes, including the use of Black communication styles such as ebonics and the implementation of the dozens—disparaging jokes about one another. These images are consistent with stereotypes of Blacks as poor, illiterate, and violent.

Of the two clips considered for examples of White disparagement, the first, “Mr. Berry,” portrayed a White corporate executive at a party with a majority of African-Americans. In order to fit in, he assumes a gangster identity and communicates with Martin improperly using slang. The second clip, called “WEHA,” involved a White radio station owner who presumes that Martin’s Blackness allows him to add an “urban flavor” to country music. When Martin fails to do this, the radio owner exercises his authority and fires the deejay. However, the termination occurs after Martin makes a spectacle of himself. In these two clips, Whites are positioned as cultural voyeurs (O. Appiah, personal communication, May 20, 2008) and power abusers.

Chappelle’s Show. Another program reviewed for consideration in this study was *Chappelle’s Show* hosted by comedian Dave Chappelle. The comedy show, which is in the format of a sketch comedy aired on Comedy Central, was popular among both Black and White audiences alike (Haggins, 2007). Chappelle, often criticized for his avant-garde material, seemed to push the boundaries of racial comedy, although the show ranked highly among viewers.

In one skit, called “When Keepin’ it Real Goes Wrong,” Chappelle depicts a young Black male by the name of Darius James who attempts to “keep it real” by starting a fight with a man who insinuates having a sexual affair with his girlfriend, Taneisha. In

response, Darius proceeds to use vulgar language which includes the infamous N-word. As a result of acting on his rage, Darius is forced to live with his sexually overactive grandmother. The theme of the clip is central to the notions of Black male violence and the need to assert Black masculinity. Further, it supports stereotypes of violent Black males, immersed in the hip-hop culture.

The two clips considered for examples of White disparagement were “Can Whites Dance?” and “Racial Draft.” In the first clip, Chappelle tests the theory of Whites’ inability to dance—a well-known stereotype of Whites. To test his theory, the comedian enlists guitarist John Mayer to play acoustic and electric guitar in the presence of both liberal and conservative Whites, who proceed to move their bodies wildly with the guitar chords. Some, on occasion, remove their clothes under the spell of the music.

The second clip involves Whites disowning individuals who discredit their race and selecting those who subscribe to White ideology. In this clip, Whites, who are referred to as the “ultimate hustlers,” choose individuals who side with policies that benefit them, and individuals whose economic intelligence exceed the perceived mental capacity of Black minorities. In other words, Whites embrace former Secretary of State Colin Powell and the new secretary of state Condoleezza Rice. At the same time, they gladly disown football player and accused murderer O.J Simpson. Both clips portray Whites as either dissonant with Black culture or in positions of authority.

Neutral Clips. The neutral clips were taken from the long running hit series *Girlfriends* and *My Wife & Kids*. *Girlfriends*, which aired on UPN (currently the CW), involve four African-American women from different classes and backgrounds. Joan Clayton, the lead character, is a lawyer who works at a law firm owned and dominated by

White males. Maya, who does not have a college degree, is a published writer and mother. Lynn, an aimless soul searcher aspires to be a musician. Toni is a fiery real estate agent. Although the show is titled *Girlfriends*, the show includes one regularly appearing male character, William, Joan's colleague and friend to all of the women.

In one clip called "Dreamhouse," William purchases a home from Toni as a surprise to his new fiancée. The other women visit the home and try to dissuade William from purchasing a home without consulting his bride-to-be. This clip deconstructs essentialized notions of race by its portrayal of African-American in a professional setting in contrast to traditional low-class positions. Moreover, the clip normalizes identities which are not purely based on race, but on personality variables unique to each character. The second clip, "Ms. Toni," involved two scenes. In one scene, Toni practices her mentoring skills on her new boyfriend's nine year old daughter. The relationship ultimately terminates when the boyfriend learns of his daughter's interest in learning more about orgasms and porn-collections. In the second scene, Joan is accused of being a stalker when she hunts down a celebrity whom she dated once. Although they were laced with nuances of Black cultural themes neither scene centered on racial identity. Instead, incongruity in real-life circumstances was the focal point of the humor.

The second neutral program, *My Wife & Kids* starring comedian Damian Wayans, aired on NBC in 2002. The premise of the show has its inspiration from the hit family series *The Cosby Show* (Littlleton, 2006). In fact, the program title derives from one of Bill Cosby's comedy acts. The first clip, "The Value of a Dollar," centered on training children for the appropriate use of money. Upon discovering his children's plan to spend their newly given allowance money, Michael challenges them to invest their money

instead. In the second clip, “Kady’s Hamster,” Michael mistakenly kills his daughter’s hamster and tries to determine how to tell her the bad news. Meanwhile, Michael and Janet, his wife, discover the older daughter lying about being sick so that she can spend time with her new boyfriend. Devoid of racially disparaging humor, the clip contained nontendentious humor, that is, humor derived from nonsensical behavior. Moreover, the clip focused on relationships between parents and children as opposed to characters’ racial identities.

Measures

Enjoyment. A 7-point Likert enjoyment scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .88$) adapted from Oliver, Weaver, and Sargent (2000) assessed audience enjoyment of the clips. To discourage respondents from giving “neutral” responses to all items, an even-numbered (6-point) scale was employed. Consistent with findings in audience reception studies (Bird, 2003; Park et al., 2006; Watts & Orbe, 2002), adjectives such as natural, familiar, and witty were added to assess an affiliation factor of enjoyment (See Appendix-C). Specifically, items measured perceived humor and perceptions of authenticity. These items included *humorous, interesting, entertaining, creative, boring, natural, realistic, serious, and absorbing*.

Target. Of interest to the actual experiment was assessment of audiences’ recognition of the targets of the ethnic jokes. While, arguably, in-group members have more cultural insight into the nuances of Black humor that causes them to offer sophisticated interpretations, White out-group members are less privy to the subtleties of Black humor that target the White social groups. Because the value to the nature of this research relies on participants’ ability to clearly recognize themselves as the target of

disparaging humor, participants identified the perceived targets of humor from the following options: Blacks, Whites, Immigrants, Other, or No Group.

Demographic. Demographic variables were also included in the questionnaire to explore differences in enjoyment as indicated by participants' age, gender, race, music preference, movie preference, and locale of upbringing. These variables were considered as possible operational indicators of enjoyment as a function of whiteness which characterizes Whites as suburban with a preference for mainstream music.

Procedure

A total of four online questionnaires were created: Survey A, Survey B, Survey C, and Survey D. Each questionnaire consisted of videos from all three conditions: Neutral (N), Black (B), and White (W) disparagement. For example, Survey A consisted of an episode from *My Wife & Kids*, an episode from *Chappelle's Show* where Blacks were disparaged, and another episode from *Martin!* where Whites were disparaged. One episode from each of the programs was included in two of the surveys. For example, whereas Survey A included one episode of *My Wife & Kids*, Survey D included a different episode of the same program.

The questionnaires were distributed across four communication courses such that each course was assigned a different questionnaire. Each online questionnaire was sent out via e-mail to undergraduate students in a northeastern and mid-western university. Participants were asked to give their evaluation of each of the three clips presented to them. After viewing each clip, participants were asked to rate their enjoyment of the clips and their perception of the target. Upon completing these measures, participants

responded to a number of demographic questions. Participants received extra credit in their respective courses for completing the questionnaire.

Preliminary Results

The purpose of the pre-test was to assess audiences' overall enjoyment of the clips, as well as their perceptions of the targets. Clips associated with higher enjoyment ratings and high levels of agreement concerning the target of the humor (the Black social group, White social group, or No Group) were selected for use in the actual experiment. Descriptive analyses were run for each video by questionnaire A, B, C, or D. Consistent with prior research (Banjo, 2008), two factors, amusement and affiliation were extracted from the enjoyment scale. The amusement factor measured participants' overall sense of enjoyment and included items such as *creative*, *interesting*, and *humorous*. The subscale yielded strong reliabilities with alphas ranging from .90 - .97. The second factor, affiliation, assessed participants' overall sense of authenticity and included items such as *offensive*, *serious*, and *absorbing*. Reliabilities for this subscale were not as strong, with alphas ranging from .68 to .79. This was due in large part to the small sample.

Survey A. Survey A included "Kady's Hamster" (N) from *My Wife & Kids*, "When Keepin' it Real Goes Wrong" (B) skit from *Chappelle's Show*, and "WEHA" (W) episode from *Martin!*. The sample (N=9), recruited from a communications course, consisted of 77% White participants. Eighty-eight percent of the sample was female. Seventy-seven percent of the sample was between the ages of 22-25, and only 20% were between the ages of 18-21.

Overall, participants rated the neutral clip higher on amusement ($M= 4.38$, $SD=.68$) than the Black disparagement clip ($M= 4.18$, $SD=1.22$) and the White

disparagement ($M= 3.66, SD=.79$). Participants also rated the neutral clip higher on affiliation ($M= 3.22, SD=1.07$) than the Black disparagement video ($M= 2.53, SD=.85$) and the White disparagement video ($M= 2.69, SD=.51$). In the clip, “Kady’s Hamster” from *My Wife & Kids*, the majority of respondents (55.6%) identified the perceived target as neutral or other. More than half (66.7%) of the respondents reported that Blacks were the identifiable target in the clip “When Keepin’ it Real Goes Wrong” from *Chappelle’s Show*, but only 22.2% of the respondents identified Whites as the target in the “WEHA” clip from *Martin!*. Low recognition of White targets in the last clip resulted in the discarding of the video.

Survey B. Survey B contained the “Dreamhouse” episode from *Girlfriends* (N), the “Family Reunion” episode from *Martin!* (B), and the “Can Whites’ Dance?” episode from *Chappelle’s Show* (W). Twenty-five subjects were recruited from a communications course at a mid-western university. Participants were largely White ($n= 22$) and female ($n= 17$). Over half of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 21 ($n=16$), with the remaining reporting being older than 21 ($n=7$).

Overall, participants rated the neutral clip ($M= 4.13, SD=.92$) and the White disparagement ($M= 4.40, SD= 1.24$) higher on amusement than the Black disparagement clip ($M= 3.89, SD=1.19$). Participants also rated the neutral clip higher on affiliation ($M= 3.91, SD=1.07$) than the Black disparagement video ($M= 3.23, SD=.95$) and the White disparagement video ($M= 2.48, SD=.69$). In the clip “Dreamhouse” from *Girlfriends*, 80% of the sample reported that there was no identifiable racial target of the clip. Thirty-seven percent of the participants reported that Blacks were the identifiable targets in the

“Family Reunion” clip from *Martin!*. A majority of the participants (82.6%) identified the target as White in the “Can Whites Dance?” from *Chappelle’s Show*.

Survey C. The third questionnaire included “Ms.Toni” from *Girlfriends* (N), “Sheneneh’s shop” from *Martin!* (B), and the “Racial Draft” clip from *Chappelle’s Show* (W). The sample consisted of 10 students, with a majority White (n=6) and female (n=6). Forty-four percent of the sample was between the ages of 18-21, and 33% of the sample was between the ages of 22-25. A majority of the sample reported being raised in the suburbs (66.7%) while the remaining reported growing up in rural areas.

Overall, participants rated the White disparagement clip ($M= 5.17, SD=.82$) higher on amusement than the Black disparagement clip ($M= 4.60, SD= 1.59$) and the neutral clip ($M= 4.12, SD=.86$). However, participants rated the neutral clip higher on affiliation ($M= 2.95, SD=1.42$) than the Black disparagement video ($M= 2.21, SD=1.00$) and the White disparagement video ($M= 2.78, SD=1.22$). In the clip “Ms. Toni” from *Girlfriends*, 60% of the respondents reported that there was no identifiable racial target of the clip. Surprisingly, 40% of participants reported Blacks as the target in the clip “Sheneneh’s shop” from *Martin!*. Sixty percent reported that the target was neutral or other. The discrepancy in target racial identification may be explained by the issue of social desirability where participants feared appearing racist by selecting Blacks as the target while reporting high amusement. Eighty-four percent of the participants identified Whites as the target in the “Racial Draft” clip from *Chappelle’s Show*.

