Fall 2003

Propensity to engage in interracial dialogue on race: A descriptive study of participants and contributing factors

Rebecca Willow

PROPENSITY TO ENGAGE IN INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE ON RACE:

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF PARTICIPANTS AND CONTRIBUTING

FACTORS

By

Rebecca A. Willow, M.A., L.P.C., N.C.C.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

Executive Program in Counselor Education and Supervision

School of Education

Duquesne University

December 2003

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Department of Counseling, Psychology and Special Education

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

Executive Counselor Education and Supervision Program

Presented by:

Rebecca A. Willow
M.A., Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, 1995
M.A., Bowling Green State University, 1989
B.A., Allegheny College, 1986

August 4, 2003

PROPENSITY TO ENGAGE IN INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE ON RACE: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF PARTICIPANTS AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Approved by:

_____, Chair
Name
Associate Professor

_____,Member
Name
Assistant Professor

_____,Member
Name
Associate Professor

Abstract

This hermeneutic inquiry examines factors that contribute to the self-selection of
participants in interracial dialogue on race and the implications of the findings. This
study was conducted within the socio-cultural context of race relations in the United
States where the problem of racism has defined the national character, has arguably been
the most divisive force in the country's consciousness, and remains its central social
problem. Throughout U.S. history, a great deal of national energy has been generated and
invested in racially influenced movements followed by efforts to make amends for such
movements (e.g., slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Civil Rights movement).
This study has described American race relations as being characterized by a *race
obsession-avoidance paradox*. This construct captures the dichotomy between the United
States' cultural preoccupation with race and the simultaneous reluctance to discuss,
frankly and openly, race and racism interracially. The paradox is manifested and
perpetuated in the fields of education and professional counseling. Addressing racial
issues is critical to educational and therapeutic processes, however, race is typically not
addressed by teachers, counselor educators, and therapists due to their discomfort with
racial issues. Other factors that compose the socio-cultural context for this inquiry are
the changing demographics in the United States, the global economy, and the
'multiculturalization' of the country. All of these factors make interracial dialogue a
critical workplace competence and economic necessity. Scholars on race agree that
discussion of race is the key to racial healing and is critical to reducing racial prejudice.

The intention of this study, then, was to investigate factors that encourage interracial dialogue on race by interviewing twenty purposefully selected individuals who participated in interracial dialogue on race, despite the cultural tendency toward avoidance. Themes that emerged from the data included early curiosity and experience with racism, interracial contact, focus on education, self-reflection, approximating experiences, high levels of empathy, moral and racial identity development and social interest. Implications extrapolated from the findings suggest the potential for intentional educational experiences to have significant impact on attitudes regarding race relations. Recommendations for further study include investigation of the relationship between the themes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of contents (cont.)

Table of contents (cont.)

Table of contents (cont.)

Table of contents (cont.)

Table of contents (cont.)

Table of contents (cont.)

List of Tables

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dedication

A few years ago, one of my cohort members said that when he eventually would walk across the stage to graduate he would be only the representative of his team of supporters. That too, has been my experience with my entire doctoral program, and especially with this dissertation. And now it is finally my chance to dedicate this final work to my team—the people without whom this dissertation would not have been possible.

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Alayna, who has endured the first three and a half years of her life with a mom who has spent as much time in front of the computer as with her; to Katy for babysitting and for putting up with my absences; to my husband, Norm, who has endured immeasurable sacrifices, financial, emotional, and physical, to enable me to complete this degree and who has served magnanimously as my technical adviser through many a computer scrape; and to my mother and (step)father, Joanne and David Munzert, whose generous babysitting time, patience, and never-ending support have quite literally allowed me to finish this work. *We* did it!

This dissertation is also presented in memory of my mom-in-law, Penny Willow, who passed to the spirit world only a week and a half before my defense draft was due, and whose spirit and will are a source of inspiration to me. She has been very much 'with me' in this last week. I know she is cheering.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

"Each of the races has these misconceptions of one another, and those misconceptions exist because they don't really sit down and just talk…"

-attributed to an African American man from a report on rudeness in America by Public Agenda, April, 2002, p.12

"Racism is an everyday influence on our lives which has great power partly because we don't talk about it. Talking about racism lessens its power, breaks the awful, uncomfortable silence we live within. Talking about it makes it less scary. Talking about racism is an opportunity to learn…and to reclaim our lives and our true histories. We can ask questions, learn and grow in exciting ways that have been denied us….Talking about racism keeps us from passing it on to our children. Talking about racism allows us to do something about it."

-Kivel, 1996, p. 95

"Greetings! I am pleased to see that we are different. May we together become greater than the sum of both of us."

-Vulcan greeting from "Star Trek"

Reluctance to discuss racism is clearly a problem that pervades American society. This investigation is an examination of those who intentionally engage in interracial dialogue on race. This study is considered within the social context of the United States, where race is a preoccupation of the culture and yet is commonly avoided as a topic of frank, open discussion, especially among interracial groups. The central inquiry of this

dissertation focuses on the distinctiveness of participants who elected to engage in interracial dialogue on race. This is an epistemological inquiry that views the propensity for interracial dialogue on race as a unique tendency and, therefore, probes factors that contribute to this behavior. This study seeks to formulate an understanding of what prompts individuals to seek out interracial dialogue on race and racism through gathering input from participants in such dialogue.

Background of the problem

Racism has arguably been the most divisive force in the American consciousness. The United States has a long history of viewing race as its most salient social category, a notion that has caused race-related events and movements to significantly define the country's history and identity (Dalton, 1995; Correspondents of The New York Times, 2001; Cargan & Ballantine, 1994; Hodgkinson, 1997; Terkel, 1992; Wilkinson, 1997). Rubin (1994) called race "the great divide in our society, dividing people of color from each other, separating whites from them all" (p. 164). Hacker (1995) suggested that, "race has been an American obsession since the first Europeans sighted 'savages' on these shores" (p. 3). (Hacker's use of the term "savages" in this context is clearly meant ironically.) He described race in the United States as a "social and human division, …[that] surpasses all others—even gender—in intensity and subordination" (p. 4). Ropers and Pence (1995) confirmed that, "because it is one of the most visible, powerful, and violent ways of dividing peoples, social scientists have long considered race one of the greatest concerns confronting the United States" (p. 30). There seems to be

considerable agreement among social scientists, like Dalton (1995), that race "remains

America's central social problem" (p. 4).

Conflict involving race relations has contributed to political, economic, physical,

and social division among Americans (Dalton, 1995; Feagin, 2000; Feagin & Vera, 1995;

Goodman, 2000; Hacker, 1995; Ropers & Pence, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Tuch, Sigelman,

and MacDonald, 1999). The violence and degradation that established and has enforced

domination of one race over another has promulgated continued violence of hate, bigotry

and protest (Bower & Hunt, 1996; Correspondents of The New York Times, 2001;

Feagin & Vera, 1995: Hacker, 1995; Neubeck & Cazenave, 2001; Tatum, 1997).

Thompson and Neville (1999) spoke of "an array of injustices that people of various

races experience on the basis of race" [and cite] data [that] support the persistence of

racism in terms of public opinion, incidents of racially motivated violence and structural

discrimination" (p. 155).

Jackson (1999) refers to racism as the 'central bacteria in our society, which

prevents the possibility of social cohesion' (p. 6). The infectious nature of racism

assures that no one is immune from its effects. Racism creates barriers for some

individuals that confine and encumber while creating unchallenged privileges for

others that insulate and encapsulate (Glauser, 1999, p. 62).

Racism has wounded the spirits and diminished the humanity of scores of individuals and

has sought to prevent oppressed and oppressor alike from realizing the benefit of

collective effort and power (Bowser & Hunt, 1996; Dalton, 1995; Feagin, 2000;

Goodman, 2000; Hacker, 1995; Locke & Kiselica, 1999; Tatum, 1997; Thompson &

Neville, 1999). Nicholson (1999) stated that, "the destructive power of racial mythology has been the most deadly human phenomenon in the modern age; it is another horseman of the apocalyptic dimension" (p. 3). He went on to say that, "racial mythology is no less virulent now than it was a hundred years ago…" (p. 3). Locke and Kiselica (1999) said that, "the topic of racism is one of the most emotionally charged subjects of our time" (p. 80). Tuch, Sigelman, and MacDonald (1999) concluded that, "few issues are as critical to America's future, or as potentially divisive as race relations" (p. 109).

American cultural preoccupation with race has been the result of a long history of racially-motivated events. Throughout the course of United States history, a great deal of energy has been generated and invested in both propelling racially-influenced (or racially-motivated) movements and then struggling to make amends for, recover from, or "undo" such movements. Examples such as the near-genocide of the Native American peoples, reservation acts and treaty legislation, slavery, Civil War, Reconstruction, the Civil rights movement, WWII internment camps, school segregation and desegregation, and so forth, stand as testimony to the ubiquitous nature of race in American culture. Current headlines in America testify to the continuation of this focus. Issues like affirmative action, reparations, racial profiling, redistricting, immigration, and even homeland security illustrate the country's defining preoccupation.

Set in this historical context, the title of Studs Terkel's best-selling 1992 book, RACE: How Blacks and Whites Think & Feel about the American Obsession, the term obsession seems to be an appropriate, and widely accepted, descriptor.   Similarly, Scott (1997), in a concept he attributed to Hacker (1992), identified race as "our [the U.S.'s]

perpetual preoccupation" (p. viii). Taylor (1992) noted that "[American] society is officially—and officiously—race-conscious" (p. 12).   Rutstein (1997) suggested that America is gripped by a coast-to-coast, border-to-border obsessive neurosis about race" (p. 80). D'Souza (1999) referred to Americans as possessing a "neurotic obsession with race that maims our souls" (p. 431). Taylor (1992) suggested that,

> in our multiracial society, race lurks just below the surface of much that is not explicitly racial. Newspaper stories about other things—housing patterns, local elections, crime, antipoverty programs, law-school admissions, mortgage lending, employment rates—are also, sometimes only by implication, about race. When race is not in the foreground of American life, it does not usually take much searching to find it in the background. Race is a looming presence because it is a category that matters in nearly every way that we know how to measure" (p. 10).

Taylor captured the essence of how American society, through its obsession, has become definable by measures of racial discontent. In other words, what has distinguished the United States as a country is its continual struggle with its legal and social dealings with race.

Taylor (1992) also alluded to the other defining characteristic of the American race dilemma. His description of race as lurking "just below the surface" and his assertion that often stories about other issues are "only by implication, about race," illustrate the avoidance of racial issues that is simultaneously part of the American paradigm. I suggest that, juxtaposed with Americans' preoccupation with race, is the

directly contrary tendency to avoid direct engagement on the topic of race and racism. I term this phenomenon the *race obsession-avoidance paradox*.

In the professional counseling and social issues literature, as well as in popular literature, Americans' emotion and conflict about race, their lack of preparedness, and their reluctance to discuss race-related issues is addressed. Experts in counseling supervision, Bernard and Goodyear (1998), referred to American society as "phobic about race" (p. 45). Tatum (1997) remarked that "as our nation becomes more diverse, we need to be able to communicate across racial and ethnic lines, but we seem increasingly less able to do so" (p. xvi). In their discussion of racism as a problem largely and strategically denied by American culture, Thompson and Carter (1997) indicated that, "one byproduct of these dismissive strategies is a climate where race has become a sensitive topic. Hence, and ironically, race is a subject worthy of meaningful discussion, yet people who talk about racial matters are often silenced" (p. 9). Kivel (1996) went so far as to say that, "in this country it has always been dangerous even to talk about racism" (p. 11)

Dalton (1995) likened our avoidance of racial discussion to a "deep and abiding wound" [he credits Wendall Berry for the use of this term], which "left untreated, …will continue to ooze and fester" (p. 3). Dalton (1995) also said "we are loath to confront one another around race.… We have run away from [it] far too long. We are so afraid of inflaming the wound that we fail to deal with what remains America's central social problem" (p. 3-4). The politically correct (PC) movement of the 1990s, as it has come to be called, and the backlash reaction to it, also exemplify Americans' awkwardness and

uncertainty with regard to race-related conversation, as the nation continues to struggle with terminology and how to go about talking with one another without offending.

The mention of race relations at a social event or even in a classroom typically engenders self-consciousness, awkward silence, and eagerness to change the subject (Gallagher, 1997). Mechanisms of avoidance, like the often-referenced racial joke, may be viewed as an attempt to neutralize social discomforts and may serve to discourage frank and meaningful dialogue on the subject. Tatum (1997) told of being approached often by parents and teachers who ask "questions about how to talk to children and other adults about racial issues" (p. xvi). Sternberg (1997) reported "analyses [that] suggested that even for individuals with high levels of experience, competence, and satisfaction in interracial living, talking about race is challenging and fraught with ambivalence" (p. 226).

Referring to the tendency toward racial dialogue avoidance, Dalton (1995) hypothesized that "we are afraid of tapping into pent-up anger, frustration, resentment, and pain" (p. 3). Thompson and Carter (1997) observed that, "people of all races, but particularly Whites, are often eager to dismiss race as irrelevant to any issue, to profess their color blindness, and to contend that race and racism are the preoccupations of Blacks and other visible racial-ethnic group members.…A key feature of the construct of race in contemporary North American society is denial." (p. 9). Denial that a race problem exists, combined with the tendency to avoid inter-group situations, is a common de facto response to racism in the United States.

There seems to be a tendency to avoid this sensitive topic, even in forums where it could be expected that the issue of race would be a central issue. Critiques of multicultural or diversity education suggest that the topics of racism, power structures, and oppression, concepts that are key to addressing racism in the United States, are frequently not directly addressed by such courses (Briggs, 2001; Goodman, 2000; Morelli & Spencer, 2000; Thompson & Carter, 1997). Instead, diversity education mainly focuses on the less contentious approaches of tolerance and acceptance of all differences (Briggs, 2001; Goodman, 2000; Morelli & Spencer, 2000).

While teaching psychology of racism courses, Tatum (1997) described her experience with the phenomenon of avoidance. She indicated that, "my students have learned that there is a taboo against talking about race, especially in racially mixed settings, and creating enough safety in the class to overcome that taboo is the first challenge for me as an instructor. But the evidence of the internalized taboo is apparent long before children reach college" (p. 36). Tatum used the word *taboo* in order to underscore the strength of the cultural norm not to discuss race. While discussion of race is certainly not forbidden by law or by moral dictates, Tatum's use of the word emphasized and called attention to the powerful social pressure to avoid the discomfort often experienced in racial discussions. In considering the socialization process of such a taboo she wrote, "when asked to reflect on their earliest race-related memories and the feelings associated with them, both White students and students of color often report feelings of confusion, anxiety, and/or fear (Tatum, 1992, p. 5). The complex and often controversial subjects of race, privilege and oppression, and institutional power tend to be

avoided in the culture at large, and even in settings where one would expect to converse about race, (such as a class on the psychology of race!), because of a generalized feeling of discomfort with the subjects.

Even counselors, psychologists, and social workers, presumably experts in interpersonal communication, are seen as somewhat uncomfortable with issues of race and race relations (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Locke & Kiselica, 1999; Thompson & Carter, 1997). Thompson and Neville (1999) suggested that therapists are often reluctant to initiate discussion of race or ethnicity due to feelings of awkwardness and fears about being misunderstood. At the same time, Thompson and Neville suggested that clients may interpret silence on these issues as negation of part of their person, or as avoidance or minimization of the meaning of race and racism in their lives. "Consequently," said Thompson and Neville, "both the therapist and the client can be manacled in addressing manifestations of racism in therapy because of a societal climate that generally suppresses open, meaningful talk about race" (p. 202).

This avoidance of engagement on an interpersonal level by therapists is also manifested in the professional literature. Thompson and Neville (1999) indicated that counseling literature that focuses directly on the relationship of racism, mental health, and mental health practice is scarce. The premise of their work suggested that American socialization practices that encourage silence on race not only contribute to the problem of racism but, thereby, also contribute to mental health problems sustained by this societal denial (Thompson & Neville, 1999).

In more formal settings, such as public education, discussion of race issues is described as uncomfortable and often takes the form of outright fear (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Tatum, 1997). Tatum (1997) related that White teachers in her professional development workshops often report feeling uncomfortable, pained, and embarrassed when discussing race relations in their classrooms (p. 41). Morelli and Spencer (2000) researched the use and support of multicultural (MCE) and antiracist (ARE) education in schools and indicated that "teachers and administrators were unwilling to use ARE because they had insufficient knowledge of its objectives and methods and feared negative community reaction" (p. 173).

The educators surveyed by Morelli and Spencer (2000) seemed to agree that there is a need for multicultural education and were distressed about the effects of racism and bigotry in the schools; however, fear of controversy from the public, as well as an expressed need for more training for instructors, prevented the vast majority from using any curricular intervention with regard to race relations. "The lack of clear, consistent policies in these state educational systems incapacitates antiracism and antibigotry efforts; perpetuates a know-nothing, see-nothing, hear-nothing, non-confrontational attitude toward racism and bigotry and contributes to fear in communities" (Morelli & Spencer, 2000, p. 173). This is a telling example because it illustrates how people avoid addressing the issue not because they do not acknowledge the problems of racism, but because they are not prepared emotionally or cognitively for dialogue on race.

Cultural reluctance to engage on the topic of racism is clearly a problem that pervades American society. It is a problem not just for 'the person on the street' as

captured by Terkel (1992), but it also stymies professionals whose business it is to

facilitate discussion on issues that affect the very heart of personal experience.

Interpersonal discomfort is then carried like a virus into entire institutions, such as public

education or mental health agencies, that become paralyzed by the fear, and thus, avoid

addressing race-related issues that are often at the forefront of the lives of their

constituents.

In the preface to <u>How race is lived in America</u>, editor, Lelyveld, captured the

essence of the phenomenon of obsession with race juxtaposed with avoidance when he

described some conversational comments about race conducted by reporters from around

the nation. He described them as, "so carefully hidden away in the daily lives of those

who speak them and yet so near the surface, so ready to be excavated" (Correspondents

of the New York Times, 2001, p. xvi). The state of affairs that results from this

illogicality and irony—this entangled combination of preoccupation and evasion—is the

race obsession-avoidance paradox.

Statement of the problem

There is consistent support for the idea that racial dialogue is worthwhile, even vital, in order to make progress in race relations. Socha and Diggs (1999) state the following:

> Ultimately, if discussions by U.S. residents about 'race' are to broaden racial awareness, broaden racial understanding, and improve the quality of communication between African-Americans and European Americans, or, more generally, improve the status quo, then *all facets of society must participate in constructive discussions about race*, be open to learning, and keep the focus on the goal of developing values and skills that move us toward living successfully and peacefully in a culturally diverse society [italics added] (p. 3).