Survey D. The last survey contained of the “Value of a Dollar” clip from *My Wife & Kids* (N) and “Eartha Kitt” from *Martin!* (B). The example of White stereotype from *Martin!*, “Mr. Berry,” was also included, but preliminary analyses of the pre-test revealed

no recognition of target as White. Therefore, an alternative clip, “Nigfam” from *Chappelle’s Show* replaced the “Mr. Berry” clip in the pretest. The clip “Nigfam” challenges the use of the N-word by portraying a White family who carries the typically pejorative term as their surname.

Overall, participants rated the neutral clip ($M= 4.51, SD=.79$) higher on amusement than the White disparagement clip ($M= 4.45, SD= .72$) and the Black disparagement clip ($M= 3.76, SD=1.01$). Participants rated the neutral clip higher on affiliation ($M= 3.55, SD= .77$) than the White disparagement video ($M= 2.50, SD= .69$) and the Black disparagement video ($M= 2.30, SD= .85$).

Fifty percent of the respondents recognized the target as neutral in the “Value of a Dollar” clip from *My Wife & Kids*. Ninety percent of the participants reported that Blacks were the target in the “Eartha Kitt” clip from *Martin!*. For the last clip, “Nigfam” from *Chappelle’s Show*, participants reported mixed perceptions of the target, with 40% reporting Whites as the target, and 40% reporting Blacks as the target of humor.

Conclusion

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, videos with a combination of higher enjoyment ratings and accurate identification of the target were selected for use in the actual experiment. Considering the outcomes of the pre-test, the actual experiment used the following videos: “Kady’s Hamster” from *My Wife & Kids* and the “Dreamhouse” clip from *Girlfriends* for the neutral condition, “Family Reunion” from *Martin!* and “When Keepin’ it Real Goes Wrong” from *Chappelle’s Show* for the Black disparagement condition, and lastly, “Racial Draft” and “Can Whites Dance?” from the *Chappelle’s Show* for the White disparagement condition. The reason for the use of two videos from

the same program was that representations of Whites in *Martin!* were not as apparent to respondents as those in *Chappelle's Show*.

Table 1

Enjoyment Means for Selected Video

Videos		Amusement		Affiliation	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Neutral	Kady's Hamster	4.38	.68	3.22	1.07
	Dreamhouse	4.13	.92	3.91	1.07
Black Disparagement	Family Reunion	3.96	1.19	3.23	.95
	When Keepin' it Real Goes Wrong	4.18	1.22	2.53	.85
White Disparagement	Racial Draft	5.18	.82	2.78	1.22
	Can Whites Dance?	4.44	1.24	2.48	.69

Table 2

Perceptions of Target in Selected Videos

Videos		Black	White	Neutral
Neutral	Kady's Hamster	36.4%	9.1%	55.6%
	Dreamhouse	10.7%	10.7%	80.0%
Black Disparagement	Family Reunion	37.0%	14.8%	25.9%
	When Keepin' it Real Goes Wrong	63.6%	0	32.0%
White Disparagement	Racial Draft	44.4%	77.8%	22.2%
	Can Whites Dance?	8.0%	84.0%	12.0%

Actual Experiment

Participants

A total of 291 undergraduate students were recruited to participate in a study about their evaluations of comedy. Due to various factors, a number of cases were dropped from the analysis. Twenty-eight cases were removed as a result of mismatches between reported ID number in the pre-measure and the actual experiment. An additional 44 cases were dropped from the analyses because they consisted of ethnic minorities: 15 Asian/Asian-Americans, 7 Latin Americans, 11 Black Americans, 9 Bi-Racial, 1 American Indian, and 1 Arab/Arab-American. Lastly, one case was dropped due to missing data. After careful elimination, the dataset reflected the responses of White participants only, the population of interest (N=218).

When recruiting participants, students were informed that participation in an unrelated 10-minute online questionnaire was required prior to signing up to participate in the in-lab experiment. Students were also informed that full participation credit was dependent on the completion of *both* studies—the online questionnaire and the in-lab study on the evaluation of comedy. Students were given a week from the day of recruitment to complete the background questionnaire. The actual study session scheduled began a week after the deadline, providing a two week break between the completion of the background questionnaire and the actual experiment. The purpose of the time delay was to avoid priming racial attitudes prior to enjoyment, and rather to explore isolated effects of exposure to ethnic comedy on enjoyment.

In an e-mail recruitment letter, students were given access to the background questionnaire webpage. All interested students completed a questionnaire measuring their

general social attitudes towards minority groups including Blacks, women, and homosexuals. Upon completing the questionnaire, students were linked to the sign-in page where 41 optional study sessions were made available for willing volunteers.

Upon completing the questionnaire, students devised an identification number required for the study. This number consisted of the last four digits of their individual cell phone number and the first four digits of their individual birthdate. For clarification, instructions for the composition of the identification number along with an example of the identification number appeared on the homepage of the questionnaire. The instructions read:

Thank you for your interest in this study. Before signing up, we would appreciate it if you could take some time to complete this background questionnaire. It should take about 5-10 minutes. Before beginning, you must enter an ID#. **This not your student ID.**

For this study, Your ID # is composed of the **LAST** four digits of your phone number and **FIRST** four digits of your birthday

Example: Phone # 814-555-**2342**, Birth date, **07/08/1980 =23420708**

Procedure

Guidelines for this project arose from both the strengths and weaknesses of prior findings in established research. For instance, Olson et al. (1999) found that exposure to disparagement humor did not influence accessibility of stereotypes or attitudes towards a targeted group. In response to these findings, Ford and Ferguson (2004) contend that Olson et al. should have measured individual differences in prejudice toward the targeted groups prior to completing the studies. With this in mind, racial attitudes were measured prior to the in-lab experiment. Upon agreeing to participate in the experiment, students completed two separate racial attitudes scales which measured students' White racial

identity as well as their ambivalent ideas about race. About 10 to 14 days after completing the racial attitudes scales, participants arrived at a computer lab to complete the second portion of the study.

Upon entering the computer lab, participants were instructed to sit at a computer station and wait for further instructions. Each computer was logged into a sign-in page which read: "Welcome to the Study." The sign-in page was embedded with a javascript that randomly assigned participants to one of the six viewing conditions. At the time of the in-lab experiment, participants were informed that the purpose of the study was to understand audiences' evaluations of comedy. After reviewing their implied consent forms informing them of their rights as participants, participants were told that they would view three short clips and be asked to report on their evaluations of each clip.

Before beginning the study, participants were reminded to login to the questionnaire using their identification numbers composed of the last four digits of their phone number, and the first four digits of their birthdates. An example of this format was illustrated on a whiteboard in the computer lab, as well as the beginning of the questionnaire. The participants in this study were strongly encouraged to read all of the instructions, as well as the plot summary provided before each video. In order to avoid co-viewership effects (the influence of the presence of others on audience responses), participants wore headsets. Upon viewing each clip, participants completed a series of questions that measured their exposure and evaluation of the clips, along with their perceived target of each clip. After completing the study, participants logged out to obtain research participation credits in their respective courses. The value of the research credit was left to the discretion of each instructor.

As much as possible, sessions were led by an investigator who was not African-American. In those cases requiring an African-American proctor to lead the sessions, strategic measures attempted to avoid influencing respondents' ratings. Although all experimental conditions were represented in each session because the stimulus clip was placed between two mainstream foils, the African-American investigator would leave the room, for five minutes during the manipulation, and returned after 6 minutes, allowing participants time to complete the manipulated portion of the study without feeling influenced by ethnicity of the proctor. Out of the 41 sessions held, only 6 were conducted by an African-American proctor.

A javascript was embedded in the homepage for each questionnaire to initiate random assignment. However, as Table 3 shows, imbalanced random assignment led to unequal cell sizes, with more participants placed in the White Disparagement condition.

Table 3

Distribution across Cells

	Neutral	White Disparagement	Black Disparagement	Total
Frequency	67	103	48	218
Percent	30.7	47.2	22.0	100.0

Stimulus Materials

The in-lab experiment used video clips that were rated high on enjoyment in the pretest, and where a majority of the pre-test sample agreed the racial target was either Black Americans, White Americans, or no particular group. Before viewing each video, participants read a plot summary to familiarize them with the plot. Reading narratives has been shown to increase the likelihood of transportation (Green, 2004) and therefore were

considered to assist participants' sense of comedy viewing. The stimulus clips were placed between two mainstream comedies including a White-majority cast and content devoid of racial disparaging humor: *How I Met Your Mother* and *Two and a Half Men*. In the first video, the *How I Met Your Mother* clip, one of the main characters, Ted, joins a matchmaking service to find his true love, considering his "1 to 8 billion chance at finding love in New York." The 4-minute clip also included a scene where Ted's married friends combat a strange-looking creature in their apartment. The plot summary of this video read:

When Ted signs up with a matchmaking service, he falls prey to the notion that his chance of meeting the right one is 1 to 8 billion. After finding "the one" he tries to win her affection despite the fact that she is already married. He later learns that love is not a science. Meanwhile, Marshall and Lilly, his newly engaged college friends, confront a frightening creature living in their apartment. Lilly says it's a roach. Marshall says it's a mouse. Together they try to conquer what they refer to as...the "cockomouse."

The last clip, *Two and a Half Men*, involved a scene in which a washed-out musician and jingle writer, Charlie Harper, is forced to work with his nephew's fourth grade class on a play about the Industrial Revolution. A mere disagreement between his brother and soon to be ex-wife threatens the potential life of the play and Charlie plans to cancel the play. However, upon breaking the news to the children, Charlie discovers a shared interest with the children: their love for his jingles. The plot summary read:

Charlie Harper, a washed out musician and song writer, is tricked into helping his brother Alan with a school play about the Industrial Revolution. Unbeknownst to Charlie, Alan was really using this opportunity to reconnect with his separated wife, Judith. After hearing news of Judith's intention to get a divorce, the couple has a disagreement that leads to the cancellation of the production. Uncle Charlie, who doesn't particularly like kids, is left to break the bad news to the eager 4th graders. Despite his fears about working with children, he discovers that he and the kids have a shared interest. His jingles.

For each condition, an instantiation of one of the videos relevant to the study was placed between the two mainstream clips. Version One consisted of the “Dream House” episode from the show *Girlfriends* where the four women try to dissuade William from purchasing a home without his fiancée’s consent. The plot summary read:

William buys a house from his pushy real estate friend, Toni Childes, for his bride-to-be as a surprise. His other lady friends, including his colleague at his law firm (Joan Clayton), try to convince him that it's not such a good idea to buy a house without consulting his future wife. Gradually each of them buys William's argument that his purchase is a symbol of his love.

Version Two consisted of “Kady’s Hamster” from *My Wife & Kids* where Michael Kyle devises a plan to confront his younger daughter, Kady, about the death of her hamster. The plot summary read:

Michael Kyle mistakenly kills Buddy, his daughter Kady's pet hamster. He spends the whole day figuring out how to rectify the situation. Should he get her a new one? Or convince Kady that her dead hamster is only sleeping? Meanwhile, the eldest daughter Claire gets busted for skipping school to hang out witha boy!

The third version of the experimental questionnaire included “Can Whites Dance?” from *Chappelle’s Show* where the comedian makes fun of Whites’ inability to dance rhythmically. The plot summary read:

Dave Chappelle sets out to test the theory that White people can't dance. He argues that it is not that the Whites cannot dance, but they lack the rhythm needed to follow drum beats. Instead, Chappelle suggests that while Whites may miss a beat of the drum, they are more sensitive to electric guitar. He tests this theory, and this is what he found.

The fourth version included “Racial Draft” from *Chappelle’s Show* in which racial groups engaged in a racial draft, an exchange of members of a racial group. The summary leading to this video read:

In a racial draft, Whites (the ultimate hustlers) are asked to select their choice of who they accept as White. They choose individuals who side with policies that benefit them, and individuals whose economic intelligence exceed the perceived mental capacity of minorities. They end up with an interesting selection!

Version Five of the questionnaire included “Family Reunion” from the program *Martin!* where Martin is reunited with his untrustworthy uncle and cousin. The summary leading to this video read:

For their first Thanksgiving as a family, Gina decides to surprise Martin by inviting his long lost uncle who has a lazy eye and his thieving cousin, who likes to imitate Eddie Murphy. However, after watching Martin's mom run down the fire escape after hearing the news, Gina realizes she may have made a mistake. Now it's up to Martin to make Thanksgiving dinner as normal as possible, starting with kicking his uncle and cousin out.

The last version of the stimulus included “When Keepin’ it Real Goes Wrong” from *Chappelle’s Show* where a Black male asserts his Black masculinity through his aggressive behavior and by using vulgar language.

In Dave Chappelle's sketch comedy, Chappelle addresses the mishaps of what is known as "Keepin' it Real" in the Black community. Upon hearing another man suggest that he was having an affair with his girlfriend, Darius decides to show that he is the bigger man by starting a fight. Unfortunately, this does not end well for him.

Measures

Ford’s (2000) study argued that exposure to sexist jokes revealed tolerance for sexist behavior for participants high in hostile sexism. Further, other findings suggest that people who are high in right-wing authoritarianism accept aggression against disadvantaged minorities (Altemeyer, 1988) and report greater enjoyment of aggression (Oliver, 1996). Cantor (1976) argued that mirth reactions are a combination effect of attitudinal predispositions as well as group membership. In keeping with these findings,

racial attitudes were measured through the lens of White racial identity. That is, in order to explore Whites' enjoyment of Black humor and evaluations Blacks' social position, valuable to this examination are Whites' self-perceptions in relation to other races. For instance, if a White individual held the belief of superiority to Black minorities, then this self-concept would predict how one enjoys disparagement of a group inferior to the audience.

Racial attitudes. The White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS) developed by Helms and Carter (1991) assesses the strength with which Whites subscribe to traditional racial hierarchy ideology which includes the notion of White superiority. Parallel to Cross's Black Identity Scale (1971), the 90-item scale follows a stage model and includes 5 factors. In the interest of the present research question, this study employs selected items from subscales extracted from Mercer and Cunningham's (2003) exploratory factor analysis of the WRIAS scale: White Superiority/Segregationist Ideology, Perceived Cross-Cultural Competence, and Racial Diversity.

Including all 50 items in conjunction with filler questions and other measures may have been overwhelming to participants, discouraging them from completing the full experiment. To protect the internal validity from mortality threat and subject fatigue, each subscale was scaled down to include lesser items. Moreover, in the interest of parsimony, fewer stronger items were preferred over an abundance of weaker items. Items from each scale were evaluated based on a number of factors, including the strength of the correlation coefficients in Mercer and Cunningham's (2003) factor analysis, the contemporary relevance, and the relevance to the present research question. For example, item 27 in Mercer and Cunningham's (2003) White Superiority/Segregationist Ideology

subscale states “I limit myself to white activities.” This item does not load strongly on the scale with a coefficient of .48. Moreover, the item does not seem relevant to the current demographic as the conceptualization of a “white activity” may not be clear to contemporary students in a diverse college campus.

The first scale, White Superiority/Segregationist Ideology, consisted of 11 of the 17 items in the original subscale. Items included statements such as “*Blacks and Whites differ from each other, but neither race is superior,*” “*I believe that Blacks are inferior to Whites,*” and “*Sometimes jokes based on Black people’s experiences are funny.*” (For additional items, see Appendix-A.) After reverse coding three negatively-worded items, a reliability analysis was conducted. Consistent with the Mercer and Cunningham’s (2003) subscale, this scale yielded a strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$).

Six items were extracted from the second subscale, the 9-item Perceived Cross-Cultural Competence (Perceived Competence). Items in this subscale included statements like “*I believe I know a lot about Black people’s customs,*” and “*I value the relationships that I have with my Black friends.*” Prior to running reliabilities, two of the items were reversed coded as replicated in the referenced article. The six-item scale yielded satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .71$).

The third sub-scale, Reactive Racial Dissonance, originally included six items, and five items were extracted for the present study as alternate measure of aversive racism. Items included statements like “*I hardly think about what race I am.*” The scale used by Mercer and Cunningham (2003) reported acceptable internal consistencies (Cronbach's $\alpha = .63$). However, for this sample, reliability analysis yielded very weak correlations, and therefore, a scale was not constructed. The last sub-scale, Racial

Diversity, originally consisted of six items from which four items were extracted and included statements like “*Blacks and Whites have much to learn from each other.*” Reliability analysis revealed acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .63$), therefore a diversity scale was computed.

Overall, the distribution across both the White Superiority/Segregationist Ideology ($M = 1.81$, $SD = .53$, $Mdn = 1.72$) and Racial Diversity ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .59$, $Mdn = 3.50$) subscales were significantly skewed, Shapiro-Wilk(218) = .917, 965, $p = .000$. Of the four subscales implemented, Perceived Competence proved to be the least suspect and the most effective measure, with more evenly distributed scores, Shapiro-Wilk(218) = .988, $p = .06$ ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .63$, $Mdn = 3.33$). Moreover, correlation analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between White Superiority and Perceived Competence, $r = -.43$. Therefore, hypotheses were reinterpreted such that low competent viewers (those who would presumably report higher negative racial attitudes) would report greater enjoyment of stereotype, with a possible preference for Black disparagement. High competent viewers (those who would presumably report lower negative racial attitudes), on the other hand, would report preferences for neutral and White disparagement.

Whereas the subscales of the WRIAS measures one's subscription to White superiority, aversive racism identifies Whites' uneasiness with race-relevant issues and characterizes Whites as avoidant of racist behavior. This concept is best operationalized as ambivalent attitudes towards Blacks. Regardless of the level of reported racial attitudes, White participants may struggle with reporting their true attitudes. Further, the results may reveal an avoidance of enjoyment of Black stereotypes which may serve as an indication of Whites' discomfort with racial discourse. For this reason, items from

Dunton and Fazio's (1997) Motivation to Control Prejudiced Reactions (MCPR) (Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$) were included as a part of the pre-measure.

After comparing factor structures across three different samples, Dunton and Fazio (1997) conclude that the 17-item MCPR scale consists of two internally consistent factors: Concern for Acting Prejudiced and Restraint to Avoid Dispute. The first factor, Concern for Acting Prejudiced, was composed of nine items and described a discomfort with prejudice behavior, thoughts, and expressions. This scale was most consistent with the conceptual definition of aversive racism, therefore all but one item was included in the measure. Considering the number of questions overall, I wanted to avoid subject fatigue. Moreover, the dropped item was perceived to be redundant with other items, not necessarily measuring anything different. Items included statements such as "*It's important to me that other people not think I'm prejudiced,*" "*I feel guilty when I have a negative thought or feeling about a Black person,*" and "*I would never tell jokes that might offend others.*" (For additional items, see Appendix-B).

The second factor, Restraint to Avoid Dispute, composed of seven items measured Whites' resistance to racial conflict. One item was dropped per advised by the authors. Two items were dropped due to its redundancy. These items include questions such as "*I'm not afraid to tell others what I think, even if I know they will disagree with me.*" Additional items can be seen Appendix-B.

Consistent with Dunton and Fazio's (1997) original MCPR scale, four items (2,3,6, and 12) were recoded before running factor analysis which revealed 5 factors, however, the scree plot indicated two significant factors. Therefore, a second factor analysis was run forcing only two factors. Consistent with the original scale, the first

factor, Concern with Acting Prejudiced, accounted for 26.8% of the variance. As seen in Table 4, the items that loaded most highly on this factor reflected concerns about being perceived as prejudiced towards others (11, 7, 8, 4, 1, 10, and 9). This scale appears to successfully operationalize the conceptual definition of Gaertner and Dovidio's (1986) aversive racism, describing Whites who fear appearing prejudiced. Items that loaded more highly on the second factor included the recoded variables (2, 3, 6, and 12) and explained 11% of the variance. These items made up the Restraint to Avoid Dispute subscale.

Table 4

Factor Loadings for MCPR Using Principal Components and Varimax Rotation

	Concerned with Acting Prejudiced	Restraint to Avoid Dispute
11. I would never tell jokes that might offend others.	.682	.004
7. It's never acceptable to express one's prejudice.	.639	-.193
8. I feel guilty when I have a negative thought or feeling about a Black person.	.627	.139
4. It's important to me that other people not think I'm prejudiced.	.604	.438
1. In today's society it is important that one not be perceived as prejudiced in any manner.	.543	.113
10. It bothers me a great deal when I think I've offended someone, so I'm always careful to consider other people's feelings.	.539	.452
9. When speaking to a Black person, it's important to me that he/she not think I'm prejudiced.	.532	.392
2. I always express my thoughts and feelings regardless of how controversial they might be.	-.085	.761
3. Going through life worrying about whether you might offend someone is just more trouble than it's worth.	.201	.554
6. I'm careful not to offend my friends, but I don't worry about offending people I don't know or don't like.	.190	.459
12. If someone who made me uncomfortable sat next to me on a bus, I would not hesitate to move to another seat.	-.066	.416
5. I feel it's important to behave according to society's standards.	.098	.299

One item, item 5, yielded weak loadings on both factors, and therefore, was not included in the construction of the scale. Dunton and Fazio (1997) reported internal consistencies of three different samples with Cronbach alpha co-efficient between .74 and .77. For this sample, reliability analysis of the first subscale, Concern with Acting Prejudiced, yielded satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$). As a result, the Aversive Racism scale was constructed. The second scale, Restraint to Avoid Dispute, did not produce an acceptable level of reliability; therefore a scale was not constructed.

Enjoyment. A 6-point Likert enjoyment scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$) adapted from Oliver, Weaver, and Sargent (2000) assessed audience enjoyment of the media clips. The scale described the enjoyment experience using adjective stems such as *enjoyable*, *entertaining*, *unpleasant*, and *offensive*. Consistent with findings in audience reception studies (Bird, 2003; Park et al., 2006; Watts & Orbe, 2002), adjectives such as *natural*, *familiar*, and *witty* were added to assess a realism factor of enjoyment (See Appendix-C).

The overall enjoyment scale included 17 items, 3 of which were recoded: *boring*, *tedious*, and *unpleasant*. A separate factor analysis was run for the treatment video. An initial factor analysis yielded three factors with the third factor explaining 10% of the variance and including only two items. However, a scree plot revealed two factors. Therefore, a second analysis was run forcing an extraction of two factors. The first factor, amusement, reflected a traditional conceptualization of enjoyment and consisted of the items *humorous*, *entertaining*, *enjoyable*, *boring*, *interesting*, *creative*, *tedious*, *witty*, and *unpleasant*. The scale demonstrated strong reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

The second factor, affiliation, conceptualized the enjoyment experienced derived from a sense of connection or identification with the clips. This factor included the items *insightful, natural, serious, familiar, realistic, absorbing, and involving*, and demonstrated a satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha=.76$). As illustrated in Table 5, the item *offensive* yielded weak loadings on both factors and was therefore treated as a single-item variable.

Table 5

Factor Loadings for Enjoyment Using Principal Components and Varimax Rotation

	Amusement	Affiliation
13. Humorous	.904	.082
3. Entertaining	.884	.156
5. Enjoyable	.869	.210
2. Boring*	.824	.040
1. Interesting	.764	.275
12. Creative	.727	.130
4. Tedious*	.708	-.236
16. Witty	.660	.218
6. Unpleasant*	.614	-.093
10. Offensive	-.124	-.063
17. Insightful	.210	.684
15. Natural	.105	.682
14. Serious	-.267	.651
11. Familiar	.275	.610
9. Realistic	-.147	.596
7. Absorbing	.436	.580
8. Involving	.464	.570

Note: Items with asterisk were reverse coded.