The idea that dialogue on race is a major key to racial healing is shared by many social science scholars (Dalton, 1995; Goodman, 2000; Kivel, 1996; Sternberg, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Thompson & Carter, 1997; Thompson & Neville, 1999). Dalton (1995) went so far as to say that, "engagement is critical to healing" (p. 27).

Kivel (1996) described the anger that racism has evoked in the United States throughout its history. "The only way to break this cycle of rage," he suggested, "is for us to seriously address the sources of the anger, the causes of the problems. And in order to do that, we need to talk about racism directly with each other" (Kivel, p. 94). In her study on racial discourse, Sternberg (1997) suggested a need for, "identifying conditions under which racial dialogue will be possible and meaningful for all participants" (p. 226). It seems reasonable, given Sternberg's suggestion, to investigate what conditions or

factors make interracial dialogue happen. The most obvious ingredient, human participation in such dialogue, seems like a logical place to begin investigation. Review of literature that mentions participants in interracial dialogue reveals only vague reference to participants' characteristics.

In their book, <u>Improving Intergroup Relations</u>, Stephan and Stephan (2001) presented a volume representing years of working in the field of intergroup relations. Their extensive examination of the current programs and research on intergroup relations (primarily addressing race and cultural groups) does not include any references to studies on what factors prompt or encourage individuals to engage in interracial discussion of race. Despite the fact that they acknowledge an explosion of programs designed to improve intergroup relations since 1996, even some describing interracial dialogue, none that they discuss provide data on participants' reasons for engaging in interracial dialogue. In an exhaustive review of literature on race relations and dialogues, there is virtually no attention given to what characteristics, skills, or lived experiences propel individuals to engage in such programs.

The importance of dialogue among the races is paramount and, for many social scientists, key to racial healing (Dalton, 1995; Hacker, 1995; McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Ridley, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Terkel, 1992). The absence of scholarly discourse about what factors promote interracial dialogue on race and why, is a significant liability when exploring the possibility of advocating for and initiating such conversations. Insights gleaned from this study, therefore, will seek to provide counselors, psychologists, social scientists and educators at all levels and of all types, with assistance

in facilitating conversations about race and racism, providing training for educators and therapists, and providing higher quality care in therapeutic work with clients in educational and mental health systems. Interracial dialogue on race increases cross-cultural understanding, and other competencies associated with diversity, encourages and models non-violent conflict resolution, and supports a collaborative approach to social problem-solving. Such contributions to the skill levels of a greater number of people serves higher order goals of violence reduction and the eventual dismantling of racist systems in the United States.

Purpose of the study

This study describes factors that may have contributed to individuals' decision to participate in an interracial dialogue on race and factors that allowed those individuals to curb, overcome or otherwise cope with the forces that may have discouraged such engagement. Insights developed through this study are intended to describe factors that may (a) increase the tendency to engage in interracial dialogue and (b) promote competence in interracial dialogue.

No previously published studies on the traits of voluntary participants in interracial discussion groups have been located; therefore, this research is aimed at the discovery of new knowledge related to the propensity for individuals to engage in interracial dialogue. The investigation of factors that promote interracial dialogue have the potential to inform us about the socialization process regarding issues of race. Such knowledge could be useful to educators, therapists, human resources personnel, social

scientists, and so forth, to facilitate and reinforce positive social behaviors that contribute to violence reduction and racial harmony.

There is evidence to suggest that factors like interpersonal skills and empathy skills, racial identity development, and moral development may have some effect upon one's decision to participate in interracial dialogue on race. In addition, particular life experiences may have some relationship to the ability to engage in interracial dialogue. The literature review and methodology specifically address this thread of related discourse.

<div align="center">Relevance of the study</div>

There are clear educational and economic indicators in the existing popular and professional literature that suggest substantial value in learning more about what promotes interracial dialogue. This need is addressed by hooks, as quoted by O'Brien (1999).   hooks wrote, "luckily, there are individual non-black people who have divested of their racism…we have yet to have a significant body of writing from these individuals that gives expression to how they have shifted attitudes and daily vigilantly resist becoming reinvested in white supremacy" (p. 411). Realizing, of course that this described need referred specifically to the White participants, hook's commentary nevertheless supported the idea that there is value in and an unmet need for further research in the area of voluntary racial dialogue.

Sternberg's (1997) findings on racial dialogue suggested that "identifying conditions under which racial dialogue will be possible and meaningful for all participants" (p. 226) is a recommended path for future research. This particular study

addresses the dearth of research in this area by directly examining what develops a propensity for such engagement and dialogue.

Education

Given the unanswered questions and controversies regarding diversity education, this study may inform curricular and programmatic decisions on prejudice reduction, racism and other diversity related issues. Researchers in the fields of counseling, education, psychology, and social work have asked questions about the purpose, effectiveness, and techniques used in multicultural, intergroup, as well as race-related instruction (Arredondo, 1999; Briggs, 2001; Constantine & Gainor, 2001; Diaz-Lazaro, C. M. & Cohen, B.B., (2001); Locke & Kiselica, 1999; Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, 1998; McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Morelli & Spencer, 2000; Salzman & D'Andrea, 2001; Slavin & Cooper, 1999; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillett, Valli, & Villegas, 1998).

In multicultural education literature, specifically, there are many questions about the effectiveness of multicultural and diversity curricula, and about how such ideas and skills can and should be taught (Locke & Kiselica, 1999; McFalls, & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Salzman & D'Andrea, 2001; Pine & Hilliard, 1990; Steele, 1997; Zeichner, et al., 1998). Effectiveness of curricula that focuses on diversity issues or racism may be enhanced by discussion of factors that could facilitate classroom dialogue and participation. In addition, more knowledge about such factors may facilitate discussions with the public regarding the need for and effectiveness of such programs.

As mentioned above, recent psychology and social work literature critiques multicultural curricula for painting a broad stroke acceptance of differences while failing

to address racism at all (Briggs, 2001; Goodman, 2000; Morelli & Spencer, 2000). The omission of racism, oppression, and privilege from multicultural and diversity education serves to further substantiate the idea that educators are not immune from the general discomfort that Americans experience with regards to discussion of race and racism and that they too tend to avoid such interaction.

For many educators, addressing the complex and sensitive issues surrounding race relations is daunting. Pine and Hilliard (1990) who are concerned with teaching skills related to race suggested that,

> to confront racism in a free and open discussion, students and teachers will have
> to develop assertiveness, listening skills, group problem-solving skills, and
> effective strategies for conflict resolution. Dealing with stereotypes, biases, and
> differing personal values and constructing a climate that fosters intergroup
> interaction and understanding are complex efforts that demand sensitivity and
> empathy (p. 596).

Insight into what factors establish willingness on the part of individuals to purposefully engage in race-related issues dialogue may assist with this charge.

Public school systems, in general, also may find this proposed study germane as they grapple with how to deal with increasing diversity and how or whether to address diversity or multiculturalism throughout the curricula (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Bigler, 1999; Slavin & Cooper, 1999). Indeed there is evidence that schools that avoid dealing with race-related issues may be compromising student potential. Bacon, Swartz, and Rothfarb (1991) indicated that school climate, including the degree to which students feel

comfortable interacting with classmates of different races and ethnic backgrounds, is a key element regarding their academic and social growth.   Certainly this contention gives solid rationale and reinforced purpose to pursue study of interracial dialogue.

However, Morelli and Spencer (2000) in a study of five school districts reported that, in general, the districts did not communicate policies to deter racism and bigotry or support multicultural education and anti-racism education as part of the curriculum. The combined feedback from the staff in the districts studied included the recommendation from educators that more "research and evaluation of MCE [multicultural education], ARE [anti-racism education] or other anti-oppression efforts to increase intervention and teaching effectiveness" (Morelli & Spencer, 2000) are needed. As schools grapple with how to address racism and prejudice, insights into what facilitates race-related dialogue may be useful in teacher or instructor education at all academic levels, in educational institutions outside of traditional academia, with parents, and in community based agencies. This study was designed to contribute to the discourse on these questions.

Workplace

Demographic records reveal that the complexion of America is changing. The United States is becoming increasingly multi-racial; intermarriages among individuals from different racial groups are becoming more commonplace (Meacham, 2000; Ponterotto, 1991; Scott, 1997).

Women and minorities are taking approximately 50% of all new jobs. This will be as high as 70% by 2008….Minorities are more of an economic powerhouse than they've ever been. Their buying power will increase exponentially as their

presence in the workforce goes up…Diversity is critical for success in World-

Class Business [that sees] future growth and viability [as] dependent upon their

ability to leverage diversity with their shareholders, employees, customers, and

communities (The Business Women's Network, 2002, p. 465-466).

These workplace and economic realities force the issue of diversity competence to the

forefront, if not based on principles of fairness and equality, then based on sheer

economic and marketplace advantage.

In an increasingly diverse society, there is substantial importance being placed on

one's ability to effectively interact with others who are different from oneself in the

workplace (Carnevale, Gainer, Meltzer, 1988; Carnevale, 1991; Carnevale & Porro,

1994; Thomas & Ely, 1996). The need for citizens and a workforce able to demonstrate

human relations skills (race-related and general) is substantially attested to in literature on

race relations, employability, personal and professional success, and emerging

demographic and cultural changes (Bowser & Hunt, 1996; Consumer Reports, 1995;

Guttman, 1995; Penrice, 1995; Nation's Business, 1995; Pomice, 1995; Thomas & Ely,

1996; Von Daehne, 1994). Ninety percent of the employers in Planning Job Choices,

2001 rated interpersonal skills as the top competency that they desired in an employee.

There is increased public awareness that social skills are imperative for success in the

business world.

A reference book of facts and statistics, Women and Diversity WOW! Facts 2002,

suggested why diversity competence is highly valued in the workplace.

Diversity is becoming more important in our world today for the simple reason that our world is becoming more diverse. The racial, ethnic, and cultural makeup of our workforce is rapidly expanding. Groups like Hispanics and African-Americans are making forays into the top rungs of corporate America. Women are starting businesses at unprecedented rates. Gays and lesbians are stepping into the limelight as a huge market opportunity. (Diversity Best Practices) **Diversity overall is being driven by the powerful force of human expansion.** There was a time when corporations saved money through compliance with EEO and other legal concerns. Now it *makes money* for them. Companies that embrace diversity incur increased shareholder value, a more dynamic corporate culture, more customer and worker loyalty, and a higher quality brand in the marketplace. (Diversity Best Practices as cited in The Business Woman's Network, 2002)

Robert Dilenschneider, founder and principal of The Dilenschneider Group, formed in 1991, is author of several books on professional leadership in the business world, including the best-seller, Briefing for Leaders: Communication as the ultimate exercise for power (1991) and The Corporate Communications Bible (2000). Dilenschneider "has counseled major corporations, professional groups, trade associations and educational institutions, and has assisted clients in dealings with regulatory agencies, labor unions, consumer groups and minorities, among others" (The Globalist, 2002). The nugget of wisdom that Mr. Dilenschneider chose to impart to the graduates of Fordham University's Graduate School of Business, among all the topics of

which he has expertise, was the importance of interpersonal skills and human relations

(Dilenschneider, 1996). He said,

> How we perceive ourselves and how we act with other people determine our
>
> success. Your cognitive IQ could be 145 and you could get a doctorate in
>
> business. But, you'll never be able to break away from the pack unless your
>
> interpersonal skills are top-drawer. The business world is full of wounded
>
> warriors who focused solely on their work—not people—and they never got a
>
> shot at the gold (Dilenschneider, p. 404).

This broad range of discourses about human relations competencies suggests

considerable interest in further research regarding race relations and/or "diversity

competence" given their growing critical importance to the world of work.

By entitling their book chapter, "Diversity and the New Economy," Carnevale

and Stone (1995) emphasized this notion. They stated that, "economic and demographic

changes [have] focused attention on the impact of diversity on the economic performance

of organizations and whole economies…. As a result, recognizing and valuing diversity is

increasingly regarded as important for economic as well as demographic reasons" (p. 47).

Diversity competence is critical in a society that is uniquely positioned by its democratic

ideals of equality and inclusion and through its increasingly diverse population.

Carnevale and Stone (1995) elaborated that, "economic and technological changes

characteristic of an emerging new economy are increasing both the value and the

importance of successful human interaction in the workplace. In a diverse culture and

workforce such as our own, successful interaction between employees and customers is

predicated on our mutual ability to acknowledge and value the differences among us" (p. 50). It may be reasonable to speculate that this ability to acknowledge and value the differences between people, recognized by Carnevale and Stone, may be an essential competency that is needed for and exercised by participation in interracial dialogue on race.

The need for diversity competence in the workplace is also described by Goleman (1995 & 1998). He cited the shifting demographic through which White males are becoming a minority, not only in the workforce, but in the customer base, as one reason that diversity competence is economically relevant. In addition, he described an "increasing need for international companies to have employees who not only put any bias aside to appreciate people from diverse cultures (and markets) but also turn that appreciation to competitive advantage" (Goleman, 1995, p. 155-156). He highlighted the potential economic benefits of increased creativity and energy, which are likely outcomes of a diverse team approach (Goleman, 1995 & 1998).

Those who are able to demonstrate human relations skills on the job are being rewarded (Consumer Reports, 1995; Guttman, 1995; Penrice, 1995; Nation's Business, 1995; Pomice, 1995; Von Daehne, 1994). Even the medical field, traditionally known for its strict scientific, "objective" worldview, is beginning to require medical students and doctors to focus on their interpersonal skills because the field is coming to the awareness that the ability of medical professionals to relate to people is vital to their success (Consumer Reports, 1995).

Public discourse suggests that individuals with the awareness, knowledge, and skills related to working with a diverse population may be well-positioned to engender success in others. Goleman (1998) illuminated the value in this skill by suggesting that, "beyond zero tolerance for intolerance, the ability to leverage diversity revolves around three skills: getting along well with people who are different, appreciating the unique ways others may operate, and seizing whatever business opportunity these unique approaches might offer" (p. 158).

Another way that diversity competence is economically relevant to the world of work was explained by Steele (1997). Steele's studies demonstrated that stereotypical messages associated with particular social groups act as obstacles to achievement, even in individuals who have proven competence in a specific performance area. Employers who want their employees to be as productive as possible would, therefore, have economic interest in eliminating the negative effects of stereotypes in the workplace. Particularly relevant to diversity competence, or the ability to work with people from different social groups than one's own, is Steele's finding that negative effects of stereotypes can be reduced by practices such as developing relationships that affirm the potential of individuals.

Indications are, however, that Americans are less able to get along with one another (Goleman, 1995; Penrice, 1995; Farkas, Johnson, Duffet & Collins, 2002; Tatum, 1997). Public Agenda's recent report indicates that Americans recognize that progress has been made to show more respect and consideration to people of color and people with disabilities. However, 73% of African Americans said that fellow Americans still either

'need improvement' or 'fail' when it comes to treating them with respect and courtesy (Farkas, et al., 2002). The general sense that, as a culture, we need to learn how to relate more effectively suggests that further research in the area of intergroup relations is needed and supports the relevance of this inquiry.

While social justice educators strive to reduce bias through activities such as interracial dialogue, the business world seems focused on increasing the competencies in employees that interracial engagement can develop. Given the widespread interest in cross-cultural experiences and the outcomes of prejudice reduction efforts, exploration of interracial dialogue and how to facilitate it seem to be promising areas of investigation.

Theoretical framework

A hermeneutic inquiry asks the foundational question, "What are the conditions under which a human act took place that make it possible to interpret its meanings?" (Patton, 2002, p. 113). This question is central to the work proposed here, because the context of racial obsession and the simultaneous avoidance of genuine engagement on the subject are critical to understanding the value of the inquiry. As such, the socio-cultural backdrop of racism in the United States will inform the interpretations of this research. A descriptive research framework is appropriate due to the nature of the main research question. This investigation provides descriptions of multiple interpersonal elements that stimulate interracial engagement on the topic of race.

Delineation of the research problem

In order to provide a framework for the inquiry process with study participants, particular areas of focus have been explored. Based on related literature, areas that seemed to be worthy of specific exploration are related to moral development, interpersonal skills, empathy development, racial identity development, and inquiry regarding specific life experiences. The intent in constructing this framework was to provide structure and rationale for areas of investigation, but to also promote flexibility within the framework that allowed for unanticipated lines of questioning to emerge during data collection.

Research questions

The guiding research question of this study was: What can be learned about factors that contribute to the self-selection of participants in interracial dialogue on race relations? Subsidiary questions also are posed: 1) Which skills in particular, if any, are implicated as important to the decision to participate? 2) Are there other characteristics or experiences that this group might share? 3) How might these factors be interpreted to inform further study in this area? The three subsidiary questions were addressed in order to continue lines of inquiry on previously published literature and to allow for the discovery of new insights on the subject. This study contributes meaningful data that address these questions.

Importance of the study

Results of this inquiry have the potential to contribute broadly to the social

sciences, particularly to the fields of counseling, psychology, sociology, and education.

Examination of the factors and motivations that prompt individuals to engage and persist

in interracial dialogue are critical because specifically designed cross-cultural contact,

such as interracial dialogue, is considered to be an effective tool for prejudice reduction

and dismantling of racial tensions (Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, 1998; Slavin & Cooper,

1999; Stephan & Stephan, 2001).

It is Dalton's (1995) view that our avoidance of racial discussion has created a

state of paralysis and that progress on racism will not be made until serious dialogue is

commonplace. He said that, "the reasons for this paralysis are several, but chief among

them is our failure to engage each other openly and honestly around race" (p. 28). Terkel

(1992) referred to race as the American obsession, but in his first few pages referred to

the avoidance of the culture in speaking openly about this topic of such preoccupation.

He described Americans' tendency to speak about race in coded or veiled language and

called Americans "somewhat diffident in language, if not behavior" (p. 4) when it comes

to race. Terkel's book, presumably his contribution toward racial dialogue, is an entire

volume capturing the voices of people engaging on race.

Among those, like Dalton (1995) and Terkel (1992), who have written extensively

on the topic, there seems to be a common view that engagement and dialogue on race and

racism is vital to progress in this area among individuals and as a nation. John Hope

Franklin, Chair of the Advisory Board of President Clinton's Initiative on Race, was

quoted as saying, "we must begin to encourage a dialogue [on diversity]; one without

acrimony but with civility" (McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001, p. 164).

In its broadest sense, the inquiry proposed here strikes at the heart of this idea that

we need to sit down and talk so that we can learn to get along. This proposed line of

questioning may provide assistance to educators, employers and those interested in social

justice, who strive to facilitate or develop such skills in individuals through intentional

intervention. Discovery of factors that promote this valuable enterprise of interracial

engagement has meaning then for its ability to inform future discourses on race relations.