The study also employed a second enjoyment measure, positive affect, which gauged participants' personal levels of involvement with and sensitivity to the clips. Items for this measure were created per advice from committee members. Participants rated their feelings experienced while viewing the clip on a 6-point Likert scale measuring the degree to which the clip made them feel intrigued, offended,

uncomfortable, and inspired. Affect was valuable to the present research because it helps to better assess varying levels of enjoyment. For example, whereas a viewer may perceive content to be offensive, their evaluation of the clip may not necessarily indicate the degree to which they, themselves felt offended.

The positive affect scale consisted of nine items. Exploratory factor analysis revealed two factors, with one factor explaining 39.6% of the variance and the second factor explaining 28.6% of the variance. The first factor measured participants' negative feelings and included the following items: *offended*, *disgusted*, *displeased*, and *uncomfortable* (Cronbach's $\alpha=.87$). The second factor describing positive affect and included four items: *encouraged*, *enlightened*, *intrigued*, and *inspired* (Cronbach's $\alpha=.82$). The item *amused* cross-loaded on both factors, so it was not included in either of the scales. While each of the factors yielded strong reliabilities, the ratings for the negative affect were skewed significantly ($M= 1.6$, $SD= .80$, $Mdn=1.25$, Shapiro-Wilk(218) =.769, $p= .000$) such that ratings on this scale indirectly measured positive affect. Therefore, at the risk of decreasing internal consistency, the positive affect scale included positive items and recoded negative items from the negative affect scale (Cronbach's $\alpha=.77$).

Target of the clip's humor was also included in the study as a manipulation check variable. To mask the researcher's specific interest in perceptions of racial targets, another target question evaluated participants' perceptions of the target based on other social identifiers including parents, married couples, or singles.

Demographics. Other variables of interest included in the questionnaire help profile participants based on demographic information. These variables included gender,

age, music genre preference, movie genre preference, class standing, race/ethnic group, relationship status, and locale of upbringing (i.e. suburban, urban, rural). Consideration of each of these variables arises from their potential influence on participants' responses.

For instance, upbringing in a suburb or country locale where exposure to ethnic minorities is less likely has the potential to influence attitudes about race and racial portrayals.

CHAPTER 3

Results

Participants

Of the 218 participants, 68.8% were female (n=150). There was relatively equal distribution across class status consisting of freshman (33%), sophomores (24.3%), juniors (18%), and seniors (23.9%). A majority of the participants was between ages of 18-21 (85.1%), and the remaining was between the ages of 22-25 (14.9%).

Music preference, movie preference, and area of upbringing were included in the questionnaire to better assess the demographic of the sample. In general, participants reported greater preferences for rock music (42.7%) with some preferring pop music (24.3%) and Hip Hop (20.6%). The remaining 11% reported a preference for country music or did not reply. More than half of the sample reported comedy as their top movie preference (57.3%). Twenty percent preferred drama, and in the lower end of the distribution were those who preferred action or documentary. A majority of the sample was from suburban areas (75.5%), whereas the remaining twenty-four percent were from either rural (17%) or urban areas (7.4%). The overall make up of this sample can be characterized as White Suburban with a preference for rock music and comedy.

Manipulation Check

Given the unequal distribution across conditions, a manipulation check was run to validate participants' accurate perception of the intended target. A chi-square test of independence was employed to examine the relationship between condition and perceived target. As can be seen by the frequencies cross tabulated in Table 6, although

respondents identified Blacks as the target overall, they more accurately identified the intended target in each condition significantly more than they identified Blacks as the overall target, $\chi^2(4, N=216)=60.4, p < .001$. Therefore, it was concluded that regardless of the uneven distribution across experimental conditions, the video manipulation was successful.

Table 6

Manipulation Check: Cross-tabulation Table of Condition and Perceived Target

Condition	Perceived Target			
	No one	Whites	Blacks	
Neutral	50.9% (29)	.0% (0)	31.1%(38)	
White Disparagement	33.3 % (19)	100%(37)	36.9 %(45)	
Black Disparagement	15.8% (9)	.0%(0)	32.0 %(39)	
Total	100 (57)	100 (37)	100 (122)	216

Note: Data presented as percent and count. Numbers in parenthesis are the count

The primary condition variable in the following analyses included all respondents, including those who misperceived the intended target. This variable is referred to as *target*. Another variable was created to include only those who accurately perceived the intended target of humor. This variable is called *perceived target*. Both variables are included in the following analyses with hopes of establishing a legitimate argument about the effect of condition on outcomes without the constraints of misperception.

Hypotheses Testing

This project proposed two competing hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 suggested that negative racial attitudes would predict enjoyment outcomes such that those who report lower negative racial attitudes (higher cultural competence) would report lesser enjoyment of stereotype of Blacks as compared to those who report higher negative racial attitudes (lower cultural competence). Hypotheses 2 proposed that viewers would report

preferences for *both* stereotypes; however, those who report lower negative racial attitudes (higher cultural competence) would experience lesser enjoyment of stereotype as compared to those who report higher negative racial attitudes (lower cultural competence).

In order to analyze differences between low versus high competent viewers, perceived competence (a continuous variable) was dichotomized into a categorical variable. A median split procedure was applied to calculate the percentages that divide the distribution into these two categories. The overall mean score was 3.33 ($SD = .50$). Scores that fell below 1.5 were categorized as low competence. The remaining was categorized as high competence. As shown in Table 7, the overall distribution was fairly equal.

Table 7

Distributions of Dichotomized Perceived Competence Variable

	% (n)
Low Competent	51.8 (113)
High Competent	48.2 (105)
Total	100 (218)

Note: Overall equal distribution between low and high competent viewers

A 2 (Competence: *Low, High*) x 3 (Target: *Black, White, Neutral*) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore differences in enjoyment on the amusement, affiliation, and positive affect dependent variables. This analysis revealed a significant main effect for target Wilks' $\lambda = .84$, $F(6, 420) = 6.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$, and a marginally significant Competence x Target interaction, Wilks' $\lambda = .95$, $F(2, 212) = 1.80$, $p = .09$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. When the perceived target variable was included as an independent variable instead, the main effect for target disappeared. However, analyses also revealed

a marginally significant interaction effect between competence and perceived target Wilks' $\lambda = .91$, $F(6, 113) = 1.84$, $p = .09$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$.

The univariate analysis for enjoyment on the amusement level revealed a significant main effect for target, with participants in the White Disparagement condition ($M = 4.78$, $SE = .08$) reporting greater enjoyment than those in the neutral ($M = 4.43$, $SE = .11$) and Black Disparagement conditions ($M = 4.28$, $SE = .13$), $F(2, 218) = 6.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. As Table 8 shows, post hoc comparisons revealed significant differences in enjoyment between those in the White Disparagement condition, and those in the neutral and Black Disparagement conditions. The main effect remained even after including perceived target as the independent variable, $F(2, 113) = 4.15$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Moreover, the post hoc comparisons were consistent with that shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Post Hoc Comparisons for Main Effect of Target on Amusement Factor

	Black Disparagement	White Disparagement	Neutral
M	4.28 _a	4.78 _b	4.43 _a
SE	.13	.08	.11

$F(2, 212) = 6.08$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$

Note: Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD post hoc comparisons

Analyses revealed a non-significant interaction effect for amusement when including target as the independent variable, $F(2, 212) = 1.74$, $p > .10$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. However, when including perceived target as the independent variable, analyses revealed a significant interaction effect between the condition and perceived competence on amusement, $F(2, 113) = 4.15$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. (See Figure 7). Whereas amusement scores were relatively equal among low competent viewers across each condition, the most

pronounced differences were seen among high competent viewers. High competent viewers in the White Disparagement condition reported greater enjoyment ($M= 5.11$, $SE=.19$) than low competent viewers in the White Disparagement condition ($M=4.56$, $SE=.26$). As shown in Table 9, pairwise comparison revealed a significant difference in amusement between the White Disparagement video and the neutral and Black Disparagement video for high competent viewers. There were no differences between conditions for the low competent viewers.

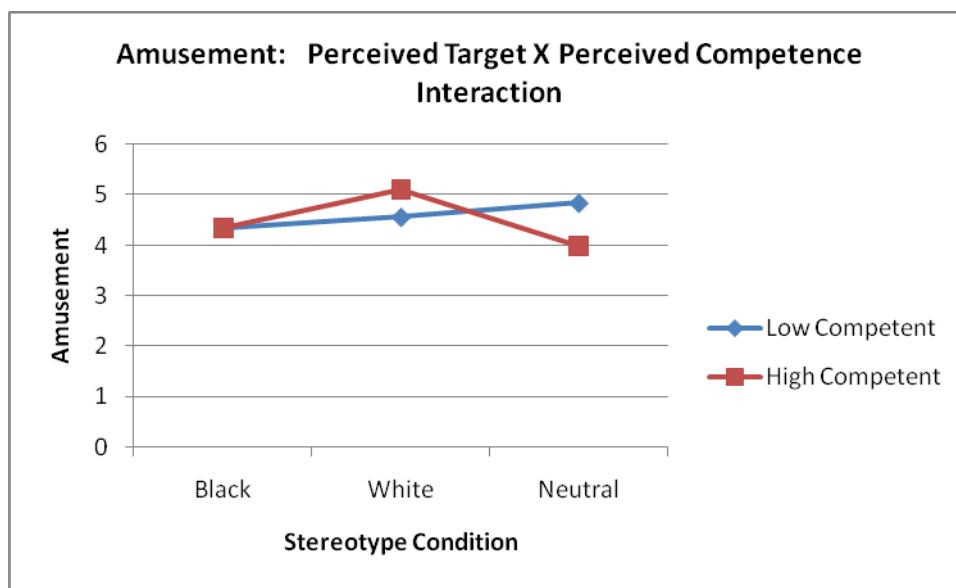


Figure 7: With perceived target as the independent variable, low competent viewers reported less enjoyment of White Disparagement than high competent viewers.

Table 9

Amusement: Perceived Target X Perceived Competence Interaction

Competence		Condition		
		Black	White	Neutral
Low				
	<i>M</i>	4.34 _a	4.56 _a	4.84 _a
	<i>SE</i>	.13	.26	.23
High				
	<i>M</i>	4.34 _a	5.11 _b	3.99 _a
	<i>SE</i>	.19	.19	.27

$F(2,113)=4.15, p<.05, \eta_p^2 = .07$

Note. Means with no subscript in common differ at $p <.05$ using LSD pairwise comparisons by rows.

The second dependent variable in the analysis was affiliation enjoyment.

Univariate analyses revealed a main effect for target showing that overall, participants in the neutral condition reported greater sense of relating ($M=2.79, SE=.09$) than those in the Black Disparagement ($M=2.45, SE=.12$) and White Disparagement conditions ($M=2.45, SE=.07$), $F(2, 212)=4.83, p < .05, \eta_p^2=.04$. As shown in Table 10, LSD post hoc comparisons showed that overall enjoyment of the neutral videos were significantly higher than the stereotype videos. No main effect was found when including perceived target as the independent variable, $F(2, 113)=1.84, p > .10, \eta_p^2=.03$.

Table 10

Post Hoc Comparisons for Main Effect of Target on Affiliation Enjoyment

	Black Disparagement	White Disparagement	Neutral
M	2.45 _b	2.45 _b	2.79 _a
SE	.11	.07	.09

$F(2, 212)=4.83, p < .05, \eta_p^2=.04$

Note: Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD post hoc comparisons

Univariate analysis for affiliation enjoyment revealed a significant Competence X Target interaction, $F(2, 212) = 4.49, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .04$, suggesting that the degree of affiliation enjoyment is determined by the combination of one's cultural understanding and the target of disparagement. High competent viewers reported higher affiliation in the White Disparagement ($M=2.60, SE=.10$) and neutral ($M=2.60, SE=.14$) conditions, and the least affiliation in the Black Disparagement condition ($M=2.37, SE=.15$). Low competent viewers reported higher affiliation in the neutral ($M=2.98, SE=.12$) and Black Disparagement conditions ($M=2.52, SE=.15$). Not surprisingly, low competent viewers reported the least affiliation in the White Disparagement condition ($M=2.30, SE=.10$). (See Figure 8). Table 11 shows that there were no significant differences between the conditions for high competent viewers. However, low competent viewers reported significantly lower scores in the White and Black Disparagement conditions than in the neutral condition.

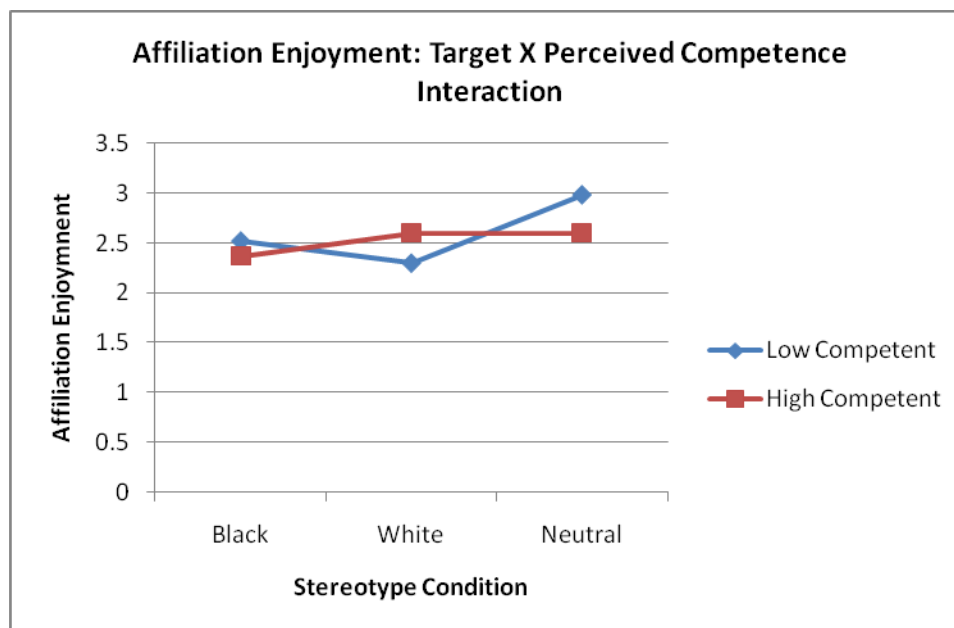


Figure 8: With target as the independent variable, low competent viewers reported less sense of perceived connection with White Disparagement, and more perceived connection with neutral video

Table 11

Affiliation Enjoyment: Target X Perceived Competence Interaction

Competence	Condition		
	Black	White	Neutral
Low			
<i>M</i>	2.52 _a	2.30 _a	2.98 _b
<i>SE</i>	.15	.10	.12
High			
<i>M</i>	2.37 _a	2.60 _a	2.60 _a
<i>SE</i>	.15	.10	.14

$F(2, 212) = 4.49, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .04$

Note. Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD post hoc comparisons within rows

Similar outcomes emerged when examining perceived target as the independent variable in the analysis. As seen in Figure 9, an interaction effect was found, $F(2, 113) = 3.46, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .06$, showing that high competent viewers reported higher affiliation enjoyment in the White Disparagement condition ($M = 2.91, SE = .16$), and the least

affiliation enjoyment in the neutral ($M=2.37$, $SE= .23$) and Black Disparagement conditions ($M=2.25$, $SE= .16$). Conversely, low competent viewers reported higher affiliation in the neutral condition ($M=2.86$, $SE= .19$), and the least affiliation in the Black ($M=2.46$, $SE= .23$) and White Disparagement ($M=2.40$, $SE= .22$) conditions. Unlike the previous post hoc comparisons, Table 12 shows that high competent viewers reported significantly higher affiliation in the White Disparagement condition than in the Black Disparagement condition.

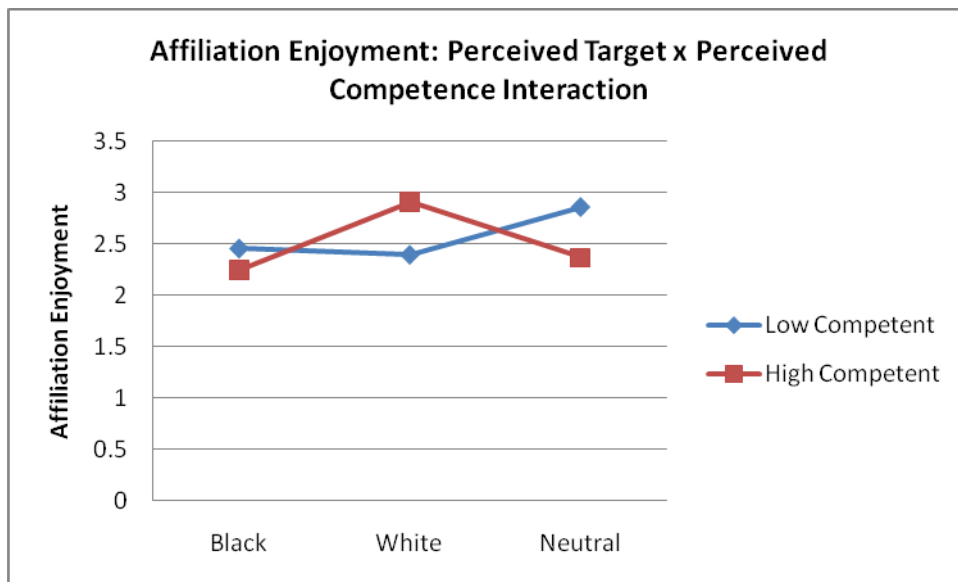


Figure 9: Using the perceived target variable instead, low competent viewers still reported less sense of perceived connection with White Disparagement, and more perceived connection with neutral video

Table 12

Affiliation: Perceived Target X Perceived Competence Interaction

Competence	Condition		
	Black	White	Neutral
Low			
<i>M</i>	2.46 _a	2.40 _a	2.86 _a
<i>SE</i>	.23	.22	.19
High			
<i>M</i>	2.25 _a	2.91 _b	2.37 _a
<i>SE</i>	.16	.16	.23

$F(2, 113) = 3.46, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .06$

Note. Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD post hoc comparisons within rows. Data with perceived target as independent variable.

Lastly, analysis for positive affect, the third dependent variable, was explored to test the validity of the competing hypotheses. Analysis of variance revealed no main effect of target on positive affect, $F(2, 212) = 1.40, p > .10, \eta_p^2 = .01$. The univariate analysis for positive affect revealed a marginally significant Target X Competence interaction, $F(2, 212) = 2.64, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .02$. In this analysis, higher numbers reflect more positive feelings. As illustrated in Figure 10, low competent viewers in the White ($M = 3.80, SE = .13$) and Black ($M = 3.85, SE = .02$) Disparagement conditions reported more negative feelings compared to those in the neutral condition ($M = 4.19, SE = .11$). High competent viewers in the White Disparagement condition reported more positive feelings ($M = 4.01, SE = .091$) than those in the neutral ($M = 3.92, SE = .12$) and Black Disparagement conditions ($M = 3.91, SE = .13$). As shown in Table 13, pairwise comparisons revealed a significant difference between the neutral video and the stereotype videos for low competent viewers only.

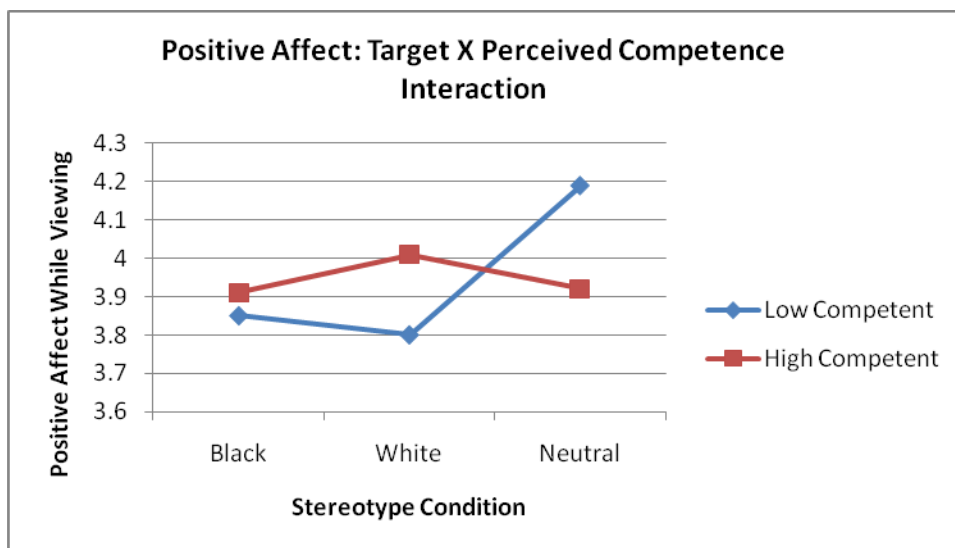


Figure 10: With target as the independent variable, low competent viewers report less positive affect when exposed to White Disparagement.

Table 13

Positive Affect: Target X Perceived Competence Interaction

Competence	Condition		
	Black	White	Neutral
Low			
<i>M</i>	3.85 _a	3.80 _a	4.19 _b
<i>SE</i>	.13	.09	.11
High			
<i>M</i>	3.91 _a	4.01 _a	3.92 _a
<i>SE</i>	.13	.09	.12

$F(2, 212) = 2.64, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .02$

Note. Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD pairwise comparisons within rows.

The marginally significant interaction effect was also consistent when examining perceived target as the independent variable $F(2, 113) = 2.67, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Pairwise comparisons revealed a significant difference between the neutral video and Black Disparagement video for low competent viewers only (See Table 14). Both the initial target variable and the secondary variable (perceived target) revealed similar findings.

Table 14

Positive Affect: Perceived Target X Perceived Competence Interaction

Competence		Condition		
		Black	White	Neutral
Low				
	<i>M</i>	3.78 _a	3.81 _{ab}	4.19 _b
	<i>SE</i>	.13	.18	.16
High				
	<i>M</i>	3.88 _a	4.21 _a	3.83 _a
	<i>SE</i>	.13	.13	.19

$F(2, 113) = 2.67, p = .07, \eta_p^2 = .05$

Note. Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD pairwise comparisons within rows.

Overall, findings indicate partial support for the proposed hypotheses. Whereas the hypotheses implied that low competent viewers would report greater enjoyment of stereotype and of Black stereotype in particular, findings revealed higher enjoyment ratings for White Disparagement in comparison to Black Disparagement. Further, there were no statistically significant differences in enjoyment on the amusement level. Findings also revealed that those who are high in cultural competence are more likely to enjoy stereotype entertainment with particular preference for White stereotypes. Low competent viewers experienced significantly less affiliation and more negative feelings (marginal significance) when exposed to White stereotype. Although low competent viewers reported more amusement of White stereotype than Black stereotype (see Table 9), these individuals also experienced less affiliation and more discomfort in this condition (see Table 11, 12 and 13), thereby minimizing their overall enjoyment experience in comparison to the other conditions. Therefore, these findings yield partial

support for Hypothesis 1b which proposes that those low in cultural competence will enjoy White stereotype less.

Guided by theories of aversive racism, the third set of hypotheses purported that there will be a negative relationship between negative racial attitudes and motivations to control prejudiced reactions (MCPR) such that those who report lower MCPR would have reported higher negative racial attitudes, and those who reported higher MCPR would have reported lower negative racial attitudes. Therefore, of particular interest to the third hypothesis were the reactions of those who reported lower negative racial attitudes and higher motivation to control prejudiced reactions.