Conceptual assumptions

Views expressed through popular literature and public polls were used in this

study. I believe that the review of current race relations literature must include popular

and public discourses as well as professional and academic writings. Although the

inclusion of popular literature in serious academic works has been traditionally frowned

upon, it is my assertion that the topic of modern race relations cannot be adequately

viewed from solely a scholarly perspective. Race relations are about public opinion and

public comfort. Popular literature is useful in such an inquiry for its ability to measure the

pulse of the masses and to suggest what is on the minds of the everyday citizen.

Although popular literature is criticized in academic circles for making conclusions not

based on empirical data, I believe, in inquiries such as this one, that popular conversation

and belief may be even more crucial to understanding the phenomenon at hand than

academic discourse. In the same way that public perception is often equally as important

as "objective reality," popular discourse and public opinion are equally valuable for their ability to inform in ways that academic writings do not.

The conceptual assumption was made that people who engage in interracial dialogue demonstrate a substantial degree of racial tolerance, and diversity competence (defined below), and a relatively low degree of racial prejudice, as evidenced by their demonstrated interest in race relations and voluntary participation in cross-racial interaction. This assumption is based on the premise that it is most common in American culture to be uncomfortable with interracial dialogue, so therefore it is speculative, for the purposes of this study, that participants in such dialogue have relatively high comfort with other races and relatively low levels of racial prejudice. This assumption then, invited the examination of literature that refers broadly to factors related to anti-racism, anti-racists, prejudice reduction, and diversity competence, presuming that these behaviors have some relationship to participation in interracial study circles on race. As a result, because there is a dearth of literature specifically on participants in interracial dialogue on race, this conceptual assumption allowed this study to be informed by much richer sources of public and academic discourses.

Another assumption relates to the importance of dialogue as a means of healing the acrimonious legacy in the United States. Scholars of racism consistently cite intergroup contact and conversation as critical to making progress in dismantling racism (Dalton, 1995; Hacker, 1995; Kivel, 1996; Stephan & Stephan, 2001; Tatum, 1997). The assumption is made that there is merit to this proposition, a belief that is consummated through interest in the completion of this study,

Definition of terms

Shipler (1997) began the preface to his book by saying, "discussions of race are imprisoned by words" (p. ix). By this he meant that words have multiple meanings and connotations, which helps to breed misunderstandings and miscommunications, especially when discussing a culturally sensitive topic like race, where there are already so many. Similarly, Nicholson (1999) asserted that,

> the scale of suffering, of human agonies unimaginably vast, makes the subject [of racism] an emotional powerhouse. Language itself is a hotly contested terrain. Are American citizens of African descent Negroes, people of color, black, African Americans, or what? Why is any such term needed? The term *Holocaust*, for all its dramatic grandeur, is probably too small to capture the enormity of the events it seeks to encompass. Perhaps human consciousness itself rejects emotional information that would be too maddening to absorb fully (p. 4).

Even attempts toward acute sensitivity when discussing and writing about issues of race and racism can result in unintentional offensives. Language is subject to multiple and alternative interpretations. As such, a section on definitions of racial terms could become so cumbersome as to discourage embarking on any true dialogue, either written or verbal, an obstacle that is precisely the phenomenon this study attempts to examine!

In undertaking this study, I share Shipler's (1997) sentiment: "Since words are my only tools, I approach this endeavor in a spirit of careful humility, mindful of how difficult it is to capture the racial reality of America within the matrix of our vocabulary" (p. ix).

In that spirit, I offer several terms used herein that demand some clarification and commentary.

<u>Race</u>

Much has been written solely about what has been meant by the term 'race' throughout history.   (For exhaustive looks at the subject of defining race, I refer the reader to Haney Lopez's 1996 work, <u>White by law:</u> <u>The Legal Construction of Race</u> and to Daniel's 2002 book, <u>More than black?: Multiracial identity and the new racial order</u>.) Working definitions of the concept of race have been in flux since America's beginnings and were at first legally delineated in order to justify regulating or criminalizing behavior based on race (Haney Lopez, 1996; Ferrante & Brown, 1999).

Haney Lopez (1996) explored this phenomenon with the following dizzying synopsis of racial definition in the United States.

Regulating or criminalizing behavior in racial terms required legal definitions of race. Thus, in the years leading up to *Brown* [versus the Board of Education], most states that made racial distinctions in their laws provided statutory racial definitions, almost always focusing on the boundaries of Black identity. Alabama and Arkansas defined anyone with one drop of "Negro" blood as Black; Florida had a one-eighth rule; Georgia referred to "ascertainable" non-White blood; Indiana used a one-eighth rule; Kentucky relied on a combination of any "appreciable admixture" of Black ancestry and a one-sixteenth rule; Louisiana did not statutorily define Blackness but did adopt via its Supreme Court an "appreciable mixture of negro blood" standard; Maryland used a "person of negro

descent to the third generation" test; Mississippi combined an "appreciable

amount of Negro blood" and a one-eighth rule; Missouri used a one-eighth test, as

did Nebraska, North Carolina, and North Dakota; Oklahoma referred to "all

person of African descent," adding that the "term 'white race' shall include all

other persons"; Oregon promulgated a one-fourth rule; South Carolina had a one-

eighth standard; Tennessee defined Blacks in terms of "mulattoes, mestizos, and

their descendants, having any blood of the African race in their veins"; Texas

used an "all persons of mixed blood descended from negro ancestry" standard;

Utah law referred to mulattos, quadroons, or octoroons; and Virginia defined

Blacks as those in whom there was "ascertainable any Negro blood" with not

more than one-sixteenth Native American ancestry.

The very practice of legally defining Black identity demonstrates the

social, rather than the natural, basis of race….In the name of racially regulating

behavior, laws *created* racial identities (p. 118—119).

As the above illustration suggests, definitions of races have been construed

geographically throughout history and in the United States have usually been based on

the "one drop rule" which has meant to exclude anyone from being defined as White who

has even the remotest African ancestor (Daniel, 2002; Haney Lopez, 1996). The new

multiracial identity discussed by Daniel,

seeks to dismantle the one-drop rule altogether. This identity thus deconstructs

the dichotomization of blackness and whiteness, as well as the hierarchical

relationship between these two categories of experience. Its goal is to rescue

racial identities from distortion and erasure by incorporating both African

American and European backgrounds" (p. 6).

He suggests, lest this be considered a simple solution, that many Blacks express concern

that the ability to so identify will only serve to dilute the power of numbers in the Black

community, and will merely allow people with lighter complexions to escape the social

stigma of blackness, while doing little to change the basic nature of racism in America

(Daniel, p. 7; Skerry, 2000, p. 53).

It has been my experience while working with groups of people charged with the

task of defining race, that they think they are very clear about what race is, *until they are*

asked as a group to define it specifically. At that point a clear-cut definition becomes

complicated, and the discussion grows circuitous. Daniel (2002) echoed this

phenomenon, saying that,

> any attempt to use the term, "race" in an objective, scientific, and functionally
>
> neutral manner is nevertheless undermined by unavoidable complexity and
>
> contradiction. Despite its supposed neutrality as a biological concept, race has
>
> historically been (and continues to be) inextricably intertwined with a society's
>
> distribution of wealth, power, privilege, and prestige, and therefore with
>
> inequality….The concept of racial difference has created a chasm of social
>
> distance expressed both explicitly and implicitly in all kinds of social intercourse.
>
> And it is this social construction of race, not the biological concept, that has had
>
> such a deleterious effect on the social order, in this country and elsewhere….
>
> racial categories are "unstable" and "decentered" complexes of sociocultural

> meanings that are continuously being created, inhabited, contested, transformed, and destroyed (p. xiii-xiv).

The realization that the construct of race is socially created only serves to magnify its significance in a culture, as an expression of that culture's understanding of the human condition and as a window into its collective worldview.

In the United States, the idea of race has been the subject of public as well as scholarly debate in light of the year 2000 census (Hodgkinson, 1997; Skerry, 2000). In his study of the 2000 census, Skerry (2000) noted that,

> much of this controversy arises not because Americans are breaking up into hard-edged groups, but because we are intermixing as individuals to the point where group barriers are breaking down, making it increasingly difficult for the census to count racial and ethnic identities meaningfully. This intermixing is one reason why racial and ethnic data lack reliability (p. 3).

A few years prior to the census, Hodgkinson (1997) wrote, "the impending debate over the definition of race to be used in the U.S. Census for the year 2000 could be the most divisive debate over racial issues since the 1960s" (p. 30). The census clearly highlighted the issues surrounding racial definitions for the public as illustrated by *Newsweek*'s Special Report in September of 2000, which was entitled, "Redefining race in America". In the feature article, Meacham stated that, "In 1860, just before Fort Sumter, there were only three Census categories—white, black and 'quadroon.' This year there are 30…" (p. 40).

Hodgkinson (1997) succinctly stated that,

clearly, racial and ethnic categories in the U.S. Census are whimsical, changeable, and unscientific. It is also clear that distinguishing such physical characteristics as skin color or nose and eye shape is "taught" to Americans at an early age as a way of judging other people and that those distinctions have been used by our government since the first Census in 1790. As more of us marry across racial and ethnic lines, such differences will become even more blurred and less useful (p. 37).

Interracial marriages, interracial adoptions, and the growing number of Americans with mixed racial and ethnic backgrounds (or perhaps the more common social recognition of these circumstances that actually have been occurring throughout history) clouds the very notion of 'pure' physical types which have dictated our behavior toward others in the United States. Many elements such as geography, class, religion, language, nationality, and so on, determine cultural categorization of individuals, and that is what creates common perception about racial groups.

Skerry (2000) wrote extensively about the racial politics that are inextricably enmeshed in every census but were heightened in the 2000 census, due to ongoing questions about racial categorization. He quotes the Office of Management and Budget, which bears the bureaucratic responsibility for drawing statistical boundaries for census purposes, as making the following clarification about racial categories.

'The racial and ethnic categories set forth in the standards should not be interpreted as being primarily biological or genetic in reference. Race and ethnicity may be thought of in terms of social and cultural characteristics as well

as ancestry.' OMB is echoing the prevailing view among scholars. In the

National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report on racial and ethnic statistics

mentioned earlier, editor Barry Edmonston and his colleagues emphasize: 'There

is no scientific basis for the legitimacy of race or ethnicity as taxonomic

categories. That is, although there clearly are many and varied racial and ethnic

distinctions, their multiplicity of sources defies a single-variable classification

scheme based on a single individual characteristic. The NAS Edmonston report

then elaborates: 'The dominant perspective in social science now views race and

ethnicity as social constructions, which develop over time as groups share

common social and political experiences. From this perspective, race and

ethnicity are dynamic and vary across groups and over time. This view stands in

marked contrast to the widespread popular perspective that race is biologically

determined and permanent and that ethnicity is culturally determined and equally

permanent' (p. 44).

Skerry's work provided an exhaustive examination of racial categorization for census

purposes and the political nuances of the process. He also indicated that there is

administrative avoidance associated with confronting these issues, a subject that is

explored further in Chapter II. Skerry's census expertise is included here to further

support the idea that race is a mutable concept and that even those saddled with making

such delineations for the nation are stymied by the task. Skerry explained that although

the OMB adheres to the policy of self-identification on the census, in other words, that

people can decide themselves how they identify racially, OMB still selects the categories

and then afterwards must decide how to group individuals who select more than one. He

illustrated this dilemma with the explanation that,

> neither OMB, the Census Bureau, nor any other federal agency in fact draws any
>
> [racial and ethnic boundaries]. Rather, the census uses OMB-established
>
> categories in which individuals place themselves. The boundaries separating
>
> these categories are implied but not rigorously defined. Certainly these
>
> boundaries are not made clear to the individuals who fill out their census
>
> questionnaires and identify their race and ethnicity as they see fit. Yet as already
>
> indicated, in order to make sense of these data, OMB must eventually impose
>
> boundaries on them, though never quite admitting it….Though seemingly minor,
>
> this distinction between creating categories and drawing boundaries has major
>
> implications. Indeed, the lack of explicitly defined boundaries between racial and
>
> ethnic groups contributes to the controversy over their proper enumeration. It is
>
> as if the federal government admitted two new contiguous states to the Union but
>
> neglected to establish a boundary between them. The obvious result would be
>
> confusion and dissension about the location of the actual boundary, about who
>
> lived on either side of it, and about the population of both states (Skerry, 2000, p.
>
> 45).

Thus, it happens that, in the midst of this monumental project that purports to provide

raw numbers, statistical data, and "hard" facts about populations in the United States,

exists these malleable questions, ambiguities, and controversial, political, and emotional

judgment calls that seem almost to be made by chance. Even when looking to the

professionals for clarity in defining racial groups, it is easy to see how the issue of racial definition becomes increasingly convoluted.

From another perspective, to some in the United States, race has become another word for "subordinate groups; in other words, they assert that Whites need not think of themselves as a race because they are the 'racial norm' in the United States" (Haney Lopez, 1996; Martin, Krizek, Nakayama & Bradford, 1999; Robinson, 1999; Roman, 1993 as cited in Gallagher, 1997, p. 108). "…One of the dominant discourses of race is that European Americans think that they do not have to think about being White and what this means because race is often not viewed as salient to their identities" (Robinson, 1999, p. 73-74). This social construction of White as the norm or the standard within the United States is an example of cultural elements determining how races are conceptualized. This concept in the United States, that encourages Whites not to recognize and understand their race, is arguably at the root of racist beliefs in America (Robinson, 1999).

For theoretical purposes of this work, I conceptualize race as a social construction rather than biologically differentiated groupings (Daniel, 2002; Haney Lopez, 1996). However, I do acknowledge the very powerful, socio-cultural implications of race as it is used and construed worldwide and in the United States specifically. Daniel (2002) who, appropriately to this discussion, subtitled his book, *Multiracial Identity in the New Racial Order*, said, "even people who maintain that race is an illusion recognize the social reality of race in the West and cannot avoid using the term even as they deny its existence" (p. xiii). In specific practical terms, when referring to "interracial" dialogue, I

mean dialogue occurring between individuals who self-identify as belonging to different racial groups within the United States. I consider White (sometimes called Euro-American or Anglo-American) to be a racial group. For me, the self-identification element of this definition is key because it takes into consideration that race may not be assessable by physical characteristics alone. However, self-identification must always be considered within the context of how an individual is identified (and thus, treated) by the culture. A woman, in a group that I facilitated, was considered White by the others in the group, (and undoubtedly by society, at large), however, she identified herself as Cherokee. Her experience with race and racism has surely been different than the experience of a person with more distinguishable physical characteristics readily identifiable by others.

Racism

I define racism as racial prejudice coupled with institutional power and privilege. This definition interprets racism as something that is perpetuated by the dominant group (Whites in the United States). Although I believe that people of color can be prejudiced and can promulgate acts of racial hatred, they lack the societal power that would turn the act of hatred into an extension of the dominant group's oppression. Ridley (1995) suggested that racism has five key characteristics: "a variety of behaviors, systematic behavior, preferential treatment, inequitable outcomes, and nonrandom victimization" (p. 28-29). In Chapter II, I have provided further elaboration of the nature of racism, which includes examples of how the characteristics of racism manifest themselves in the United States.

Institutional racism

Institutional racism is defined herein as racial prejudice enforced and perpetuated by the collective power yielded by societal systems such as government, education, finance, housing, politics, and corporate entities.

People of color

This is a term currently used to refer collectively to races and ethnic groups in the United States who are non-White. Shipler (1997) discussed the use of this term.

I employ the latest versions of the self-labeling that has evolved, just in the course of my lifetime, from 'colored people' to Negroes' to 'blacks' to 'African-Americans' to 'people of color,' the last embracing all who are not 'white.' …Not

many years from now, I imagine, this language will seem antiquated, perhaps

even offensive, as the ear is trained to hear another lexicon (p. ix).

The term 'people of color' is a means to efficiently refer to races and ethnic groups who

have been subordinated by the dominant White culture in the United States. It is my

experience that many such 'people of color' dislike the term and view it as the latest

euphemism to categorize them. I personally have posed to many groups the question,

"*what would be a better term?*" and we have collectively come up with no apt substitute

in the opinion of the participants. Although I do not personally like the term either, I use

it because it is the current vernacular and it is convenient when I generalize about a huge

group of people, without attempting to exhaustively list more specific descriptors.

<u>Diversity competence</u>

The term 'diversity competence' is used throughout this document. Diversity

competence is my shorthand term for the propensity and ability to work with others from

a different social group than one's own, including, but not limited to, race as a social

group. I suggest that this skill, when well developed, certainly includes the ability to

work and dialogue with those of other races.

As Briggs, (2001) and Morelli and Spencer, (2000) suggested, current curricula in

multicultural and diversity education often do not specifically address race or racism, or

privilege and oppression. My view is that the development of awareness and skill in the

area of race relations that can be developed through interracial dialogue is a key

ingredient in developing 'diversity competence'.

<u>Americans</u>

I use 'America' and 'Americans' to refer to those peoples who were acculturated in the United States of America and who are enmeshed in the dominant United States' culture. The use of the term 'American' has been usurped and redefined despite the fact that Canada and Central and South America also are lands peopled by Americans. (I refer the reader to the essay by Jack D. Forbes, 1997 for a deeper discussion of this issue.) I also wish to acknowledge that the descriptor, American, often carries the connotation of 'White' (consider the 'All-American' stereotype). Rutstein (1997) quoted Bernard Streets, a student of American racism, on this use of the word. He said,

> one effect of racism in America has been that whites, as the dominant, controlling
>
> power, in creating our national identity have defined "American" as white. As
>
> such, deep down, many whites do not perceive people of color as American.
>
> Holding onto a widely-shared, yet very narrow sense of history, they view
>
> 'American' as one of European or white ancestry. This even excludes the native
>
> Americans who lived in the Americas long before Columbus' arrival (p. 69).

It is clear that the term 'American' has a multitude of definitions, depending on one's frame of reference. I chose to use the term, American, for convenience and to speak in the vernacular, to refer to the dominant culture of the United States of America; *however*, I wish to acknowledge that the terminology is technically incorrect and controversial. I do consider people of color, who are citizens of the United States, to be American. In many cases, however, American most accurately refers to the dominant culture of the

United States, which often does not capture the experience of African Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans.

<u>Factors</u>

The title of this proposed study refers to 'contributory factors.' The term 'factors' is used throughout this text in its broadest sense in an effort to capture succinctly whatever characteristics, experiences, skills, qualities, or elements might be revealed as contributors to individual participation in race-related dialogue. In its definition for these purposes, the term 'factor' is intended to be inclusive and to be conceptualized broadly.

Summary and outline

This chapter has defined the overall socio-cultural context within which this proposed inquiry was conducted. Obsession with race, and a co-existing cultural reluctance to openly discuss race, presented here as the race obsession-avoidance paradox, frame this study. A statement of the problem has illuminated the need to ask the question, "what then, propels individuals to participate in interracial dialogue?" Considerable evidence suggests that educators and practitioners may benefit from potential findings.

Chapter II discusses in more detail the public and professional discourses related to the subject of interracial dialogue. This exploration of literature serves as a framework to inform the crafting of the particular methodology proposed, which is described in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents elaboration on the data collection protocol, the findings of the study, analysis, and interpretation. Chapter V provides a discussion of the results,

conclusions, insights to contribute to professional and public discourses, and

recommendations for further investigation of this topic.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED DISCOURSES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the existing literature that informs this study. The review considers both the popular and academic discourses that relate to the topic of racism, since both are critical to the analysis of a socio-cultural phenomenon. The history of racism within the ideological context of the United States is discussed. A discussion of modern and systemic racism informs the current examination of interracial dialogue.   Although no body of literature exists that directly addresses the propensity for interracial dialogue on race, some possible factors that may either discourage or encourage interracial dialogue on race, based on the existing research literature, are suggested. Ways that this topic is critical to the counseling and education fields are reviewed. These factors, then, which form the foundation and process of the present study are reviewed below.

The problem of racism in America

Introducing the topic of racism in America as important is akin to introducing Shakespeare as a classical English writer. To craft an introduction to the topic is a daunting task, given the volumes written on the subject. The snarled complexity of racism's tentacles makes it almost ubiquitous in American culture, thorny to unravel, and bewildering to analyze. As such, it would be difficult to overstate the significance that racism, and thus, race relations, have had in defining the culture of the United States of America.

The problem of racism is as old as the United States itself (Feagin & Vera, 1995; Hacker, 1995; Hudson & Hines-Hudson, 1999; Nies, 1996; Ridley, 1995; Taylor, 1992). Taylor (1992) suggested that the arrival of Europeans on the continent, already the home to native peoples, was "an enormous crisis in race relations—a crisis that led to catastrophe and dispossession for the Indians" (p. 9). Similarly, the appearance of the first Africans who were made slaves "in 1619 set in motion a series of crises that persist to the present" (p. 9). The history of America is a drama featuring racial conflict as the constant recurring theme. Taylor illustrated that, "indirectly, it brought about the bloodiest war America has ever fought, Reconstruction, segregation, the civil rights movement, and the seemingly intractable problems of today's underclass" (p. 9). Pettigrew (1996) stated that, "from the nation's beginning, Black-White relations have been the chief domestic problem of the United States. There have been Constitutional Amendments to address racial concerns; slave revolts and urban riots punctuate our racial history; and we even fought a bloody civil war over race" (p. ix). The lack of change in how America has dealt with race since its inception is notable. It is significant that, in the 1940s, Gunnar Myrdal described race as the "great American dilemma" and that this phrase is still used in reference to American race relations (Feagin & Vera, 1995, p. 170; Taylor, 1992, p. 9).

It is worth noting that the words of W.E. B. Dubois (1901) nearly a century prior to Pettigrew's commentary seem hauntingly current. He wrote,

the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line; the relation

of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the

islands of the sea. It was a phase of this problem that caused the Civil War; and however much they who marched south and north in 1861 may have fixed on the technical points of union and local autonomy as a shibboleth, all nevertheless knew, as we know, that the question of Negro slavery was the deeper cause of the conflict. Curious it was, too, how this deeper question ever forced itself to the surface, despite effort and disclaimer (p. 354).

In addition to illustrating the timelessness of the American race issue, remarkably, Dubois also alluded to the very phenomenon addressed by this proposed study, that of American preoccupation and simultaneous avoidance of racial issues, in this case, slavery.

It is this uniquely American phenomenon of simultaneous preoccupation and evasion of racial issues that I refer to as the *racial obsession-avoidance paradox*. With similar connotation, essayist, Wendall Berry, referred to American race relations as a "hidden wound" (Taylor, 1992, p. 13). The symbolism of a hidden wound is that it is beneath the surface, but festering and preventing healing from taking place. This image is a graphic symbol for the race obsession-avoidance paradox. The wound is representative of the obsession that Americans have with race, and avoidance is represented by its hidden, often covert, nature.

Taylor (1992) also referred to the issue of race in America as a paradox when he suggested that American thinking about, and thus discussion of, race has become rigid. Although in Taylor's writing, paradox has a different meaning, he suggested that, "race is…not only the great dilemma, it is also the great paradox. It is in race relations that

America has gone most obviously wrong, yet it is about race that we dare not think anything new or different" (p. 12).   Explaining his use of the word paradox, he suggested that Americans have continually focused on race with acts, laws, policies, and commissions that have been unsuccessful at eliminating racism because the basic assumptions about race have not evolved since the 1960s. He reflected, "it is where we are failing the worst that honesty and clear thinking are least welcome" (Taylor, p. 13). Race relations, said Taylor, is America's most significant failure, and self-consciously or defensively, Americans shy away from fresh exploration of this sensitive area.

The race obsession-avoidance paradox argues further that Americans have, from their beginnings, cultivated a preoccupation with race, yet have simultaneously shunned frank and open discourse about race.   A metaphor used by Janet Robideau (2000), coordinator of the Indian People's Action, captured the essence of the racial obsession-avoidance paradox vividly. She said that,

> it's like we're all in the same room, and there's this huge pink elephant in the middle of the room. That pink elephant is racism. But nobody wants to look at it; people walk around it; they don't want to see it. But we can't begin to move forward until we name it and get other folks to actually see it. Until we can do that, we can't really change anything, we can't get the pink elephant out of the room (as cited by Neubeck and Cazenave, 2001, p. 1).

The metaphor of the pink elephant is not meant to trivialize the sober realities of racism, but to illustrate the ridiculousness of its avoidance. The image of the pink elephant, so

obvious and obstructive, illuminates both the preoccupation and the silence that define the race obsession-avoidance paradox.

Rutstein (1997), like Terkel (1992), used the term obsession to describe American disposition toward race. "It's an obsession; an obsession rooted and nourished in the white American psyche for nearly 400 years; enough time to become institutionalized and take on conscious and unconscious forms" (p. 79). Rutstein's description suggests the process by which racism has become tightly woven into the American fabric because of its significance throughout American history. Rutstein (1997) explained that,

the psychological obsession is so deeply rooted in the soul of America that it has continually grown despite some superficial attempts to dull the pain that racism sets off. The obsession's powerful core was wrapped, at first, by layers of superiority, conviction, pride, grandiosity, and narcissism, and after the 1960s, layers of denial. Because of those layers, the core is well protected, making real healing difficult (p. 65).

The layers of denial that Rutstein described contribute significantly to the cultural avoidance that paradoxically accompanies the American obsession. Therefore, despite America's intense preoccupation with race, candid and open discussion of race and racism is uncommon. Taylor suggested that, "we have made race such a grim and serious thing that we may speak of it only in a handful of approved phrases. Our very thoughts have become as stilted as our speech" (p. 12). Shipler (1997) concurred that,

talking about racism is one of the most difficult endeavors in America. Shouting is easy. Muttering and whining and posturing are done with facility. But

conversing—black with white, white with black—is a rare and heavy

accomplishment. The color line is a curtain of silence (p. 473).

The race obsession-avoidance paradox has evolved as a by-product of the racial

circumstances throughout American history. A discussion of race within an American

historical context and the evolution of the race obsession-avoidance paradox may be

useful in understanding the modern dynamics of interracial dialogue in the United States.

There is substantial evidence that the vestiges of the long history of racial inequality in

the United States are entrenched. The deeply rooted belief in White superiority that has

characterized the country from its birth, discussed in the following section, still informs

the social structure of today.

<div align="center">The history of racial hypocrisy in America</div>

The idea that both racism and democracy, constructs that conjure seemingly

incongruent values, can be described as defining the socio-cultural landscape of America

is relevant to understanding the race obsession-avoidance paradox. The national anthem,

the Declaration of Independence, and the pledge of allegiance to the American flag give

examples of the language used in America to inculcate citizens with values like

inclusiveness, individual worth, and justice. "Land of the free", "liberty and justice for

all", "all men are created equal", "unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of

happiness" are quintessentially American phrases that represent these American ideals.

Standing in the shadow of those ideals, however, are images of young Black girls

bombed in a church, police fire-hosing non-violent activists, slavery, Civil War, the Trail

of Tears, segregation, and lynchings. "In its first words on the subject of citizenship, Congress in 1790 restricted naturalization to 'white persons'" (Haney Lopez, 1996, p 1). This policy made clear that the famous phrase would have more aptly been put, "all *White* men are created equal."

Schwarz (1997) discussed Thomas Jefferson, traditional symbol of a legendary American, and his views of political and religious tolerance "to which Americans still aspire" (p. 56). As clear example of American hypocrisy, however, Jefferson very clearly omitted Blacks from this standard of tolerance. Although he is said to have believed slavery was wrong, he also believed that Blacks were "alien, inferior, and dangerous" (p. 56). "Jefferson's notions of democracy, upon which our ideals of pluralism are founded, depended not merely on racial supremacy but on racial homogeneity" (p. 57).

Nineteenth century social historian, Tocqueville (1963), took note of this duplicitous American phenomenon, in his treatise, <u>Democracy in America</u>, originally published in 1835. He said, "thus it is in the United States that the prejudice which repels the Negroes seems to increase in proportion as they are emancipated, and *inequality is sanctioned by the manners while it is effaced from the laws of the country* [italics added]" (p. 360). Tocqueville noted this clash of values as he observed that the treatment of Blacks did not reflect, and in fact was in direct contrast to, the laws of the country. He further commented that,

> they [Americans] first violated every right of humanity by their treatment of the
> Negro, and they afterwards informed him that those rights were precious and

inviolable….Slavery…attacked by Christianity as unjust and by political

economy as prejudicial, and now contrasted with democratic liberty and the

intelligence of our age, cannot survive (p. 381).

Tocqueville pinpointed the hypocrisy that so ironically characterized America (and some

would say, still does) and foreshadowed the great conflict that this clash of values would

engender a few decades later in the form of war.

Treatment of the first Americans by the government and citizens of the United

States epitomizes the hypocrisy that has characterized the country's policies regarding

people of color. Freedom from religious persecution was the yearning that compelled the

first immigrants to endure life-threatening travel to what came to be called the United

States of America. This value was later determined to be so integral to the new country's

identity that on September 25, 1789 the First Congress of the United States ratified the

following as the first amendment and thus, part of the Bill of Rights. "Congress shall

make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise

thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people

peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." In

direct contrast to these values, in the 1880s the United States' outlawed traditional

religious observances of native peoples, called Sundances or Ghost Dances, and forced

them to adopt Christianity (Nies, 1996). There are innumerable examples in United

States history when people of color have clearly been excluded from the benefits of the

very ideals by which the country has sought to define itself. Ropers and Ponce (1995)

reflected that,

much of American history reads like a litany of *in*equality and prejudice….From

our earliest roots, then, Americans have been socialized to be prejudiced—to be

suspicious of people who look, act, and have beliefs outside prevailing cultural

norms and values (p. 117-118).

This history of intolerance that is described is in direct contradiction to the democratic

ideals promoted by the United States.

Similar observations of American hypocrisy regarding race were made in the

middle of the twentieth century. Thompson and Neville (1999) noted that in the 1940s

the United States was being criticized for hypocrisy, that is, advocating for democracy

and opposing fascism abroad while enforcing Jim Crow laws at home" (p. 162). Some

argue that the Unites States has not progressed to a place of congruence between ideals

and 'manners' yet today.

Schwarz (1997) suggested that the hypocrisy between America's self-proclaimed

ideals and its deeds is apparent in current foreign policy and attitudes toward foreign

conflict. He argued that,

the history we hold up as a light to nations is a sanctimonious tissue of myth and

self-infatuation. We get the world wrong because we get ourselves wrong. Taken

without illusion, our history gives us no right to preach—but it should prepare us

to understand the brutal realities of nation-building, at home and abroad (p.50).

Schwarz asserted that the United States has not been the model of tolerance and as

welcome to diversity as it mythologizes. He said that, "'Americanization' was a process

of coercive conformity….[that] celebrated not tolerance but conformity to a narrow

conception of American nationality by well-dressed, accent-free 'American looking' Americans—that is, Anglo-Americans" (p. 54). Schwarz clearly contrasted American ideals, or American legend, with historical realities.

Nies (1996) described,

[the] system of off-reservation boarding schools, designed to assimilate Indians into the dominant white society. English was the only language allowed; the Indians were to follow Christian teachings; to have their hair cut; wear 'citizen' clothing; adopt Christian practices; and learn to schedule their day by the quasi-military regimen (p. 289).

Despite attempts by many Native Americans and other people of color to conform to Anglo ways, they have still been treated as second-class citizens in the land of liberty and justice for all.

Scott (1997) wrote,

although the rigid race based boundaries once circumscribing social formations in this society no longer have the sanction of law, the habits of nearly four hundred years are not so easily interrupted. They exist and still define the socio-economic-political cultural lines, which segment a diverse people, and seemingly disparate people, claiming fidelity to a belief in union (p. vii).

For many Whites, denial that racism exists or that it is a significant problem is a way to manage an otherwise overwhelming social condition.

There are several reasons why White people tend to deny the existence of this broad-based social pathology. First, White racism is a very complex and negative

phenomenon…[and]…many White people prefer to believe this problem doesn't

exist….Second, many White people feel helpless to do things to help reduce the

problem. Third, confronting the problem…involves addressing the various

privileges White people typically experience as a result of their racial heritage"

(D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999b, p. 93).

The recognition that American ideals and reality are a distance apart for many citizens

does not match the national narrative.

Reconciling the large gap between our society's abstract principles of equality

and the reality of everyday racism has been for centuries a great challenge to

those concerned with the eradication of racism. Indeed, this is the famous

"American dilemma" articulated so well in the 1940s by Swedish social scientist

Gunnar Myrdal (Feagin & Vera, 1995, p 170).

An admission that racism exists forces Americans to deal with the conflictive

contradiction between American ideals of "liberty and justice for all" and the contrasting

reality that many people of color experience in the United States. Therefore, to recognize

the realities of racism in America means to question American ideals and assumptions.

Kluegel and Smith suggest that there is a dominant [American] ideology concerning

social stratification and inequality: (1) The opportunity for economic advancement is

available to all Americans who wish to work hard; (2) Individuals are responsible for

their own positions in the society. There is a rejection of structural explanations of

inequality; (3) Individuals should be rewarded in proportion to their contributions.

Respondents felt that our system of economic inequality was equitable and fair

(Kitano, p.51)

Individualism which is a central American ideal is antithetical to examination of systems

of social inequality (Kitano, 1997). The American myth of rugged individualism leaves

no room for systems theories that understand individuals within the context of their

environment and within a dynamic social network.

This American ideal of individualism also completely denies the historically

perpetuated social stratification that casts Whites as the norm or the standard in the

United States and as the benefactors of particular privileges that come with that status.

Marty (1999) explained,

> as in other Western nations, white children born in the United States inherit the
>
> moral predicament of living in a white supremacist society. Raised to experience
>
> their racially based advantages as fair and normal, white children receive little if
>
> any instruction regarding the predicament they face, let alone any guidance in
>
> how to resolve it. Therefore, they experience or learn about racial tension without
>
> understanding Euro-Americans' historical responsibility for it and knowing
>
> virtually nothing about their contemporary roles in perpetuating it….As a result,
>
> many white antiracists organize their social justice efforts around an ignorance of
>
> the racially based privileges they possess that reinforce racist disadvantages for
>
> others. More disconcerting than the persistent presence of racial privilege in
>
> white antiracist practices, however, is the earnestness, with which many white
>
> people defend against coming to this realization.

The lack of awareness that is pervasive among White people with regard to their privileged status only further belies the sham of rugged individualism. The idea that success is the byproduct of mere merit and hard work is dubious, at best, and often does not reflect the experience of people of color in the United States.

Scott (1997) observed that, "most honest evaluations the U.S. society inform us—disturbingly—that the color line is still in place" (p. viii). Speaking of Hacker's (1992) work, Scott said that, "Hacker…argues persuasively in his *Two Nations* (1992) that essentially the 'problem of the twentieth century' remains intractable at the close of the twentieth century. Race, Hacker tells us, still divides and conquers this nation. It is our perpetual preoccupation" (p. viii).

<center>"I never owned any slaves"</center>

One's racial (and other) identities and perspective determine the degree to which one believes that progress has been made toward healing racism in America. Kitano (1997) called this the Rashomon perspective, a term that refers to a Japanese film that portrayed diverse interpretations of the same situation (p. 8). The United States, perhaps due in part to racial obsession, has made dramatic progress on the problem of racism by many measures (Harrison, 1999; Taylor, 1992). To have gone from slavery of Blacks to a time when Blacks are elected to public office and many are considered middle class is referred to by Harrison (1999) as "a racial and cultural revolution" (p. 102). Opportunities for Blacks and other people of color have burgeoned relatively quickly in historical terms.

Many White people insist that racism is a social condition of the past and/or that only extremist groups perpetuate racism today (Briggs & Paulson, 1996; D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999c; Kivel, 1996).   Some people believe that holding contemporary Whites responsible for the condition of racism in America is unfair and causes racial division. Still others argue that the disparate economic, educational, and political outcomes between Whites and people of color have to do solely with individual effort or lack of effort.

In his argument against proportional representation, D'Souza (1999) advocated that the hiring of people of color in proportion to their representation in society be eliminated. It was his position that if this were done, Black representation in places like elite schools would drop and that we would have to be "willing to live with these outcomes, until blacks are able to raise their own standards, to compete at highest levels" (p. 431). This argument asserts that merely with effort (whether equal to or exceeding what Whites put forth) Blacks have an equal chance to succeed.

Kivel (1996) lists several arguments that White people often use to rationalize or minimize racism: (a) Denial (e.g., *"This is a land of equal opportunity"* or *"Discrimination is a thing of the past,"* p. 41); (b) Minimization (e.g., *"Personal achievement mostly depends on personal ability"* or *"There were lots of kinds of slaveowners"*, p. 42, or, *Slavery was over with 150 years ago, get over it!*); (c) Blame (e.g. *"Most blacks don't want to succeed"* or *"Look at the way they act",* p. 43) or using stereotypes as the reason why people of color have less economic success; (d) Redefine, with cries of reverse discrimination, which ignores context and power differentials (e.g.