Although a significant negative relationship was found between the aversive racism measure and the White Superiority measure at the .01 level, $r = -.19$, preliminary results called for a correlation analysis with perceived cultural competence included as the independent variable instead. Correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships between aversive racism and cultural competence and revealed a weak and non-significant relationship, $r = .04$, $p > .05$. Therefore, hypothesis three was disconfirmed.

Hypotheses three also proposed that those who report higher motivation to control prejudiced reactions would report lesser enjoyment of Black Disparagement. Among those who reported high MCPR only, a univariate analysis revealed no significant effect of target on amusement $F(2, 122) = 2.17$, $p > .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, affiliation $F(2, 122) = 1.17$, $p > .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, or positive affect $F(2, 122) = 1.64$, $p > .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. When perceived target was examined as the independent variable instead, the same results appeared for

amusement $F(2, 74)= 1.64, p> .05, \eta_p^2= .04$, affiliation $F(2, 74)= 1.46, p> .05, \eta_p^2= .04$, and positive affect $F(2, 74)= .92, p> .05, \eta_p^2= .02$.

As seen in Table 15, high competent viewers made up the majority of those who reported high motivation to control prejudice which could explain why the variable did not yield any significant effects. Overall, the data reveal the most significant effects among those low in cultural competence. Low competent viewers made up the majority of those low in motivation to control their prejudiced reactions. Therefore, analyses of variances were conducted to examine possible effects among low motivators in the overall sample, although responses among those who reported lower motivation to control prejudiced reactions was not pertinent to hypothesis three.

Table 15

Distribution of Competence across Dichotomized Motivation to Control Prejudiced Reaction Variable

	Low Competent	High Competent	Total
	% (n)		% (n)
Low MCPR	45.5 (51)	39.0 (41)	42.4 (92)
High MCPR	54.5 (61)	60.9 (64)	57.6 (125)
Total	100 (112)	100 (105)	100 (217)

When running the analysis of variances for those who reported lower motivation to control prejudiced reactions only, univariate analyses revealed a significant main effect of target on amusement $F(2, 89)= 4.97, p< .05, \eta_p^2= .10$ and affiliation $F(2, 89)= 5.39, p< .05, \eta_p^2= .11$. As shown in Figure 11, among those who were less concerned with appearing prejudiced, higher amusement was reported in the White Disparagement condition ($M= 4.87, SD= .74$) than in the neutral ($M= 4.33, SD= .99$) or Black

Disparagement condition ($M= 4.28, SD= .81$). Table 16 shows that for low motivators, amusement in the White Disparagement condition is significantly different from the other conditions.

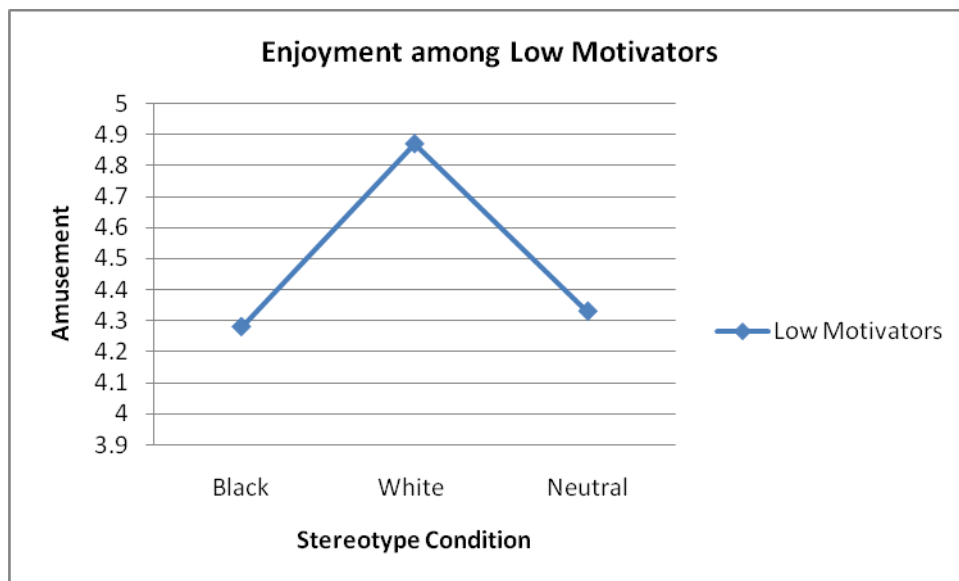


Figure 11: Main effect of Target on amusement for low motivators shows that those low in motivation to control their prejudiced reactions were most comfortable reporting enjoyment of White Disparagement.

Table 16

Post Hoc Comparisons for Main Effect of Target on Amusement for Low Motivators

	Black Disparagement	White Disparagement	Neutral
M	4.28 _a	4.87 _b	4.33 _a
SE	.81	.74	.99

$F(2, 89)= 4.97, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .10$

Note: Means with no subscript in common differ at $p < .05$ using LSD post hoc comparisons

As it pertains to the affiliation variable, those in the neutral condition reported greater affiliation ($M= 2.96, SD= .69$) than those in the White Disparagement condition

($M= 2.45$, $SD= .74$) and the Black Disparagement condition ($M= 2.42$, $SD= .72$), $F(2, 89)= 5.34$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$.

Whereas a main effect of perceived target on amusement was found $F(2, 39)= 3.40$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .15$, there were no effects on affiliation $F(2, 39)= 1.70$, $p > .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$ or positive affect $F(2, 39)= 2.16$, $p > .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$. Overall, multivariate analyses revealed no main effect of aversive racism on any of the enjoyment factors for those high in motivation to control prejudiced reactions. Whereas it was posited that the most pronounced effects would be visible among high motivators, analyses reveal the most pronounced effects among low motivators instead. Therefore, hypotheses 3a and 3b were disconfirmed.

Supplemental Analyses

One of the primary findings revealed in this study was that those scoring low on measures of cultural competence also reported lower levels of positive affect in response to exposure to Black and White stereotype media clips (See Tables 13 and 14). Consequently, additional analyses were conducted to explore possible mediating variables to explain this outcome.

In particular, Barron and Kenny's (1986) mediation procedure was employed to examine possible mediators between the condition and positive affect for those who were low in cultural competence. Perceived offensiveness was one of the items that did not load strongly on either of the enjoyment factors and was considered a viable mediator between the condition and positive affect. Exposure to stereotype is argued to have lead to perceived offensiveness among low competent viewers. Moreover, this perceived offense leads to a negative experience while viewing.

According to this four-step procedure, a series of significant relationships must be established. First, there must be a significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Second, there must be a significant relationship between the independent variable and the presumed mediating variable. Third, a significant relationship must exist between the presumed mediating variable and the dependent variable. Finally, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable should decrease when controlling for the presumed mediating variable.

Following these procedures, a series of analyses was conducted to examine if perceived offensiveness mediates the relationship between exposure to stereotype and positive affect among those low in cultural competence. First, an ANOVA was employed to examine the relationship between target and positive affect among those who scored low in cultural competence. Analysis revealed a significant effect of condition, $F(2, 110) = 4.80, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$. Lower levels of positive affect were reported among participants in the White ($M = 3.80, SE = .09$) and Black ($M = 3.85, SE = .13$) Disparagement conditions compared to those in the neutral condition ($M = 4.19, SE = .10$), though pairwise, post hoc analyses using LSD procedures showed that lower levels of positive affect were significant for the White condition only.

Second, an ANOVA was conducted to examine the relationship between target and perceived offensiveness (the mediator). This analysis revealed a significant effect of condition, $F(2, 110) = 12.93, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .19$. Post hoc comparisons showed that participants in the White Disparagement condition reported higher levels of perceived offensiveness ($M = 2.75, SE = 1.55$) than did participants in the neutral ($M = 1.58, SE = .18$) or Black Disparagement ($M = 1.92, SE = .23$) conditions. Third, the relationship

between the perceived offensiveness and positive affect was examined via a correlation, with this analysis showing that higher levels of perceived offensiveness were significantly correlated with lower levels of positive affect, $r = -.37$ ($p < .05$).

Finally, an ANCOVA was conducted to examine the effect of target on positive affect while controlling for perceived offensiveness. This analysis showed that controlling for perceived offensiveness reduced the effect of condition on positive affect to non-significance, $F(2, 109) = 1.94$, $p = .15$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Consequently, these analyses support the idea that perceived offensiveness mediates the relationship between condition and positive affect. Namely, among participants scoring low in cultural competence, exposure to stereotype (and particularly White Disparagement) lead to increased perceptions of offensiveness, which in turn lead to lower levels of positive affect.

The initial target variable was replaced by the perceived target variable to assess any differences in outcomes. An ANOVA revealed a marginally significant effect of perceived target on positive affect $F(2, 54) = 2.48$, $p = .09$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The second ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between perceived target and perceived offensiveness $F(2, 54) = 7.40$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .22$. As established by the first set of analyses, a significant correlation between positive affect and perceived offensiveness was already obtained. The final step of the procedure revealed that controlling for perceived offensiveness reduced the effect of condition on positive affect to non-significance $F(2, 53) = 1.63$, $p = .21$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, confirming perceived offensiveness as a significant mediating variable.

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

Interpretation of Results

The goal of this study was to examine predictors of Whites' enjoyment of Black entertainment. Whereas a host of studies have shown that Whites are able to both enjoy and identify with Black entertainment (Appiah, 2001; Middleton, 1959), this study attempts to understand the mechanisms through which Whites are able to enjoy stereotype. Furthermore, this study aims to understand the context in which Black entertainment is most enjoyed: devoid of stereotype, stereotyping of Whites, or stereotyping of Blacks.

As guided by disposition theory (Zillman & Cantor, 1972), this study proposed that negative attitudes towards the racial group of the characters would predict enjoyment of ethnic minority disparagement. In this study, negative racial attitudes towards Blacks was operationalized and measured by Helms and Carter's (1991) White Racial Identity Scale as researchers have established that Whites' racial self-concept is indicative of their racial attitudes. Modeled after Cross' Black Racial Identity Scale (1971), Helms and Carter (1991) proposed a stage development theory of White racial identity, and contended that Whites' reactions to Blacks largely depended on their personal resolutions toward their own racial identity. Therefore, viewers' White racial identity was considered a worthy predictor of enjoyment of stereotype.

According to Helms and Carter's (1991) stage development theory of White Racial Identity, Whites' self-concept follows a continuum beginning with a sense of superiority and culminating into a more cultural integrative self-concept. The first

hypothesis proposed that White's sense of superiority would predict a preference for entertainment that disparaged groups perceived to be inferior. In general, findings indicated that this sample did not perceive themselves as superior to Blacks. On the contrary, findings indicated that Whites' racial attitudes depended less on a sense of dominance and power, and more on one's acceptance of Blacks and openness to cultural integration.

As a result, cultural competence served as a better predictor of enjoyment of stereotype, although findings were not in the predicted direction. This finding suggests that Whites in the present sample have reached the Autonomy stage of White Racial identity which characterizes a level of identity that does not identify with racist ideology. Specifically, the sample perceived themselves as culturally competent and comfortable with their own racial identity. Instead of White Superiority influencing enjoyment of disparaging representations, this study shows that Whites' comfort with race better explains enjoyment outcomes.

Whereas the first hypotheses compared enjoyment of Black versus White disparagement, the second hypotheses compared enjoyment of stereotype versus no-stereotype content. As informed by distinctiveness theory, this study proposed that stereotype entertainment would make racial identity salient and influence enjoyment outcomes such that viewers would prefer stereotype clips to clips devoid of stereotype. Presumably, stereotypes of Whites in a Black context would reinforce notions of White superiority such that mock representations of Whites were perceived to be both unrealistic and laughable. As explained by relief theories of humor, these hypotheses assumed that entertainment thriving on racial identity would induce some level of

discomfort such that there would be a reported preference for stereotype, with low competent viewers reporting greater enjoyment of stereotype.