"*White people are the victims now*"); (e) Define racism as unintentional (e.g., *"Most white people are well-intentioned"* p. 44, or that the near genocide of Native Americans was unintentional result of European migration, p. 43, or putting positive spin on Columbus's "discovery" of America); (f) Argue that it's only a few people (far right or Neo-Nazis or skinheads p. 45); (g) Counterattack (e.g., *"How come we don't have a White History Month"?* or *"They are taking away our jobs",* p. 46, or *"They want special status",* p. 46). D'Andrea and Daniels (1999c) suggested that these types of rationalizations are the reasons why there is a "lack of attention and resources directed at ameliorating racism in the United States" (p. 60). They cited widespread denial, due to the moral contradiction dilemma, feelings of helplessness that lead to avoidance, and the desire to avoid addressing White privilege. Neubeck and Cazenave (2001) commented that,

> while perhaps more immediately visible in political elites' discourse than in academic writings, insensitivity to racism as a systemic social problem, and blindness to the race-based privileges possessed by all Whites, extends to the work of all but a small number of social scientists and policy analysts. More European Americans today view the "race problem" as having been somehow solved by legislation passed during the 1960s, and simply do not believe that African Americans and other people of color continue to be deprived of "the dignity, opportunities, freedoms, and rewards that this nation offers white Americans" (Feagin & Vera, 1995, p. 7) (p. 6).

Many White people in America want to believe that racism is "solved" because it is

easier than dealing with the albatross that it has become and it is easier and more

desirable to believe in the American myth of equality of opportunity.

In my experience as a racial dialogue facilitator, a common response of a White

person to suggestions that racism is a current issue, that Whites have contributed to its

perpetuation, and that they are therefore responsible for its dismantling is a comment like,

"I never owned any slaves." This type of statement is meant to absolve the speaker of

any ownership, not just of slaves, but also of the problem of racism. Such a statement

plays well on the American sensibilities of individualism, fairness, and self-

responsibility, but upon deeper analysis it suggests a superficial understanding of racism

in America.

> Cose (1993) wrote,
>
> we are offered speculation and conjecture, self-congratulatory theories from
>
> whites who have never been forced to confront the racial stereotypes routinely
>
> encountered by blacks, and who—judging themselves decent people, and judging
>
> most of their acquaintances decent as well—find it impossible to believe that
>
> serious discrimination still exists. Whatever comfort such conjecture may bring
>
> some whites, it has absolutely no relevance to the experiences of blacks in
>
> America (p. 3).

Lest doubters are tempted to minimize this description of the state of racial affairs by the

fact that Cose's work was published nine years ago, a 2002 report by Public Agenda

suggests that the Rashomon perspective still applies to views of race relations in

America.   As referenced in Chapter I, 73% of African Americans said that fellow Americans still either "need improvement" or "fail" when it comes to treating them with respect and courtesy (Farkas, et al., 2002). In the recently issued report on rudeness in America, researchers cite that,

> African Americans may have a harder time seeing the nation's progress over time when their daily experiences tell them how far there is still to go. [For] example, when asked if they had been 'followed around in a store by an employee because they suspected you were about to shoplift,' 44% of the African Americans report that this has happened to them within the past year. Only 10% of white respondents say this has happened to them (Farkas, et al., 2002).

This is a clear example of Tocquville's and Bell's description of American hypocrisy. Although America touts fairness, individual merit, and equality as its defining ideals, and although laws have been passed that make discrimination illegal, the daily experience of people of color portrays a different set of values.

The idea that, as groups of people, Whites and people of color have had significantly different experiences throughout the history of the United States is a crucial concept in understanding current interracial issues. An examination of the modern dynamics of racism provides some insight into present-day interracial dialogue on race.

Modern racism

The perpetual preoccupation in modern times may be grounded in the same historical prejudices and attitudes as those of the past but are typically manifested in more subtle behavior. Briggs and Paulson (1996) asserted that "many of today's enlightened explanations for social problems, which are accepted by much of White society, are little more than subtle forms of the same line of reasoning [that underlies White supremacy]" (p. 147).

Healey (1997) proposed that modern racism typically rejects the notion of biological inferiority of races but involves the following assumptions:

> (1) there is no longer any serious or important discrimination in American society, (2) any continuing racial inequality is the fault of members of the minority group, and (3) demands for preferential treatment or affirmative action for minorities are unfair and unjustified. Modern racism tends to 'blame the victim' and place the responsibility for change and improvements on the minority groups, not on the larger society…Also, researchers have consistently found that modern racism is correlated with opposition to policies and programs intended to reduce racial inequality (p. 55).

In other words, modern racism is more subtle than traditional racism, but in principle still sends a powerful message that enforces the same social order. The institutions of the dominant culture that maintain White privilege, (the unearned advantages of being White) are typically not held to any accountability for the perpetuation of racism, while

people of color are often blamed for their lesser social, economic, and educational status
(Briggs & Paulson, 1996, p. 149).

> With the advent of the civil rights movement, it was no longer socially acceptable
> to practice overt discrimination. In its stead there arose a new kind of individual
> racism and racist theories….The new racism, instead of classifying social
> problems in terms of biological inferiority, shifts the explanation to one of
> cultural inferiority (Briggs & Paulson, 1996, p. 140).

This mindset is borne out by such behaviors as 'dysfunctional rescuing', which is giving
latitude to people of color out of guilt or shame perhaps due to an underlying assumption
that they cannot succeed without assistance (Batts, 1998). Another example is blaming
the victim, which refers to the rationale that people of color are solely to blame for their
circumstances in America due to their own inadequacies or lack of effort (Batts, 1998).
Denial of cultural differences and avoidance of contact with people of color are other
examples of modern racism. These include reluctance to acknowledge a person's race or
ethnicity, (e.g. "I don't see you as black" or seeing Hanukah as the Jewish equivalent of
Christmas).

> Kitano (1997) suggested that the modern day dilemma of racism is even more

complex than in previous centuries.

> The choice is not between right and wrong, between the values of the American
> creed and a ragbag full of irrational and self-serving beliefs; the choice now must
> be made among competing values—compassion, the freedom to achieve,
> tolerance, the right to be judged on one's individual merits, the reach of the state,

and the autonomy of the family—in a word, the very values that make up the

American creed….There is a complex of causality that leads to difficulties in

assigning responsibility and courses of action (p. 6-7).

Kitano hints at the convolution that characterizes the current state of race relations in the

United States. An exploration of this current state seems vital, in order to adequately

examine modern interracial relations within a meaningful context.

Scholars have recently referred to the current complex state of affairs to which

Kitano refers as modern racism, which is described as more subtle, symbolic, and indirect

than traditional racism (Episcopal Divinity Church Occasional Papers, 1998; Bell, 1994;

Healey, 1997). Bell (1994) described that,

rather than eliminate racial discrimination, civil rights laws have only driven it

underground, where it flourishes even more effectively. While employers,

landlords, and other merchants can no longer rely on rules that blatantly

discriminate against minorities, they can erect barriers that although they make no

mention of race, have the same exclusionary effect. The discrimination that was

out in the open during the Jim Crow era could at least be seen, condemned, and

fought as a moral issue. Today, statistics, complaints, even secretly filmed

instances of discrimination that are televised nationwide…upset few people

because, evidently, no amount of hard evidence will shake the nation's conviction

that the system is fair for all (p. 149-50).

The similarity in the statements of Tocqueville in 1835 (p. x) and Bell in 1994 is striking.

Both describe a society where laws proclaim equality and justice, yet daily behavior of

the majority culture is experienced as degrading to people of color. The idea that most Whites in America view racism as either extinct or greatly diminished and that most people of color view racism as "alive and well" points to this hypocrisy as well as to the thread of White denial of racism in America that has been consistently noted (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999a & 1999c).

<div align="center">Systemic racism</div>

Whether considered modern or historic, evidence suggests that racism persists in the United States of America. The idea that modern racism is systemic by its nature is an integral concept in understanding its impact. Taylor (1992) noted that, "the statistical picture of black society, and the real world behind the statistics, are fundamentally different from the world in which whites live" (p. 10). Although many White Americans suggest that they are not racist, racist behavior, ideologically and structurally, is perpetuated. Sociological perspectives hold that racial dynamics are perpetuated by socialization to the unequal system of racial stratification (Thompson & Neville, 1999, p. 157). In other words, Americans are taught racism by their environment, to which they adapt and then adopt its lessons. Avoidance and acculturation then, serve to make racism part of the fabric of the society, less visible and more part of the norm, especially to those who prefer not to acknowledge its evidence (Powell, 1992). Avoidance, or not seeing, affects White Americans' perceptions of racism and the realities of the problem. Healey (1997) cited a 1995 survey to a nationally representative sample that found that White Americans were "grossly misinformed about the actual situations of black Americans" (p. 56). Neubeck and Cazenave (2001) commented that,

European-American insensitivity to and denial of racism as a social force—

especially the systemic racism to which we have alluded—has been helped along

and legitimized by a "scholarship of backlash" that emerged in the post-civil

rights era. This scholarship reflects and reinforces many European Americans'

unwillingness to entertain the notion that racism is alive and well today. The

"politics of denial" regarding the present-day salience of racism make our current

political and intellectual climate inhospitable to expressions of concern over the

plight of poor African-American mothers and other impoverished people of color

(p. 7).

Those who view racism as a relic of the past fail to take into account the historical and

perpetuated power differentials that have created and that sustain racism on an

institutional level. The strong American ideal (and myth) of individualism blinds many

from the reality that the dominant group has benefited from its status in the culture and

owes its success at least partially to a playing field that is not equal, but balanced in their

favor (Powell, 1992).

It is a systems orientation that understands the individual not merely in isolation

but that can also pan the camera wider to view the broader context.

…The individualists systematically tend to deny or minimize the problem of

inequality. Blacks, they say, do not suffer discrimination; nor are women held

back; nor is being born poor a handicap. In short, believing in equality of

condition, individualists are radical egalitarians" (Kitano, 1997, p 52).

This viewpoint advocating the power of the individual is predictable in a society that places value on individualism, and devalues the power of the social forces that surround the individual. In fact,

> Lenski (1966) found that in every society, those who belong to the dominant social classes have the greatest capacity to explain and to disseminate their views of the existing system of inequality. They are therefore apt to support the social structure and to rationalize their advantage (Kitano, 1997, p. 49).

Often oblivious to (or having chosen to ignore) the power of the White social privileges that work most often to their advantage, many persons in the dominant White majority attribute their relative success to individual effort. Many people of color, on the other hand, are well acquainted with the social forces that work to their disadvantage, which often render individual effort impotent.

> Non-coincidentally, this oblivion to privileges that come with whiteness is directly tied to the common assumption made by White people that they are "raceless". Martin, Krizek, Nakayma and Bradford (1999) took note of this phenomenon while conducting a study on what ethnic labels are preferred by various ethnic groups. Of White people they noted,

> > while they consistently identified seven labels (Anglo, Caucasian, Euro-American, European American, WASP, White and White American), we were surprised by their reluctance to identify these labels or to discuss the process of labeling. We interpreted this reluctance to mean that labeling was somehow different for whites than for other ethnic/racial groups….One reason [that there

has been so little attention paid to ethnic labels of White people is] the historical

power held by whites in the United States. That is, whites as the privileged group

take their identity as the norm and the standard by which other groups are

measured, and this identity is therefore invisible, even to the extent that many

whites do not consciously think about the profound effect being white has on their

everyday lives (T. Allen, 1993; Frankenberg, 1993; Hardiman, 1994; McIntosh,

1992; Miller, 1992; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995) (p. 27-28).

This common assumption of "racelessness" held by White people in the United States

contributes to the denial, avoidance, and ignorance of racism as a social problem. Even

those who see the disadvantages that racism bestows on people of color, often fail to

understand the 'other side of the coin'; that it bestows advantages on White people. It is

not surprising that the racial problem, then, goes underestimated, misunderstood, ignored,

or avoided—many people are only cognizant of half of the problem. Johnson (1999)

quoted work by Richard Dyer (1997) who said, "as long as race is something only

applied to non-white people, as long as white people are not racially seen and named,

they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced, we are just people" (Dyer,

1997, p.1 as cited in Johnson, 1999, p. 4). "As a consequence [of not seeing Whiteness

as a race], …many Whites do not consider race or racism to be an issue that directly

affects them and those who look like them. This type of non-seeing is…dangerous… and

perpetuates racism, sexism, and other acts of oppression" (Robinson, 1999, p. 74). This

ignorance about White skin privilege is integral to the perpetuation of the idea that the

United States is purely a merit-based society where the proverbial playing field is equal.

Many people of color can cite examples of the unequal playing field from their own life experience. For example, while most White people would cite individual integrity as the force that keeps them out of trouble with the law, Bryonn Bain (2000) described a strikingly different experience in his essay, <u>Walking while Black: The Bill of Rights for Black men</u>. Bain, a Harvard University student at the time, described being arrested, charged, and imprisoned for a street crime that he did not commit. Despite the fact that he had worked hard, had achieved academically in rigorous settings, and had never been in any trouble with the law, the assumption made by the officials in his situation was that he was a street thug. It was his skin color, not his dress, his behavior, or even the law school textbooks in his backpack, that seemed to be the factor that determined his treatment. He explicitly described the degradation and racist assumptions of several officials to which he was subjected. Bain reflected, "it is this type of contradiction between American ideals and the experience of people of color that seemingly locks the United States into a racial stalemate" (p. 44). This stalemate or failure to move keeps the wound unhealed.

The racism embedded in the educational system provides a specific example of how the power of the dominant White culture diminishes the humanity of people of color. For years, American schools have taught the misleading 'fact' that Columbus discovered America. Rutstein (1997) noted that,

> we have been brainwashed into believing that when the Europeans came to the
>
> Americas, they found a total wilderness, inhabited by humanoid type creatures
>
> devoid of respectable intelligence and culture, devoid of a belief in God, given to

inhumane social practices, and incapable of functioning in a civilized

society….What we have overlooked in education is that there were many

civilizations in the Americas, made up of human beings who had families,

cultures and religions long before Columbus' arrival. There were even great

urban centers. In 1250 AD the city of Cahokia, which was larger than London,

England, at the time, rose out of the plain of what is now southern Illinois, on the

Mississippi River….The message students should have been getting all these

years is that Indians engaged in commerce, operated farms, maintained legitimate

healing and ecological practices, devised sophisticated organizational and

governance systems, and were capable of discovering not only places but

medicines and such materials as rubber and asphalt (p. 112).

The significance of Rutstein's observation is that it demonstrates the ethnocentricity of

the American educational system. That which is valued by the culture is taught and

recognized. The message to White students and students of color is that only White

accomplishments are worthy of acknowledgement, or that people of color have made no

significant contributions to the culture. Without any individual act of cruelty, the

systemic roots of racism remain intact as generations of Americans, often unknowingly,

pass racist assumptions to their progeny. The insidiousness of these erroneous and

denigrating assumptions embedded in the culture reveals the nature of systemic racism.

Therefore, it is largely an effortless matter to perpetuate racism.

An understanding of systemic racism and recognition that mere contribution to the status quo can reinforce racism reveals that it is not so easy to extricate oneself from any responsibility for perpetuating the ideologies of racism. In fact,

maintenance of the basic racial controls is now less dependent upon specific

discriminatory decisions. Such behavior has become so well institutionalized that

the individual generally does not have to exercise a choice to operate in a racist

manner. The rules and procedures of the large organizations have already

prestructured the choice. The individual only has to conform to the operating

norms of the organization and the institution will do the discriminating for him.

The lack of recognition of this phenomenon is one of the underpinnings of

modern racism. (Baron, 1969 as cited by Briggs & Paulson, 1996, p. 152).

Rutstein (1997) provided an example that illustrates the insidious nature of new or modern racism and why it is often considered subtle, yet so complex.

During the era of political correctness there are more sophisticated ways to punish

a recalcitrant minority and keep 'them' in their 'proper place'. One way is to

intensify the process of eliminating or cutting back benefits granted during the

heyday of the Civil Rights period. Political scientist Roger Boesche of Occidental

College has identified some of the aims of the process: Nothing violent, mind

you. Just things like the elimination of affirmative action, denying minorities

services like education and health care, eliminating 50,000 staff members from

Head Start, cutting money allocated for summer jobs for inner city youth, cutting

funds for low income housing and building more prisons and putting black men in

them. Nothing violent, just acts of deprivation that will make life for blacks even more insecure and difficult to endure, and in the end intensify the degree of violence in the black community….Which, in turn, will justify officialdom's decision to employ harsher measures in cracking down on black violent crime, which is viewed by those who commit the crimes as acts of rebellion performed by freedom fighters. In the meantime, white onlookers, through the medium of television, silently applaud the action of the police. This feeling and other feelings generated by observing the black social chaos portrayed on TV fuels the whites' repressed obsession in regards to blacks. This cycle has been in operation for a long time (p. 98).

Systems, such as cultural phenomena, often escape the analysis of those who operate within them. Rutstein's use of the word "cycle" is meaningful in the explanation of systemic racism, because it illustrates its seemingly automatic nature, that behaviors and consequences will be repeated unless there is an interruption of the cycle. Feagin and Vera (1995) indicated that "the system of racial subordination and exploitation is so taken for granted; it is now nearly 400 years old and is woven into every major institution in this society" (p. xiii). This pervasive and entangled structure, where assumptions and reactions that are harmful and disrespectful to people of color are enacted out of habit and tradition is systemic racism.

Kivel (1996) explained that, "racism is not just the sum total of all the individual acts in which White people discriminate, harass, stereotype or otherwise mistreat people of color. The accumulated effects of centuries of white racism have given it an

institutional nature which is more entrenched than racial prejudice" (p. 160). Even if all

overt, interpersonal acts of racist behavior were eliminated tomorrow, there would still

exist a systemic, sometimes difficult to cull out racism that permeates the very fabric of

American culture. "A person is much less likely to act in way [sic] favorable to minority

groups, irrespective of their personal attitudes toward them, because of the organizational

consequences to such behavior" (Briggs & Paulson, 1996, p. 150). It is this permeation

or systemic saturation, in addition to the still continuing episodes of interpersonal racist

behavior, which creates the uneven playing field.

Manifestations of modern racism

In the seventy-four year history of the Academy Awards, Halle Berry in 2002,

was the first African-American woman to win a Best Actress Oscar. In her emotional

acceptance speech it was clear that she was well-aware of the historical implications of

her achievement. She said,

> this moment is so much bigger than me. This moment is for Dorothy Dandridge,
> Lena Horne, Diahann Carroll. It's for the women that stand beside me, Jada
> Pinkett, Angela Bassett, Vivica Fox. And it's for every nameless, faceless woman
> of color that now has a chance because this door tonight has been opened. Thank
> you. I'm so honored. I'm so honored (March 24, 2002, 74th annual Academy
> Awards, televised by ABC)

The next morning, I happened to have my car radio tuned to a local talk-show host who claimed to "like" Halle Berry but who took issue with the assertions in her acceptance speech.

He argued that Berry was awarded the Oscar strictly because she had earned it through her acting and that to suggest that other "nameless, faceless women of color" had any better chances of cinematic success because of that broken barrier was ludicrous. Nameless, faceless women did not receive Oscars he argued. He asserted that it was strictly acting ability that earned such an honor. He implied that to call attention to the fact that her race was an issue at all, seemed to suggest that it may have been her race and not solely her abilities that were considered by the Academy. The seventy-four year stretch of White women receiving the Best Actress Oscar was explained by his assertion that other Black women in history just hadn't had her acting ability. I read his tone as insistent, argumentative, and slightly tinged with fear; this was not a fear for safety but fear that a life's worth of ideology was in danger. Before him was evidence that just might make a crack in his conviction that America has been and is a meritocracy where individual effort is all that is needed to earn success or recognition.

This scenario paints a classic picture of the prototypical White versus Black, divergent view of the same event. It is my suspicion that Halle Berry did not mean to imply that she was selected for the Oscar only because of her race, but that she did recognize that throughout film-making history, other Black women had been denied not only awards of merit, but the opportunity to be cast in parts that would qualify one for such awards. Black women have for years been denied parts because of their skin-color,

have been type-cast, stereotyped, and relegated to small roles or supporting roles probably less due to individual acts of racism (although these must not be discounted) but because of systemic or institutional racism. Systemic racism exists when the processes, regulations, or practices of a system inherently create or encourage discriminatory behavior. For example, when justifying the phenomenon that Black women have had little cinematic opportunities, producers would likely argue that they have to play to the bottom line—who will pay to see the movie?, who will they want to see?, what roles will be believable to that audience? In an industry that has traditionally catered to Whites who have had by far the most disposable income, those White people have gone to the movies to see other White people, (and people of color in certain prescribed roles).

It is also my suspicion that the talk show host really wanted to believe that awards for merit, such as the Oscars, are given based on objective measures (or at least fair subjective measures) and that one's social identity is not considered. What the host blinded himself to is the "rigged race" Black women experience prior to even being considered an Oscar nominee (such as not being considered for a lead part because of race or being considered only for roles where Black women are stereotyped). His assumption is that in applying for acting jobs, and in the film business, a merit-based system, or a "fair race" is at work. In his presumed argument, it is mere coincidence, bad luck, or collective lack of application to the task that other Black women throughout Academy Awards history have not risen to Berry's status. (He may concede that he means post-Civil Rights era—but even then, that is about thirty years hence.)

For the talk show host to acknowledge that people of color have been placed at a disadvantage also would mean to acknowledge that Whites have had unearned advantage. This understanding of the system, as automatically disadvantaging some and advantaging others based on race, stands in direct contrast to the American ideal of merit-based accomplishment. Tatum (1992) referred to this phenomenon as the "myth of meritocracy" (p. 6). She reflected that, "an understanding of racism as a system of advantage presents a serious challenge to the notion of the United States as a just society where rewards are based solely on one's merit" (p. 6). Like the American ideal of individualism, discussed earlier, the ideal of a meritocracy is flawed upon close examination, a reality that some would prefer to ignore.

The talk show host, in fact, demonstrated a typical White response, that being denial, to having caught a glimpse of racist evidence. D'Andrea and Daniels (1999c) suggested that denial of reality is a common White response in the face of racism.

There are several reasons why many White persons tend to deny that this problem continues to exist in our nation. One is that the perpetuation of racism represents a serious moral contradiction for those persons who genuinely support the democratic principles upon which our nation is based. This moral contradiction is reflected in the fact that although the United States is based on principles promoting the notion of "justice for all," millions of non-White persons continue routinely to experience various forms of racial discrimination that negatively impact the opportunities they have for personal, educational, and career advancement (Bowser & Hunt, 1996; Cose, 1993; Jones, 1997) (p. 60).

The White talk show host's explanation for the dearth of Black awardees typified the form of modern racism that blames people of color for their circumstances in America, due to their own inadequacies or lack of effort. Berry, on the other hand, seemed well aware of the broad-scoped, racial dynamics that made it possible that she was the first recipient of the prestigious award in seventy-four years. The talk show host was convinced that race was irrelevant to the award decision-making and seemed indignant that such a thing could be suggested.

This example is used because it illustrates a typical American pattern. The White dominant culture typically minimizes the role of race or denies that racism plays a part in current circumstances in order to avoid the discomfort of the alternatives (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999b). White people usually would rather sweep racism under a proverbial rug and would convince themselves that racism, and any of its lingering effects, is dead. People of color and/or those that are aware of the dynamics of racial power and oppression are typically able to clearly see how the experience of racism has effected and still actively effects present day circumstances.

While on vacation this summer over 500 miles away from (at least the physical embodiment of) this dissertation, I was perusing a copy of the Hartford Courant where an article entitled, *Injecting race into the Revolutionary War*, caught my eye. The article discussed a project being pursued by Lena Ferguson and her nephew, Maurice Barboza. The two African-American individuals are attempting to identify Revolutionary War soldiers who were Black in order that their ancestors and public historical record can correctly recognize the contributions of Black patriots. According to the research efforts

of Ferguson and Barboza, poor colonial record-keeping and what is presented as a shoddy investigation by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, left well over 500 Black soldiers unidentified as such.

This story gives a clear example of modern, systemic racism. Specifically, this situation illustrates how the dominant White culture minimizes, trivializes, or ignores contributions of people of color, in this case, Black soldiers. This culture then insinuates that, by expecting fair and correct recognition and accurate historical representation, people of color are "wanting special treatment" or are "putting up a fuss" or are "getting all worked up." The illustration of modern racism, to which I refer, isn't the fact that Ferguson, a documented descendant of a Revolutionary War veteran, had to threaten to sue the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution in the 1980s in order to gain membership to the group. I do not refer either to the fact that the DAR was not thorough in its efforts to identify Black soldiers and then refused to meet with Barboza to discuss the results of his more thorough identification process. Although, each of these elements of the story certainly gives unmistakable examples of racism.

The more subtle manifestation of modern racism is illustrated by the title of the newspaper article. The phrase, *Injecting race into the Revolutionary War* is telling in that it suggests that the subjects of the article, Ferguson and Barboza, are seeking to impose racial identity on the soldiers that did not already exist. The idea seems to be suggested that somehow the Revolutionary War was presumed to be White until race was artificially "injected" recently by Ferguson and Barboza; that correct recognition of Blacks in the Revolutionary War is irrelevant except to these nitpickers.

This case is an excellent example of how the history of the United States has been "whitened" through ignoring and minimizing the contributions of people of color. The further injustice occurs when people of color advocate for recognition or inclusion and are rebuked by hypocritical sentiments suggesting that race is unimportant, or accused of anti-Americanism, or criticized for wanting to 're-write' history. In fact, it is the dominant culture that has a proclivity for presenting history in ways that present its race in a noble, genteel light and, at the same time, diminishing, distorting, or ignoring the contributions of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans.

Modern racism is manifested through this continued absence of honest, historical acknowledgement of the historic role of people of color in the United States. This seems to be related to White feelings of guilt, shame, and unease, which produce White silence, even on matters of historical record, like the race of Revolutionary War soldiers. Another clear example of modern racism is Shipler's (1997) account of the treatment of Mount Vernon, the historical site of George Washington's home. He stated that,

at Mount Vernon, George Washington's estate, slavery was largely absent until recently. On a crisp autumn day in October 1994, many years after the silence should have been filled, tourists filing through the mansion received no hint that African-Americans had been enslaved at this place. Only in the separate building that served as the kitchen did a guide finally add 'slaves' to the end of her last sentence, like a passing afterthought….It was no wonder that blacks were not prevalent among the visitors….The antiseptic approach to life in Washington's day continued at the various outbuildings. To avoid mentioning slaves, signs of

explanation were written in the passive voice. In the washhouse, "clothing for both family and guests was washed.…" In the smokehouse, "…132 hogs were slaughtered.…Meats smoked here were eaten by the Washingtons and their guests." Never did the slaves wash the clothing; never did the slaves slaughter the hogs and smoke the meat…. Beginning in 1995, a candid tour of slave life was conducted two to four times daily, often by Gladys Quander Tancil, a descendant of slaves from a nearby farm. She didn't sugarcoat anything. The overseer was stingy with food, she said. The reconstructed slave quarters was much better than the original, which had a dirt floor and nothing but old rags for slave children to sleep on. As she spoke, she searched the faces of the tourists, tailoring her account to their reactions, not wanting to offend. The belated attention to slavery has drawn more Blacks to Mount Vernon, but some whites express resentment.

One told her, "We came to hear about George Washington, not you" (p. 166-67). This White person's desire not to want to hear about the experience of people of color exemplifies the dominant White culture's sentiments and prevailing conduct, even when the result has meant historical inaccuracy and half-truths. This prevailing behavior of the dominant White culture has had the effect of "whiting out" the contributions and even the presence of people of color.

Robinson (2000) also noted the whitening of American history, specifically in the frieze around the rim of the dome on the United States Capital Building in Washington D.C.. He described this artwork as

depicting in sequenced scenes America's history from the years of early

exploration to the dawn of aviation….The frieze figures are not all white. Native

Americans appear in several of the scenes. In one, the only depiction of an act of

violence, a Native American holds back the arms and head of another Native

American, as still another Native American coils to bludgeon the pinioned figure.

Hmmm. Although the practice of slavery lay heavily athwart the new country for

most of the depicted age, the frieze presents nothing at all from this long, scarring

period. No Douglass. No Tubman. No slavery. No blacks, period….The

frescoes, the friezes, the oil paintings, the composite art of the Rotunda—this was

to be America's iconographic idea of itself. On proud display for the world's

regard, the pictorial symbols of American democracy set forth our core social

attitudes about democracy's subtenets: fairness, inclusiveness, openness,

tolerance, and, in the broadest sense, freedom. To erect the building that would

house the art that symbolized American democracy, the United States government

sent out a request for one hundred slaves….Neither book [on the Capital's

construction, which were available in the gift kiosk] mentioned anything about the

use of slave labor (p. 2-3).

Not only does this inaccurate and misleading artwork demonstrate a clear example of the

"whiting out" or erasure of people of color in America, but it is another telling example

of the contradiction between American spoken ideals and its every day treatment of

people of color.

These types of examples illustrate characteristics of modern racism, specifically denial and minimization of the contributions and significance of people of color. "Organizational procedures develop historically, usually through extending tradition….Once established, these procedures frequently have an inertia all their own, even when they no longer serve any useful purpose and do in fact discriminate" (Briggs & Paulson, 1996, p. 153). The examples above also clarify how doing nothing in particular but promoting the status quo contributes to the problem of racism. They also portray the insipidness of modern racism. Its intent is not necessarily to overtly disparage, but the result passively denigrates. Modern racism ignores, minimizes, and misrepresents facts.

The unequal playing field or the rigged race

Those who deny that racism has any residual effect on people of color argue that with the elimination of laws that endorse discriminatory behaviors, all people in the United States now have an equal chance to succeed. A common explanation for inequalities by virtually all measures is most often explained as lack of effort by people of color. D'Souza (1999) said, "equality of rights for individuals does not necessarily translate into equality of result for groups….If different groups of runners hit the finishing tape at different times, it does not follow that the race has been rigged" (p. 430). Contrary to D'Souza's premise, thorough examination of the institutions and systems that collectively constitute the United States suggests that indeed the race *has* been rigged.

In 1991, ABC-TV broadcast a documentary that followed two men, one Black and one White, with similar qualities and qualifications. The camera crew followed the men as they attempted to rent an apartment, purchase a vehicle, shop in stores, and so on. There were marked discrepancies in the treatment that they received. The Black man was turned away from the apartment rental, was offered a higher price and higher financing for the vehicle, and was followed or ignored in stores. He was also, unlike the White man, followed closely by police as he walked down the sidewalk. While some Whites dismiss cries of discrimination by people of color as without merit, as paranoid, and as requests for special treatment, documented evidence such as this film suggest that racism is ingrained into our culture and institutions. Accusations of paranoia may be better described as realistic reflections of daily experience.

D'Andrea and Daniels (1999c) suggested that,

One of the most serious tragedies that continues to scar our nation involves the

various ways in which White racism is perpetuated in our modern society.

Although many White Americans think this problem was largely taken care of

during the civil rights movement (D'Andrea, 1996), there is an abundance of

evidence that points to the fact the White racism continues to have a serious toxic

effect on the lives of millions of persons in the United States….

Beyond…individual acts of racism, more insidious and impactful forms of

institutionalized racism continue to impact large numbers of non-White persons

negatively. Examples of institutional racism include the disproportionate number

of African-American, Hispanic American, and Native American persons who are

currently unemployed, undereducated, in prisons, and living in poverty in this

country (D'Andrea, 1992). Other indicators of this ongoing national dilemma

include both the apathetic and increasingly hostile reactions many White persons

have to the various forms of racism just listed (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1994)

(D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999c, p. 59).

Indeed many white Americans choose not to acknowledge the ways in which the

phenomenon of racism transcends individual acts of meanness (Feagin & Vera, 1995;

Kivel, 1996). It is overly-simplistic to imagine that ethnic slurs no longer spoken in

polite company, many Whites' measure of the elimination of racial prejudice, can offer a

true measurement of the systemic experience of people of color.

Many would deny the existence of the unequal playing field based on the perception that racism is a bygone problem, however its existence is evidenced in the subtleties that define modern racism.   Neubeck and Cazenave (2001) wrote that,

> public opinion surveys …show that the perceived race of welfare recipients matters mightily in determining how recipients are viewed. When welfare recipients are seen as being mostly white they are likely to be thought of with compassion; when they are seen as being mostly black they are viewed with contempt.…Data from the National Opinion Research Center showed that, when asked to directly compare themselves with African Americans, fully three-fourths of white respondents rated African Americans as less likely than whites to prefer to be self-supporting (p. 4-5).

Skin color is often assumed to be a relevant issue when the behavior or circumstances of Blacks or other people of color is examined. Yet, when judging the same behavior or situation with Whites, negative behavior is seldom attributed to skin color.   In the eyes of many Americans, race seems to stand as the significant defining feature of people of color above all other attributes. Phillip (1995) observed that,

> while minority voters around the country have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to support white candidates, whites have just as commonly demonstrated a general tendency not to support minority candidates. As a result, to this day, it is districts in which minorities make up more than half the population that elect minority candidates (p. 13).

It is presumed that people of color will vote for Whites despite racial differences, yet the reverse, that Whites will vote for people of color despite racial differences, is a privilege not accorded most people of color. It is these types of subtle perceptions and assumptions that tend to reveal the status of racism in America that is often obscured or denied. Other more blatant disparities are clear, but often get ignored or avoided by those who would argue that racism no longer exists. "In spring 2002, as reported by CNN, the Institute of Medicine found that Whites receive better and more aggressive healthcare than others" (Gill, 2002, p. 16). In fact,

> despite the wishful thinking and obfuscations of modern racial conservatives (D'Souza, 1995; Herrnstein, & Murray, 1994), there is compelling evidence that racism is not an artifact of the American past, but persists as a contemporary social and cultural norm (Bell, 1992; Franklin 1991; Jordan, 1968)….This evidence is complemented by the existence of massive and measurable objective inequalities between persons of color and white Americans (Banner and Haley, 1994; Farley, 1984; Farley, & Allen, 1987; Hacker, 1992; Jaynes, & Williams, 1989; Sigelman, & Welch, 1991) (Hudson & Hines-Hudson, 1999, p. 22).

The nature and extent of the measurable inequalities are undeniable. Some of the consequences of modern racism are more difficult to measure, and seemingly more insidious.

For instance, a court system investigation clearly illustrates how systemic and institutional racism is ubiquitous but can be elusive, difficult to pinpoint, and complicated to untangle. On July 22, 2002, the Pittsburgh Tribune Review reported that, as per their

investigation, "county residents in predominantly white neighborhoods are twice as likely to be called for jury duty as those living in black neighborhoods. The investigation also uncovered a consistent pattern of racial exclusion that exists in every black neighborhood and municipality in the county" (Houser, 2002, p. 1). It is probable that investigation, as the District Attorney promises, will result in the discovery of some underlying factors that create the racial imbalance.

It will be difficult to measure, however, the far-reaching impact that the imbalance has had, for an as yet unspecified number of years, on Black people (and White people) in the county that includes the city of Pittsburgh. It also exemplifies the fact that even today, over thirty years after Civil Rights legislation that some would argue "fixed racism", systems and practices exist that denigrate and devalue people of color in the United States. In a classic manner, this uncovered judicial imbalance strikes at the very heart of the hypocrisy noted above by Tocqueville, DuBois, and more recently, Bell; that the American ideal that boasts of being judged by a jury of one's peers, does not apply equally to people of color.

Parenti, quoted by Jensen (2000) indicated that "racism intervenes at every stage of the criminal-justice process: arrest, arraignment, indictment, trial, conviction, and sentencing. At each step, privilege acts to cull whites out" (p. 6). The administration of penalty in the judicial system benefits the dominant culture over the poor who are more often people of color. Kivel (1996) explained that,

> one example of corporate fraud is the Savings and Loan debacle in which
>
> hundreds of millions of dollars were transferred to the rich at a cost to the country

of over $500 billion which we will be paying off well into the next century. This will cost each of us over $2,000. (That adds up to $10,000 for my family of five.) A bill was passed in Congress and signed into law which made it impossible to prosecute individual corporate officers or others who had been instrumental in the failure of Savings and Loans and who had benefited from those failures. This law was passed at the same time as the Omnibus Crime Bill which ostensibly cracks down on crime. Clearly White collar crimes by the rich are being treated much differently than crimes committed by the poor and people of color. (p. 165).

Jensen (2000) described the racism that he suggested permeates the judicial and penal system. Of his own experience he observed,

I teach creative writing inside a prison. My employers have told me that I am not to represent myself as a spokesperson for the prison, nor may I comment in print on subjects on which I am not an expert. I can, however, talk about those things I have experienced directly, such as my classes. So, though I cannot tell you the entire judicial-and-penal system is racist, I can tell you that nearly all of my minimum-security students have been white, and nearly all of my maximum-security students have been black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or 'other'" (p. 5).

Jensen did not rely on his own observations in his work on the judicial and penal system. He interviewed Christian Parenti, whom he cited as having studied the system in various roles for the last decade. Parenti discussed the theory of Yale law professor, Robert Perkinson, which suggests that " slavery [is] the real birth of American incarceration" (p.