These hypotheses were not supported. Findings indicated that those who were more culturally competent reported more positive affect when exposed to stereotype than those who were low in cultural competence. Moreover, those who were low in cultural competence seemed to view White stereotyping as more unrealistic than Black stereotyping. This implies that Whites who are less in tune with Black culture are most likely to subscribe to traditional views of whiteness and are more likely to perceive White stereotypes to be inconsistent with their views of Whites. Therefore, these individuals are more likely to experience discomfort when viewing White stereotypes.

Overall, findings suggest that Whites who are culturally aware are better able to digest entertainment that thrives on racial stereotyping. Individuals who are comfortable with matters of race were not only more likely to prefer stereotype entertainment to neutral entertainment, but they were also more likely to report White stereotypes as more realistic than Black stereotypes. This finding is contrary to the humor literature which argues that out-group members experience less enjoyment when they are the target of a joke by someone outside of their group. Perhaps, those who are highly competent are more likely to dissociate themselves from traditional articulations of whiteness and are able to discern the purpose of White stereotyping in Black context entertainment as a social critique of whiteness. Enjoyment, in this case, is derived from understanding the subtext (Boskin, 1997) of racial disparagement in ethnic humor.

The third hypothesis of this study proposed that aversive racism would operate as an alternative explanatory variable for high competent viewers' enjoyment of Black

entertainment. Based on theories of aversive racism, those who report low negative racial attitudes (high cultural competence) may actually possess reservations about Blacks. However, aversive racism proposes that these individuals will try to mitigate any associations with racist ideology by showing concern for acting prejudiced. Therefore, aversive racism was operationalized as the motivation to control prejudiced reactions. Although the scale was reliable, this measure did not prove to significantly influence enjoyment outcomes.

However, findings did indicate moderate implications of modern forms of racism. Whites in this sample who were low on cultural competence expressed greater discomfort when viewing stereotype entertainment. Further, low competent viewers reported greater enjoyment of White stereotype than Black stereotype. Theories of modern racism suggest Whites are generally uncomfortable with race issues. Further, while they hold negative racial attitudes, Whites are also oblivious to these attitudes. It is possible that, although Whites may perceive Black stereotypes as humorous, they are more likely to avoid reporting their enjoyment of Black disparagement to avoid appearing racist (Kleinpenning & Hagendoorn, 1993). In this aspect, findings support theoretical assertions of modern racism. However, findings did not directly support aversive racism which emphasizes the behavior of those who report high cultural competence only.

Overall, participants reported a greater sense of amusement in the White condition. One plausible explanation for this finding is that since Whites' racial identity is not central to their sense of self, portrayals of Whites are perceived as humorous because it provides a visual of the often abstract notion of whiteness. In other words, one of the components of whiteness is that it is invisible and universal. Depictions of

whiteness in Black entertainment make the invisible construct observable and open to critique.

Implications for Enjoyment Theories

The present line of research attempts to expand enjoyment theories to consider the role of viewers' social identity and cultural context on the enjoyment experience. This study, in particular, focused on entertainment in which racial identity is central. Findings imply that there exists another level of enjoyment derived from a sense of familiarity or personal experience. This kind of enjoyment is referred to in this study as affiliation enjoyment. High competent viewers reported greater enjoyment on this level signifying a sense of connection and recognition, whereas those low in cultural competence reported less enjoyment on the affiliated level.

These findings suggest that enjoyment measures should include variables that tap into audiences' real-world recognition. Whereas identification theories explain audiences' perceived similarity with characters, the affiliation enjoyment measure explains an enjoyment experience derived from a sense of truth. Moving beyond wishful identification, this measure seeks to attain the level at which media entertainment that is reflective of real life can be enjoyed. Examining enjoyment on this level challenges traditional conceptualizations of entertainment as a mere passive viewing experience. Perhaps entertainment that is reflective of real-life is experienced in a different way, one that helps viewers manage their social identities and cope with their reality. Consequently, entertainment that involves characters that are representations of social actors in audience members' world may help viewers better understand their social

world. However, for enjoyment to be experienced at this level, viewers will need some knowledge base from which to draw favorable interpretations.

Having implications for transportation theories as well, the results of this study show that entertainment context (real-life versus fantasy) could be significant to the transportation experience. If content is perceived as offensive and yields more negative feelings, then transportation is likely to be inhibited. However, findings from this study indicate that audiences' competence with regard to the nature of the entertainment may also predict greater transportation experience.

This study also applied disposition theory which asserts that pleasure is experienced when disliked characters have bad outcomes and liked characters experience good outcomes. Although the White Superiority measure proved to be low in utility, the study introduces the factor of viewers' competence in their moral evaluations of media characters. As argued by Raney (2004), audiences' evaluations of characters are guided by a sense of justice and an inherent moral compass. This study indicates that viewers' interpretation of racial injustice may serve as a valuable predictor of enjoyment pertaining to real life. In this case, viewers who are culturally aware may judge disparagement of Whites as fair and more enjoyable when considering the longstanding history of racial discrimination.

Lastly, this study calls into question the role of communication in engendering social change. Early scholarship proposed that disparaging representations of minorities serve only to bolster pre-existing negative attitudes towards the social group. The findings of this study suggest that humor contexts may actually educate audiences. Whereas factual messages (i.e. those within news frames) may reinforce stereotypes,

humor messages within the context of entertainment may serve as an illustration of potential racial harmony. Entertainment that consists of ethnic jokes where minorities and Whites are disparaged is able to confront issues of race, while at the same time mitigating racial tensions. If indeed audiences are passively or actively learning from entertainment media, we can resolve that in situations as these they are learning tolerance for out-group members. Therefore, the cultural competence demonstrated in an entertainment program in the context of humor is transmitted into an individual's real-world management of race relations.

Still, there arises a need for theoretical development for understanding the entertainment value of potentially harmful social messages. This study challenges disposition theory as a proper explanation for this phenomenon. Whereas attitude formation is central to the overall enjoyment experience, a different kind of processing is evident among White viewers of Black entertainment. Contrary to the supposition of disposition theories, White viewers in this sample who were low in cultural competence (which could be perceived as a negative attitude) reported *less* enjoyment of Black stereotypes than their high cultural competent counterparts. Moreover, low competent Whites in this sample reported a preference for race neutral entertainment. Therefore, one could argue that the operational variable that best explains the relationship between Whites and exposure to Black entertainment does not involve racial attitudes, as much as it involves one's sense of social identity which includes whether or not Whites actively reject or relate to the Other. Ultimately, this relationship predicts enjoyment of ethnic entertainment.

Implications for Modern Racism Theories

Arguably, the underlying mechanism behind theories of contemporary racism discussed in social psychology is guided by theories of whiteness proposed by critical race theorists. Whiteness is a construct that is invisible and presumably natural. It is never questioned, and therefore remains in the shadow of racial discourse. It often seeps through Whites' interaction with the Other, whether personal or mediated. Those who subscribe to its characteristics hardly give it thought and so it remains an abstraction. This study attempted to provide empirical evidence for an abstract notion by testing how Whites responded to mediated interactions with Black culture.

Inherently, whiteness explains that those who are born into the White racial group naturally carry favorable attitudes towards themselves and unfavorable attitudes towards ethnic minorities. Helm's and Carter's (1991) White Racial Identity stage theory proposes that through engagement with out-group members and their own desire to choose their identity, Whites are able to disassociate themselves from traditional views of whiteness. For those who associate themselves with this ideology, the theory predicts a perceived sense of superiority or high negative racial attitudes. Aversive racism was applied to explain possible explanations for viewers who report low negative racial attitudes as it assumes that those who report such attitudes are suppressing their true attitude so as not to appear racist. This concept was measured by the motivation to control prejudiced reactions. Although the scales employed proved to be reliable, the core theoretical assumption through the lens of whiteness explains the lack of significant empirical findings in this study.

Since whiteness is unaware of itself, those who subconsciously subscribe to these ideals may be unlikely to accurately report their social attitudes. Moreover, when attitudes translate into behavior, we are never sure at what point behavior is modified to be socially desirable. Therefore, physiological measures are able to capture best the potential incongruence between one's pre-existing attitude and responses on self-report measures. It is possible that such measures might be able to identify variances between one's reported attitude and their physical reactions. If this were the case, the findings would demonstrate the internal conflict that exists between Whites' attitude and behavior. This conflict has been referred to as cognitive dissonance.

In this study, although those who were low in cultural competence reported a preference for neutral entertainment, these participants still enjoyed Black disparagement. Further, those who were low in cultural competence simultaneously reported greater discomfort and perceived offense than those high in cultural competence when exposed to stereotype. These findings may have some implications for cognitive dissonance suggesting that a disagreement with true feelings elicited feelings of discomfort. In turn, this physiological discomfort may have predicted low enjoyment outcomes where higher enjoyment may have been experienced for the Black disparagement video. In other words, findings in this study may have some implication for the role of cognitive dissonance on self-report measures of racial attitudes.

Moreover cognitive dissonance may serve as a better predictor of reported enjoyment outcomes of ethnic disparaging humor. When exposed to entertainment that disparages an out-group member, viewers may report low enjoyment to mitigate the discomfort induced by the conflict between their initial attitude and reported behavior. If

this were the case, then it is quite plausible that dissonance theories play a significant role in understanding contemporary forms of racism. In this context, it suggests that although true racial attitudes may not be reported their effects are intrinsic and those who have not completely disassociated themselves from the ideology of whiteness experience conflicts between their attitude and behavior when interacting with Black culture, whether personal or mediated.

Implications for Audience Research

One of the underlying questions presented in this study aims to examine the differences between Blacks' and Whites' enjoyment of Black entertainment. Prior studies (Banjo, 2008) have shown that Black audiences derive enjoyment from a sense of realism or relation with the cultural portrayals. Naturally, it is easier for Black audiences to identify with Black entertainment. Even if they do not subscribe to the characterizations of Blacks, they are at least able to interpret the cultural subtext because of their cultural association. This study shows that Whites who are open to learning about other cultures are also able to enjoy it on that level, not exactly identifying with it, but at least understanding the subtext.

In Banjo's (2008) third-person study, the author found that Blacks reported grave concern that exposure to Black entertainment would only reinforce White viewers' perception of Blacks. This study mitigates these fears, suggesting that those who are culturally competent are less likely to be negatively influenced. Further, the few who may express a disinterest in Black culture are less likely to patron Black entertainment. Therefore, contrary to popular belief, Whites who are present in a co-viewing situation may be enjoying Black entertainment in a healthy way.

This study also provides some insight on White consumers of Black entertainment. Presumably, Whites who attend Black cultural events (i.e. films) consider themselves competent enough to digest the messages. Moreover, as implied by this study, viewers who are categorically White do not share the same viewing experience based solely on their race. The overall question of this study was: *What are you laughing at?* The findings revealed that if culturally competent, White audiences are possibly laughing at the absurdity of stereotyping. If culturally incompetent, White audiences may be laughing to mitigate feelings of discomfort.

Limitations and Future Research

Considering the sensitive nature of this project, this study is not without its limitations. Whereas the manipulation for each condition was effective in that participants in the pre-test recognized the correct targets of humor, stronger manipulations could have been employed. This study used 3-4 minute clips from comedy programming which introduces a variety of problems. First, the length of the clips may not have been long enough to elicit a sense of transportation or engagement. Although the popularity of Black actors was considered in stimuli selection, White audiences may not have been familiar enough with the comedies which could have affected their sense of comfort. On the same token, another possibility is that White audiences' attitudes towards the actors may have influenced the results whether positively or negatively.