6). He believes that the modern criminal justice system is the extension of the measures used to control black people, men in particular, in the South.

> For example, the antislave militias of the South, called 'patrollers,' did many of the same things cops do now: traveling assigned 'beats,' stopping black people, demanding to see their papers, and ransacking their homes looking for contraband…Then, after the Civil War, the 'black codes' arose, and Southern criminal justice as we know it was born. By the 1880s and 1890s, Southern criminologists were talking about the 'innate criminality' of black people…[which led to an] explosion of incarceration in the South (p. 6).

Parenti also cited sociologist, Loic Waqaunt who "calls criminal justice the latest development in an age-old project of controlling black people with force" (p. 6). Waqaunt's and Perkinson's theory may seem far-fetched, until one looks at some current penal system realities.

> Although African Americans make up only 13 percent of the general population, they comprise 58 percent of the prison population and 74 percent of all prisoners convicted on drug charges. This country [the U.S.] imprisons black men nine times more frequently than it does white men. According to one study, a third of all black men between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine were under some sort of criminal justice supervision in 1995. It's a form of apartheid (Jensen, 2000, p. 6).

The systemic nature of racism and its manifestations in modern U.S. society are concretely outlined through examination of the penal and criminal justice system.

Other sources concur. Gill (2003) documented that,

> statistics show an ongoing racial divide…Based on a study by Human Rights
>
> Watch, The New York Times noted in June 2000 that nearly twice as many
>
> Blacks are imprisoned for drug offenses as Whites, even though there are five
>
> times more White drug users than Blacks. A 2002 report by Human Rights
>
> Watch found that Blacks and Hispanics make up 63 percent of the adult prison
>
> population in the United States, but only 25 percent of the national population (p.
>
> 16).

That racial inequities exist cannot be denied. Even if the design and perpetuation of this

system lacked a racist purpose, the resulting racial disparity cannot be easily dismissed as

coincidental.

Other systems, too, create more disproportionately negative outcomes for people

of color. In the educational system, segregated and inferior schools force people of color

to start behind (Kivel, 1997; Rutstein, 1997). Kivel noted,

> Most students in the United States go to schools that are highly segregated by race
>
> because of discriminatory housing and lending practices, and estate tax laws
>
> which promote the transfer of wealth through generations. Predominantly white
>
> schools spend much more per student than schools in which the majority of
>
> students are of color. The average difference in spending is probably about 2:1,
>
> although in many areas the greatest differences can run 8:1 or 10:1. An additional
>
> $1,500 per year per student gives a class of thirty $45,000 more a year. Without a
>
> single overt act of discrimination the educational opportunities of most children of

color in our country are vastly deficient when compared to those of white

children. Today we have an educational system that is nearly as racially

segregated and unequal as before the Supreme Court's Brown vs. Board of

Education ruling outlawed intentional school segregation. This is institutional

racism (p. 161).

To provide a concurring observation, in a March 28, 2003 address before Howard

University Law School, United States Representative Artur Davis (D) Alabama observed

that when he spoke at a high school on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, fifty years, he noted,

after Brown versus the Board of Education that outlawed school segregation, every

student in his audience was Black. Consideration of the disparate opportunities and the

continuing realities of, at least pragmatic, segregation afforded through the educational

system provides a concrete example of how, *without a single overt, individual act of*

discrimination, and without legal sanction, racism is perpetuated.

People of color who do succeed in the educational area and become professional

educators continue to grapple with inequities in academia. Kivel (1997) reports that

professors who are people of color earn less, approximately 75% of what Whites with

similar qualifications earn. In addition, recent salary and hiring freezes in many

institutions have prevented people of color, who are typically more recently hired, from

in a sense, catching up, to higher income brackets (Kivel, p. 161). More, too, is often

expected from people of color in academia with fewer support systems in place. Often

they are expected to advise all students of color and are asked to be members of many

campus committees where diversity is desired, which can create heavier advising and

campus service loads. At the same time, established networks in academia are mostly

White, and lack of role models, like more seasoned professionals who are people of

color, makes peer support more rare.

A focus on modern racism, which can be subtle, is not to suggest that overt acts of

racial hatred have been eliminated for people of color in academia. For example, in

December of 2002, an African American English professor at the University of

Pittsburgh found a carefully crafted noose that had been left on his desk next to a copy of

a 1952 book by African American author, Ralph Ellison, that was required reading for a

class (Schackner, 2002). (The book traces the journey of a Black man and his

experiences with being Black in America.) This situation exemplifies the type of

harassment or negative attention with which people of color in academia can be

confronted. The physical, emotional, and psychological energy that is required to handle

such an incident is, of course, energy spent above and beyond one's regular teaching

requirements and has the potential to interfere with one's livelihood and effectiveness as

an educator.

In sectors outside of academia, it is common for people of color to work harder to

achieve comparable standards of living. "Three economists at The Economic Policy

Institute released, 'The State of Working America,' a report that concludes that American

families are working longer hours than 10 years ago. Middle-income Caucasian families

are working about 250 hours more per year than a decade ago. Whites, however, have it

easy compared to middle-class African American families, who are working an extra 500

hours, or 12 full-time weeks, more than Whites" (Diversity Monitor, October, 2000 as

cited by The Business Women's Network, 2002, p. 464). Gill (2003) reported that, "the average White household in 2002 had a net worth of $84,000, compared to a net worth of $7,500 for the average Black household, according to Franklin Raines, CEO of Fannie Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association) and former director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget" (p. 16). On the employment and economic fronts, it would be difficult to argue that the playing field is equal.

In what is often thought of as strictly an objective numbers game, the world of banking and finance, as well, is infiltrated by practices that perpetuate systemic racism. In a special report entitled, *The Race Question*, the Pittsburgh Post Gazette in 1996 published conventional home mortgage denial rates from the six county area around Pittsburgh, Pennnsylvania. Applicants who were White and earned $100,000 or more experienced a denial rate of 4.71%; applicants who were black and earned $100,000 or more experienced a denial rate of 14.52% ("Race Question," 1996). Pincus (1999a) confirmed that,

> banks in various cities have 'redlined' certain minority areas (that is, they have
> refused to grant mortgages to people who live in these areas regardless of whether
> they meet the financial qualifications specified), and they have granted smaller
> mortgages at higher interest rates (p. 121).

The playing field is clearly not equal when housing and real estate practices are examined. Housing inequities then, beget educational inequities due to property value and tax base issues. Other arenas, too, serve to illustrate the systemic phenomena that create the rigged race.

On June 5, 2003, the Erie Times News in Erie, Pennsylvania covered a prospective fire fighters recruitment event. Fire fighters in attendance from Buffalo, New York were quoted as saying that "the lack of diversity in [the] Erie [department] was 'surprising to the point of shock'" (Gardner, 2003, p. 1). Erie has an African American population of fourteen percent and four percent "other minorities". The fire department as of June, 2003 had one Black fire fighter.

In addressing systemic racism within social systems, Briggs and Paulson (1996) stated that,

> within the social service sectors such as foster care, mental health, juvenile justice, and general assistance, people of color receive more restrictive modes of treatment even if they have the same diagnosis as Whites….In other words, the color line continues to be a major determinant of placement in the social hierarchy (p. 149).

Social networks like country clubs and university clubs, where business contacts abound, have traditionally, either by policy or by practice, kept people of color out (Pincus, 1999c). Tax structure is complex and, therefore, through its nature, protects the accumulated and concentrated wealth of the richest members of society (Kivel, 1997).

> White Americans no longer need to overtly discriminate against people of color to maintain a racial hierarchy. Because of the vast disparities of wealth, power and privilege, and the historical injustices upon which that wealth and power is built, we cannot rely on neutral legal remedies, on bans against overt acts of discrimination, or on individual white people unlearning prejudice as sufficient

means to overcome racism—although these are all important….Racism is self-

sustaining…*We must judge our efforts at justice by the justice they produce*

(Kivel p. 161).

This idea that whites can do nothing in particular to actively harm people of color and yet

still perpetuate racism is a foreign and unpopular concept with the dominant white

majority. Instead, there seems to be a common perception that people of color are the

recipients of a multitude of special treatments and consideration. This thinking can create

backlash attitudes toward programs and services originally instituted to work toward

equalizing the playing field. Kitano (1997) wrote that,

> …although there is a significant decline in anti-black sentiment (Kluegel and
>
> Smith, 1986), there is no significant change in our racial stratification system and
>
> inequality. It appears that anti-black sentiment has become less direct and now
>
> stems from a variety of sources, including a perception that Blacks are receiving
>
> favored treatment form the government, and that differences in economic status
>
> are not the result of race, but of individual failures (Kitano, p. 51).

Often this backlash mentality takes the form of blaming people of color for "taking white

jobs". The thinking that the jobs belong to Whites to begin with reveals racist

assumptions, but further, it is mostly White-owned corporations that exploit communities

and are increasingly opting to relocate their businesses to other countries where they can

pay lower wages (Kivel, 1996).

> For those Americans who do not understand (or don't care to understand) the

systemic and omnipresent nature of racism, and its accumulative effects on people of

color, programs designed to mitigate some of those effects seem like unnecessary political pandering. Despite this popular rationale that compensatory programs are no longer needed, the American experience for Whites versus people of color stands as testimony that the effects of racism endure.

Demott (1997) cited these statistics that starkly contrast the standard of living of Whites and Blacks in the United States.

Black infants die in America at twice the rate of white infants. (Despite the increased numbers of middle-class blacks, the rates are diverging, with black rates actually rising.) One out of every two black children lives below the poverty line (as compared with one out of seven white children). Nearly four times as many black families exist below the poverty line as white families. More than 50 percent of African American families have incomes below $25,000. Among black youths under age twenty, death by murder occurs nearly ten times as often as among whites. Over 60 percent of births to black mothers occur out of wedlock, more than four times the rate for white mothers. The net worth of the typical white household is ten times that of the typical black household. In many states, five to ten times as many blacks as whites age eighteen to thirty are in prison (p. 97).

This information clearly suggests that Whites and Blacks can expect a different life experience in the United States. Those who would argue that the effects of racism are negligible, because they neither commit nor witness overt acts of meanness toward

people of color, are applying a narrow view of a complex and entrenched problem. Nicholson (1999) observed that,

> never far beneath the surface, racially divisive issues and emotions are as ubiquitous in the United States today as they were when the Kerner Commission released its famous warning in 1968 that the country was becoming dangerously divided into two unequal nations, one white and one black. In spite of massive executive, judicial, and legislative government intervention since then, little has changed what has turned out to be more of a prophecy in the commission's report than a prescription for remediation. The Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation issued a report to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of the Kerner Commission report. The study, 'The Millennium Breach,' found that 'the racial divide in the United States has not only materialized (as predicted in 1968), it's getting wider' (New York Times, March 1, 1998, p. A25). Legally, enforced segregation in the United States according to race, or jim crowism, is gone from public life. That was a mighty achievement. Nonetheless, during the final three decades of this century increased racial ghettoization, impoverishment, and imprisonment have not been offset by the modest and sometimes questionable gains of affirmative action programs, school busing, and the creation of political 'minority districts.' Race plays no less a powerful part in the social and political life of the United States today than it ever did (p. 4).

Namely, the unequal racial status in the United States "is maintained not so much through coercion or force, but by exercising control over cultural beliefs and ideologies, as well as

the key legitimizing institutions of society through which they are expressed (e.g., the state and mass media)" (Neubeck & Cazenave, 2001, p. 23). Rather than in the letter of the law, racism exists in the national consciousness of a land both obsessed with and evasive of racism's ubiquity. And, despite desires to wish it not so, clearly the playing field is not equal. Indeed, the 'race' in the United States *is* rigged.

Challenges to interracial dialogue

It is significant to this study that avoidance of contact is cited as an example of modern racism (Episcopal Divinity Church Occasional Papers, 1998). Certainly the complex history of racism in the United States and the disingenuous manner in which Americans have dealt with the issue is at the root of the cultural tendency not to talk about racism, in general, and not to dialogue in interracial groups, in particular.

Although inter-group contact is cited as effective in reducing prejudice and increasing understanding, it is often resisted. Interracial dialogue has been described as difficult, uncomfortable, and sometimes even dangerous. Pettigrew (1996) said that, "interracial social interaction is generally awkward at best" (p. xi). Rutstein (1997) referred to "the prevailing fears associated with interracial encounters" (p. 86).

Tatum (1992 & 1998) described her experience with teaching a course on the psychology of racism as so saturated with resistance to discussing race that she has categorized the reluctance she encounters. The three sources of resistance that she listed are,

(1) Race is considered a taboo topic for discussion, especially in mixed race

settings; (2) Many students, regardless of racial-group membership, have been

socialized to think of the United States as a just society; (3) Many students,

particularly White students, initially deny any personal prejudice, recognizing the

impact of racism on other people's lives, but failing to acknowledge its impact on

their own (Tatum, 1992, p. 5).

These three broader issues have been discussed previously in this chapter. Blauner

(1999) described interracial dialogue as "so badly needed and yet so rare today" (p. 35).

Nicholson (1999) stated that, "the topic of racism is never casual in everyday

conversation" (p. 4). In other words, the promise that this type of activity holds for

intergroup relations is mitigated by Americans' historical cultural reluctance to engage

with racial groups other than their own.

Given the societal norms that tend to discourage discussions of race, I seek,

through this study, to consider what can be learned about the experience of those persons

who participate in racial dialogue. The study of factors, or personal traits, characteristics,

skills and experiences, is relevant to determining what develops the propensity for

individuals to participate in an interracial dialogue on racism. It may be instructive to

first examine what impedes interracial dialogue in order to place factors that facilitate

dialogue into some context.

Cognitive dissonance

The theory of cognitive dissonance, developed by Leon Festinger (1957), suggests that humans experience a distressing mental state when they are confronted with ideas or situations that do not fit with their belief system (Griffin, 1997; Rosenthal, 1993). Festinger suggested that "when dissonance is present, a person will not only attempt to reduce it, but will also take steps to avoid situations and information that are likely to increase it" (as cited in Helms, 1990, p. 59). For many, discussing racism is an experience that generates a great deal of cognitive dissonance (McFalls, & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Tatum, 1997).

Therefore, educators are engaged in discourse about reducing cognitive dissonance, as it relates to diversity education and the topic of intergroup relations (Locke & Kiselica, 1999; McFalls, & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Stephan & Stephan, 2001). That cognitive dissonance is an issue in diversity education is not surprising given Griffin's explanation that, "not only do we tend to select reading material and television programs that are consistent with our existing beliefs, we usually choose to be with people who are like us. By taking care to 'stick with our own kind,' we can maintain the relative comfort of the status quo.

Like-minded people buffer us from ideas that could cause discomfort" (Griffin, 1997, p.). This tendency to surround ourselves with others who are similar to us is one factor that may prevent individuals from choosing to engage in an interracial experience, especially one that requires substantial commitment. Festinger (1957) suggested three

typical responses that are meant to reduce dissonance: (a) changing a behavior; (b) changing an environmental belief; and (c) developing new beliefs.

The first reaction, changing a behavior, is extremely common in interracial situations. Tatum (1992) suggested that frequently for White people, "withdrawal (accomplished by avoiding contact with people of color and the topic of racism) is a strategy for dealing with the discomfort [of cognitive dissonance created by the topic of racism]" (p. 14).

> Which alternative the White person chooses probably depends on the extent to which her or his cross-racial interactions are voluntary. It seems likely that the person who can remove herself or himself from interracial environments or can remove Blacks from White environments will do so" (Helms, 1990, p. 59).

The most common strategy to reestablish congruence is to avoid the dissonance-creating environment.

Another course of action in reducing cognitive dissonance is to reduce it by changing one's attitudes to be consistent with the beliefs that have emerged in the group and then to attempt to change the beliefs of others within one's scope of influence. As might be expected, attempting to change the beliefs of others is often unsuccessful, which makes this way of reducing dissonance a difficult route. "This dissonance reducing strategy is likely to be met with rejection by Whites as well as Blacks" (Helms, 1990, p. 59). To the extent that the alteration of one's own worldview or that of others is required for achievement of congruence, there are obvious complexities and opposing forces.

The third course of action is to develop new beliefs that reject or minimize the new race-related theories; this is a strategy discussed elsewhere here as denial. Denial has been suggested as a common response to new information about racism. The cognitive dissonance so often experienced surrounding the topic of racism presents a clear deterrent to interracial dialogue. Since withdrawal and denial account for the most common reactions to the challenges to one's worldview that often occur in such experiences, intentional interracial dialogue is rare. Basic knowledge of cognitive dissonance is critical to understanding what is unique about the participants in this study who voluntarily entered into interracial dialogue.

Intergroup anxiety

Intergroup anxiety is described by Stephan and Stephan (1985) as an anxiety that stems from the anticipation of interacting with people from a different cultural, racial, or ethnic group. Intergroup anxiety is "common within cultures, for example, in contacts between members of different racial and ethnic groups, and between members of nonstigmatized and stigmatized groups" (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 158). Stephan and Stephan suggested that intergroup anxiety is important and relevant to examination of intergroup behavior and interaction because it accounts for some of the "unique characteristics of intergroup interaction" (p. 158). Intergroup anxiety is a generally accepted concept and is supported by research as well as common opinion; however, there are many variables that mediate the degree and nature of the anxiety (Owens, 1998).

Intergroup anxiety is stimulated by three sets of factors. They are prior intergroup relations, prior intergroup cognitions, and situational factors. Particularly relevant to an

interracial group in the United States are the first two factors. First, prior intergroup relations are important because this concept includes conditions of contact, which are among antecedent factors described by Stephen and Stephen (1985) that determine the degree of anxiety an individual might experience in anticipating inter-group contact. It is suggested by the theory that if there is a history of conflict between the two groups, such as exists between racial groups in the United States, then anxiety is likely to be heightened.

The second factor, prior intergroup cognitions, includes knowledge of "stereotypes, prejudice, expectations, and perceptions of dissimilarity" (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, p. 158). Certainly in the United States where racial prejudices and stereotypes are a significant factor, the intergroup anxiety created by interracial dialogue would predictably be exacerbated. Confronting feelings of guilt, one's own mistaken beliefs and assumptions about the other group, and overcoming one's fears can all be distressing (Stephen & Stephen, 2001, p. 118). Through a process called "effort justification", participants tend to regard their behavior and positive attitude change, and the social cause as being worth all the effort in order to justify the distress or participation (Hoffman, 1993; Stephen & Stephen, 2001).