More specifically, because the majority of the ethnic humor clips were extracted from the Chappelle's Show, it is quite possible that a "Chappelle Effect" is at work. Not only are White audiences familiar with the actor, but fans of the show are also privy to his humor and therefore are more likely to report enjoyment of these clips. This study

did not account for prior opinions of the programming before selecting participants. Future research may want to consider prior opinion towards comedy as a criterion to guide in sample selection.

One of the reasons Chappelle's Show was more represented than others is because of the scarcity of Black starring programs and the lack of availability of the DVDs at the time the study was conducted. A replication of this study should include programming that is similar in characteristic, but distinct in actor representation. Although, it is possible that a Chappelle effect might introduce bias, the findings still reveal distinguishable differences between low and high competent viewers that are worthy of scholarly attention.

Another issue with using comedy programming is that the ethnic humor is less explicit than stand-up comedy. Moreover, ethnic humor in programming on broadcasting channels is less provocative than that found in cable programming. Programming was applied to distinguish representations from joke-telling which is processed differently. Future research should not only consider using stand-up comedy instead, but may also consider making comparisons between reactions to stand-up comedy which is more explicitly disparaging and comedy programming, which is more implicit. A comparison between enjoyment of cable programming and broadcast programming might also be worth exploring as it indicates differences in enjoyment of raw versus subtle humor.

Another factor that proved to be a limitation in this study was the unequal cell sizes. Although the questionnaires were randomly assigned using a javascript, an imbalance in conditions emerged such that more participants were exposed to the White disparagement condition. After extracting the participants who did not accurately identify

the target, the numbers were much smaller with a majority exposed to the Black disparagement condition. Therefore, one of the limitations of this study is that the small sample size may not have had enough power to detect significant and true differences between the conditions.

Measuring racial attitudes. The White Superiority scale (from the WRIAS) and the Motivation to Control Prejudiced Reactions scale were employed to measure negative racial attitudes. However, neither of these measures proved to be useful. One of the reasons for this could be that generally race scholars employ obtrusive measures when examining implicit racial attitudes. Whereas Dunton and Fazio's (1997) Motivation to Control Prejudiced Reactions is an established measure for studying implicit racial attitudes, Helms and Carter's (1991) White Racial Identity Scale is a bit more intrusive. Items in this scale were probably more likely to yield social desirable results because participants would not want to associate themselves with White racial superiority. Even though the measure was pertinent to the nature of the research question, it proved to be a drawback as it did not adequately measure implicit attitudes about one's perceived sense of racial superiority. Although the scales were reliable, they lacked construct validity.

Although Whites may not hold hostile attitudes towards minority ethnic groups and may engage in activities to further their understanding of other groups, theories of whiteness still imply a direct relationship between one's racial identity and social behavior. However, inherent to the study of White racial identity is the issue of invisibility because whiteness no longer exists upon identification. In other words, although White individuals may hold an implicit sense of entitlement, admission or confession of such attitudes would prove difficult. However, future research should

consider employing various methodological strategies to tap into these subconscious attitudes and examine them as predictors of enjoyment of racially charged content.

To avoid this issue, future research should include implicit attitude measures such as the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Employing response time measures could more accurately assess unfavorable attitudes towards Black minorities, or more favorable attitudes towards in-group members. Although not yet employed in existing research, other measures including physiological and brain mapping strategies may prove to be better measures of implicit racial attitudes where the viewer may hold less favorable attitudes towards out-group members.

Findings from this study revealed that culturally incompetent Whites experienced the most discomfort and offense when Whites were disparaged. Even though measures for subscriptions to whiteness did not prove significant, experienced discomfort is indicative of personal offense. Moreover, this suggests that one's self-identity does influence evaluation of entertainment to which identity is central. Aside from employing less obtrusive racial measures, qualitative methods should also be employed. As evident in Frankenburg's studies of whiteness (1995), focus groups may help to facilitate true feelings about race and the conflicts Whites may experience in these contexts. Also as supported by Park et al., (2006), White audiences may be more likely to confess enjoyment of Black stereotype because they identify the depictions as true.

Findings might also be explained by the growing intersectional identity formation among White youth. That is, hostile attitudes towards ethnic minorities are not as prevalent in a post-civil rights era. As a result of civil rights work and equal-opportunity initiatives, White racial identity arguably has transposed from racial intolerance to a level

of tolerance that urges cultural competence. Therefore, future studies in this area should take into account the possibility of contemporary forms of White racial identity which may include, but are not limited to Whites' connection to or understanding of other cultures. Future studies might also take into account the differences in racial identity between generations. It's possible that older individuals may still hold negative attitudes, whereas White college students may express more liberal views.

Enjoying offensive material. The findings of this study and other studies (Banjo, 2008) explore the complexity of enjoying offensive entertainment. In this study, even though Whites perceived the White stereotype as more offensive, they enjoyed the White stereotype more than Black stereotype. Relief theories posit that perceivers of ethnic humor laugh to release psychological tension. Perhaps, viewers' discomfort with White stereotype elicited enjoyment. Future research should further explore the mechanisms through which audiences are able to experience offense and enjoyment simultaneously.

Perhaps one venue through which this may be studied is in the context of satire. As a communication form, satire is distinct from racial humor because inherent to its rhetorical form is the subtlety of its socio-political message. Racial humor, on the other hand, uses absurd strategies to exaggerate and exploit differences between groups. Similar to satire, there exist suppressed hostile attitudes towards systemic prejudice beneath the asinine representations. Nonetheless, racial humor is less complex than satire. However, audiences may not be particularly keen to these differences, and they may be likely to miss the goal of a satirical production. Future research should compare differences between audiences' responses to satire and mainstream ethnic humor.

Identity and enjoyment. Finally, the implications of this project go beyond issues of race and racial disparagement. There is an increasing amount of entertainment in which characters are categorically distinct from each other. Such distinctions might include differences in sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and able-bodied incapability. This line of research suggests that an individual's social identity ultimately predicts his or her enjoyment of such entertainment. One might perceive the content as biased against their social group; they may fear that outsiders will misinterpret the representations. This study, in particular, suggests that such entertainment requires a sophisticated brand of audience—media consumers who are able to decipher the complexities of disparaging representations within the context of humor. Future research should examine the motivations of enjoyment of humor that disparages disabled persons or religious groups. For example, an individual's sense of superiority or privilege may explain the pleasure derived from watching disparaging representations of disabled people.

The findings may also be generalized to other contexts. Whereas a host of research has identified the negative effects of poor representations of social groups, the implications of this study suggest that audiences may be maturing into more sophisticated and competent media consumers. Perhaps, those high in cultural competence are not as negatively influenced by poor representations as those who are less likely to learn about other cultures—low competent viewers. Future research should examine these individual differences as predictors of media influence. In sum, this study proposes a need for theoretical development for explaining the affective, cognitive and behavioral components of enjoyment of entertainment unique to social groups.

Summary

The goal of this project was to explore possible explanatory variables that would predict Whites' enjoyment of Black entertainment. Whites' racial identity was of specific interest to this study. Whereas established theories predict that Whites' sense of superiority would lead to greater enjoyment of Black disparagement and lesser enjoyment of White disparagement, the findings of this study reveal a sympathy for Blacks that predict greater enjoyment of White disparagement instead. Many inferences are drawn from this study, but perhaps the most noteworthy implication is the notion that traditional articulations of racial identity are shifting from racial divisiveness to cultural cohesion. These implications should be considered in the future of audience studies and media effects research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix-A

Measure for racial attitudes

White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Helms, 1990)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this study.
Please read all questions carefully and respond as best you can.
Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

This questionnaire measures people's social and political attitudes. There are no right or wrong answers. Use the scale below to respond to each statement. Please rate your agreement with the following statements from "**strongly disagree**" to "**strongly agree**."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I hardly think about what race I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I feel as comfortable around Blacks as I do around Whites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. There is nothing I want to learn from Blacks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I seek out new experiences even if I know a large number of Blacks will be involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. A Black person who tries to get close to you is usually after something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Sometimes jokes based on Black people's experiences are funny.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I think it is exciting to discover the little ways in which Black people and White people are different.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I used to believe in racial integration, but now I have my doubts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I'd rather socialize with whites only.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. In many ways blacks and whites are similar, but they are also different in some important ways. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. Blacks and whites have much to learn from each other. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. For most of my life I did not think about racial issues. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. I have come to believe that black people and white people are very different. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. White people have bent over backwards trying to make up for their ancestors' mistreatment of blacks, now it is time to stop. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. There are some valuable things that White people can learn from blacks that they can't learn from other Whites. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

This questionnaire measures people's social and political attitudes. There are no right or wrong answers. Use the scale below to respond to each statement. Please rate your agreement with the following statements from ***“strongly disagree”*** to ***“strongly agree.”***

- | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Society may have been unjust to Blacks, but it has also been unjust to whites. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. I am comfortable wherever I am. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. In my family, we never talked about racial issues | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. I feel hostile when I'm around Blacks. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Blacks and Whites can have successful intimate relationships. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. I was raised to believe that people are people regardless of race. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. I believe that Blacks are inferior to Whites. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 8. I believe I know a lot about Black people's customs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Sometimes I'm not sure what I think or feel about Black people. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. Blacks and Whites differ from each other in some ways, but neither race is superior. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. I am not embarrassed to admit that I am White. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. When I am the only White person in a group of blacks, I feel anxious. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. I don't understand why Black people blame all White people for their social misfortunes. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. I believe that White people look and express themselves better than Blacks. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. I value the relationships that I have with my Black friends. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Appendix-B

Measure of Aversive Racism

Motivation to Control Prejudiced Reactions Scale (Dunton & Fazio, 1997)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In today's society it is important that one not be perceived as prejudiced in any manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I always express my thoughts and feelings regardless of how controversial they might be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Going through life worrying about whether you might offend someone is just more trouble than it's worth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. It's important to me that other people not think I'm prejudiced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I feel it's important to behave according to society's standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I'm careful not to offend my friends, but I don't worry about offending people I don't know or don't like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. It's never acceptable to express one's prejudice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I feel guilty when I have a negative thought or feeling about a Black person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. When speaking to a Black person, it's important to me that he/she not think I'm prejudiced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. It bothers me a great deal when I think I've offended someone, so I'm always careful to consider other people's feelings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I would never tell jokes that might offend others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. If I have a prejudiced thought or feeling, I
keep it to myself.



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Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

PhD in Mass Communications, Pennsylvania State University, May, 2009
B.A. in Psychology, Minor: English, Pennsylvania State University, May, 2004

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Media Effects
Media and Ethnic Identity

RESEARCH***Publications***

Banjo, O., Hu, Y., & Sundar, S. (2008). Cell phone usage and social interaction with proximate others: Ringing in a theoretical model. *The Open Communication Journal*, 2, 127-135.

Banjo, O. (2005). Personalizing your college education. In C. Glenn (Ed.), *Making Sense: A Real-world Rhetorical Reader* 2nd ed. (pg. 521). Boston: Bedford, Freeman & Worth.

Oliver, M. B., Banjo, O., & Kim, J. (2003). Judging a movie by its cover: A content analysis of sexual portrayals on video rental jackets. *Sexuality & Culture*, 7(3), 38-56.

Banjo, O. (2002). The effects of media consumption on the perception of romantic relationships. *Penn State McNair Journal*, 9, 9-33.

Competitively- Selected Conference Papers

Banjo, O. (2008, May). *For us only?: Hostile media perception in the presence of a White audience*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Montreal, CA.

Banjo, O. & Fraley, T. (2008, May). *The Man, the Wannabe, and Whitebread: Portrayals of whiteness in Black films*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Montreal, CA.

Banjo, O. (2006, Nov). *Are you in the family? Determining relationship investment by cell phone provider*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX.

AWARDS & HONORS***Grants***

Africana Research Center, *For us only?: Hostile media perception in the presence of a White audience*, (November 2006)

Scholarships

Barrow's Minority Scholarship, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), (Summer 2006)

GSIC Student Paper Award, Pennsylvania State University, (Spring 2006)