Stephan and Stephan (2001) observed that, "participants in intergroup dialogues often engage in behaviors that are disapproved of by members of their own group and that are in direct conflict with their own prior beliefs. The close interpersonal relations and growing concern for the welfare of the others in the group must often be justified

against a backdrop of prior contradictory behaviors and beliefs" (p.118). As discussed above, this often generates cognitive dissonance, which becomes difficult to reconcile.

In summary, avoidance, when it is possible, is the most common response to such heightened inter-group anxiety. This behavior is primarily due to a) the discomfort experienced when individuals are challenged to change their basic assumptions and beliefs about fundamental social constructs (like race); and b) the discomfort and anxiety experienced by many individuals when anticipating interaction with people who are different racially and /or culturally from them.

A reasonable focus, then, is on what factors prompt individuals to overcome or to cope with intergroup anxiety and cognitive dissonance to actually participate in interracial dialogue. A review of related literature suggests investigation surrounding participants' interpersonal skills and empathy development, which both have been associated with emotional intelligence, moral reasoning, racial identity level, and life experiences.

Racial differences

Both White people and people of color have been discouraged from participating in interracial dialogue on race. There may be some commonalities and some differences to be discovered in how the races experience both discouragers and motivating factors. People of color and White people may be prompted to participate by similar factors but to different degrees.

For Whites, agreeing to dialogue with people of color may mean opening oneself up to feelings of guilt, blame, shame, frustration, anger, and fear of being "found out" and

labeled racist or being the target of anger (Dalton, 1995; Hacker, 1995; Kivel, 1996;

Tatum, 1997) Kivel (1996) said, "As part of growing up white and learning racial

stereotypes, we have been trained to stiffen up, be more cautious, fearful and hesitant

around people of color" (p. 14). Kivel added that White people who have spoken up

about racism historically in the United States have been silenced, isolated, discredited or

otherwise punished for having done so (p. 22). Physical assaults (White civil rights

leaders killed in the 1960s), labels and name-calling ('Nigger-lover'), being ostracized

from White social groups, and getting fired from jobs, etcetera, are examples of how

Whites have been discouraged from speaking about racism (Kivel, 1996). There is often

an underlying level of fear, not only of saying the 'wrong thing' but of physical attack

(Locke & Kiselica, 1999). "There is a belief that something will happen to them

[Whites], as a result of interacting with people of color, and particularly with African

Americans" (Locke & Kiselica, 1999, p. 85).

For people of color, speaking out about race and racism has netted similar and

worse social consequences including lynching, harm to self and family, and further

subjugation. People of color may be hesitant to engage in interracial discourse because

of the risks involved, some of which may be expressing vulnerability in the presence of

Whites, trusting Whites, or opening or reopening painful emotional wounds (Dalton,

1995). Living with the effects of racism on a daily basis may also leave people of color

drained of the issue and needing personal respite rather than further engagement on the

topic or bearing the responsibility of "educating White folk" (Dalton, 1995, p. 36).

(1997) reflected that,

understandably, many African-Americans feel unduly burdened by the demand

that they cajole, instruct, and lead White people by the hand toward open-

mindedness. Irritated blacks sometimes delight in mocking the whining tone of

whites who plead, "Tell me what I did wrong. Tell me what I can do." Without

aid from blacks, however, few whites seem likely to reach the level of

sophisticated sensitivity needed to foster racial harmony. By and large, white

America has not tuned in to the subtleties of race that black America understands

very well (p. 562).

Accumulated frustrations, the result of years of over-extended patience with Whites and

their tendency not to see what is so obvious to people of color, can take a significant toll

on the number of people of color who have the energy to engage in interracial dialogue

on race.

In addition, African American males, as a group, have more experience with

poverty, unemployment, poor education, and familial distress than any other ethnic or

racial group in the United States (Gill, 2003). Owens, (1998) wrote that,

male African Americans experience distinctly higher rates of involvement with

the criminal justice system, personal and family violence, and substance abuse

than any other demographic group in America. Gibbs (1988) hypothesizes such

self-destructive behaviors reflect an inability from many young male African

Americans to cope with overwhelming feelings of anger and rage. Victims of a

complex interaction of factors—devaluation, low status, poverty, cultural and

social isolation, political and economic powerlessness—this group may not be

simply engaging in antisocial behaviors but responding to a perception of their

social context as unendurable….Many have developed an alternate set of values

which are based on the skills necessary to survive namely, status and material

wealth…They are frequently perceived as objects of fear and discrimination.

More importantly, these individuals bring a different set of beliefs, expectations,

and subsequent pattern of behaviors to interracial interactions because of these

factors (p. 9-10).

Owens (1998) suggested that the interracial behavior of African American males may be

affected by the particular, cumulative impact of racism on their lives. Relevant to this

study, it seems reasonable to suggest that even the decision to engage in interracial

dialogue may be affected by the particular impact of racism on African American males.

Attentiveness to gender and racial differences that may illuminate patterns related

to interracial dialogue decisions seems advisable. Intragroup themes or trends (among

women or men, or within different racial groups) are, then, other areas of which to be

aware in data collection and analysis. For all racial groups, interracial dialogue on race is

often viewed as difficult and anxiety provoking. Dalton (1995) said,

it is small wonder that true engagement is so rare. Usually, no one wants to take

the initiative. Talking honestly about race feels risky. We aren't quite sure how

to do it or where it will lead. The upside is uncertain and largely unknown. Even

if things go well, what will be accomplished? The downside, however, feels

much more predictable. Although we may not be able to say precisely how, we

tend to believe that if things go badly there will be hell to pay….More often, our

fears stem from the belief that there is little margin for error in race conversations, and that the relationship between us and whomever we would engage is not strong enough or resilient enough to withstand pressure (p. 31-35).

Dalton's thoughts provide an excellent synopsis of why interracial discourse on race is so exceptional. What, then, prompts a person of any race to engage in such aberrant behavior?

<div style="text-align: center;">Factors that may contribute to interracial dialogue</div>

No literature currently has been located that specifically studies factors that promote interracial dialogue on race. However, in light of my conceptual assumption detailed in Chapter I, that White participants engaged in interracial dialogue are likely to be described as anti-racists, it seems applicable to examine the limited discourse on characteristics of anti-racists. Exploration of studies on characteristics of antiracists may hold some clues that could inform this study on characteristics of those who engage in interracial dialogue.

The factors reviewed below were selected for exploration in this research, based on their plausibility as precipitating factors to interracial dialogue or diversity competence. Plausibility was established through review of current related discourses and this researcher's interpretation and compilation of the existing literature. Specific attention will be paid to participants' emotional intelligence including the sub-items of interpersonal skills and empathy, moral development, racial identity, and life experiences.

<u>Emotional intelligence</u>

Empirical research on emotional intelligence is in its infancy but continues to emerge as a topic of public as well as academic interest. The definition of the construct of emotional intelligence is not universally shared. Emotional intelligence, according to Goleman (1995), referred to the abilities included in the five domains of knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships (p. 43). Ciarrochi, Forgas and Mayer (2001) referred to earlier work by Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) to define emotional intelligence as "an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them" (p. 9).

Goleman's (1998) work gave specific operational form to Ciarrochi, Forgas and Mayer's definition. Goleman extrapolated specific human relations skills that seem to be rooted in the basic abilities defined by Ciarrochi and associates. Two such skills that appear to have relevance to interracial dialogue are interpersonal skills and empathy, which will be discussed more fully below.

Preliminary research supports speculation of a relationship between diversity competence and emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman's (1998) popular work on emotional intelligence cited "leveraging diversity" as a critical interpersonal skill that includes the abilities to "respect and relate well to people from varied backgrounds; understand diverse worldviews and [display] sensitivity to group differences; see

diversity as opportunity, creating an environment where diverse people can thrive; and …

challenge bias and intolerance" (p. 154-155). Goleman understood the ability to leverage

diversity to be a product of the ability to empathize and to manage emotions in the self

and in others. Goleman's work clearly described a diversity competence that is part of

the broader scope of emotional intelligence skills that his research suggests are critical to

professional and personal success. Based on a more rigid standard for empirical data on

the issue however, Ciarrochi's group cited managing emotions of self and others as

emotional intelligence, but they did not address diversity skills at all.

The specific connection between emotional intelligence and cultural competence

was raised in recent counseling literature (Constantine & Gainer, 2001). These

researchers expressed a need to investigate how counselors' emotional intelligence and

empathy relate to self-perceived competence in counseling a diverse population. This

study found that school counselors' prior multicultural education, emotional intelligence

scores, and personal distress empathy scores were correlated with significantly higher

rates of self-perceived multicultural knowledge, but not self-perceived awareness. The

findings in the Constantine & Gainer study suggest the need for continued research in the

area of emotional intelligence and diversity competence.

Interpersonal skills. One factor that I suggest may have some relationship to the willingness and the ability to effectively interact with people of races other than one's own is level of interpersonal skill. It seems reasonable to suppose that people who are adept at interpersonal interaction may transfer those skills to an interracial interaction. Therefore, the area of interpersonal skills is one that deserves some attention in this inquiry.

It seems further reasonable that diversity competence, the inclination and ability to interact with others who are different, represents an advanced level of interpersonal skill. Interpersonal skills enable individuals to communicate with others effectively and diversity competence merely adds the element of social group difference to the interpersonal interaction.

Review of the literature suggests a possible correlation between higher-level interpersonal skills and a higher measured level of racial tolerance (Grossarth-Maticek, Eysenck, & Vetter, 1989; Hightower, 1997). Some studies specifically linked higher levels of interpersonal skills with psychological health and specifically with racial tolerance and the inverse; claiming that those who display racist behaviors have lower levels of interpersonal skills and poorer mental health (Adorno, Frankel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Grossarth-Maticek, Eysenck, and Vetter, 1989; Gough & Bradley, 1993; Hightower, 1997; Jahoda, 1961; Pettigrew, 1981).

If the assumption is made that persons who engage in interracial dialogue are demonstrating a degree of racial tolerance, it might then suggest that such participants could have well developed interpersonal skills. In related research, O'Brien's (1999)

study of White antiracists suggested that they have a developed ability to empathize

and/or understand social power and interpersonal dynamics. This is exhibited by their

stated understanding of systemic racial power dynamics and their ability to assess the

social implications of their behavior. O'Brien (1999) noted that, "the respondents who

discussed their relatively privileged position in terms of action tactics were race

cognizant because they recognized the power they had as Whites relative to people of

color in a racist society" (p. 419). Interpersonal skill and an awareness of individual

behavior within a social context seems to be, then, a factor worth probing in this study, as

it might contribute to the tendency to participate in interracial dialogue.

Empathy. It is reasonable to think that the ability to listen to others who are

different and to engage in conversation about sensitive topics may require some degree of

empathy skills. In addition, participation in interracial dialogue may be perceived as an

act that by its nature reaches out in connection to others, as an act that may benefit others,

and as an act that could be defined as "prosocial" because of the implied interest

participants may have in social justice.

"Why should anyone be concerned about victims, or more generally, why should

anyone feel an urge to go out of one's way to help other people and reduce their suffering

or distress" (Hoffman, 1993, p. 157)? Hoffman suggested that empathy, or specifically,

empathic distress, is a factor that promotes prosocial behavior. Degree of empathy then,

may make significant contributions to moral judgment and decision-making (Hoffman, p.

178). Typically, however, empathy affect is biased in favor of familiar people, meaning

that empathy is easier toward someone with whom we are familiar. This may indicate

that more highly developed senses of empathy would account for empathic responses to people who are perceived as different or at least unknown to oneself. Therefore, because participants in interracial dialogue are likely to perceive participants of other races as different or unfamiliar to them, empathy appears to be a factor worth probing.

In the limited existing literature on characteristics of antiracists, empathy was suggested as a key factor that was common to those defined as antiracists. Feagin and Vera (1995) concluded that those who were willing to confront their own racism and who had experienced other forms of oppression were more likely to understand and empathize with the experience of racism. Hogan and Netzer's (1995) study substantiated those results and theorized that " 'approximating experiences' describe the way in which people can draw upon their own or others' experiences to develop empathy with people of color and develop an antiracist awareness" (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413). Approximating experiences can "open a small window into understanding other types of oppression" (Croteau, 1999, p. 31). A well-developed sense of empathy, developed through approximating experiences or through other means, then, is worth examination as a factor that may contribute to one's propensity to engage in interracial dialogue.

Moral development

Drawing upon the works of Gilligan (1982), Kohlberg (1975), and Perry (1970), Barrett (1995) defined moral/ethical development as "the process by which an individual makes value judgments concerning right and wrong and his or her sense of responsibility to him/herself and others" (p. 13). The idea that, by this definition, moral development relates to a sense of responsibility to others, makes such development an interesting

factor to explore in this study. It is reasonable to imagine that participants in an interracial dialogue on race may view that participation as a reflection of their sense of responsibility to their own conscience or to others in the society. If such reasoning is used, an individual's level of moral development may be related to the decision to participate in a dialogue group.

Barrett (1995) indicated that little research has been published on the relationship between moral development and prejudice. Barrett's work specifically examined links between moral development and prejudice based on preliminary empirical and theoretical evidence that suggests a relationship. Although her results were inconsistent, she reported that, "findings suggest that as moral development increases …forms of prejudice decrease" (p. 33). The correlation between moral development and sexism and moral development and homophobia was significant; however, it was not statistically significant between moral development and racism.

Barrett theorized that the inconsistent findings might have been due to confounding variables that were introduced with the use of a particular instrument that she used to measure racism. The tool that measured racism asked individuals to indicate how they would take *action*, while the instruments for the other two types of prejudice asked only for *attitudes*. Barrett suggested that factors such as assertiveness and social comfort needed for taking action may have confounded the measure of attitudes about racism. Nonetheless, Barrett's findings on moral development and prejudice suggest that the relationship between moral development and racism warrants further examination.

In her examination of prominent moral development theories, Barrett (1995) synthesized the following common points:

(1) dichotomous thinking is characteristic of thinking at less sophisticated/lower levels of development, (2) decision-making based on consideration of situational contexts is characteristic of more sophisticated/higher levels of development, and (3) there is as [sic] increase in an individual's ability to think independently (not depending on authorities for the answer) as development occurs (p. 15).

Barrett suggested that these criteria may also stimulate prejudice reduction. In relation to the current study, it seems reasonable that these themes be incorporated in interview protocols to ascertain whether the individuals who participated in interracial dialogues on race identify or display moral decision-making that relates to these criteria.

D'Andrea and Daniels (1999c) proposed different psychological dispositions of White racism. The affective-impulsive disposition is characterized by "simple, hostile, and oftentimes illogical ways of thinking" (p. 62) about other racial groups, stereotypical thinking and the use of racial slurs. This orientation toward racial groups "reflects a delay in the development of an individual's ability accurately to conceptualize similarities and differences among persons from different racial and ethnic groups" (D'Andrea & Daniels, p. 62). They suggested that people operating from this disposition are "more inclined to control their racist impulses" (D'Andrea & Daniels, p. 65) when they know that their socially unacceptable behavior will result in punitive action. This mind-set is consistent with Kohlberg's (1978) characterization of persons at the lowest

level of moral development—the pre-conventional stage where behavior is controlled by threat of punishment.

O'Brien (1999) found that "white antiracists show a willingness to take risks and sacrifice their white privilege in certain situations," (p. 416) such as losing friends, experiencing discomfort or complications at work, or even losing jobs. Despite these risks, they also "saw themselves as more able to challenge racism without the fear of repercussions that people of color would face" (p. 418). O'Brien suggested that,

> this posture on confronting racism stands in direct contrast to the African-American respondents quoted in Feagin and Sikes (1994), who stated that they gave an incident a great amount of deliberation and reevaluation before responding, if they responded at all, so as not to confirm the stereotype of paranoid and overreacting blacks. Thus, whites stand in a particularly advantaged position to challenge white racism and be heard and to engage in what I call privileged polemics. My respondents [who were white] were significantly aware of this position (p. 418).

This insight is helpful not only in that it furthers the idea that people of color and Whites may differ in terms of their reasons for engaging in interracial dialogue. These findings also suggest that those who are inclined to participate in such dialogues may do so out of some sense of moral obligation that is stronger than whatever sense of risk or discomfort may be involved. This connection between moral development and antiracism suggests that a line of inquiry seems advisable regarding moral development as it relates to the inclination toward interracial dialogue.

Racial identity

      Racial identity theories proposed by Janet E. Helms (1990), William E. Cross (1971, 1978), and others describe the developmental process that individuals undergo as they gain understanding of the self and others as racial beings, and as they achieve, potentially, racial self-actualization (Helms, 1990; Tatum, 1997; Sue, Carter, Casas, Fouad, Iveyk, Jensen, LaFromboise, Manese, Ponterotto, & Vazquez-Nutall, 1998, Thompson & Carter, 1997). Racial identity is developed through purposeful attention to self-reflection and experience with race (Ponterotto, 1991; Thompson & Carter, 1997). A general version of racial identity development theory for both people of color and for Whites is summarized briefly here.

      For people of color, the stages of racial identity consist of four major stages. In *Preencounter*, the dominant traditional White worldview is idealized and the Black worldview is scorned. In the *Encounter* stage, life circumstances create an awareness of racism and realization that White standards interpret Blacks as inferior. In the *Immersion/Emersion* stage, there is withdrawal into a Black world and rejection of the dominant culture. Finally, in *Internalization*, a positive Black identity is formed and healthy relationships with Whites are also possible (Helms, 1990).

      For Whites, racial identity may remain undeveloped or lie dominant since it is possible for those in the dominant group not to have contact with people of color and not to acknowledge their own White skin privilege (Helms, 1990). The first stage of White racial identity development, then, is *Contact*, when the idea or actuality that people of color exist is first confronted (Helms, 1990). In the *Disintegration* stage there is

awareness of one's own Whiteness and the moral dilemmas associated with being White (Helms, 1990). In the *Reintegration* stage, White identity is acknowledged and the premises of White racism are legitimized. In the *Pseudo-Independent* stage there is active questioning about racial inequality and a positive racial identity is formed (Helms, 1990). In the *Autonomy/Emersion* stage, myths and stereotypes about groups are replaced with more accurate information and emotional catharsis may occur (Helms, 1990). Finally, in the *Autonomy* stage, there is active learning about other cultural groups and how all oppression is related (Helms, 1990).

One's racial identity development process may be significant, then, to the decision to participate in interracial dialogue because for both people of color and Whites, certain stages are characterized by the tendency or willingness to engage with people of different races. (Conversely, some stages would be characterized by a tendency to avoid interracial interaction.) People of color (although Tatum referred here specifically to the Black racial identity model, a very similar developmental process is proposed for all people of color), in the *Internalization* stage are more "willing to establish meaningful relationships with Whites who acknowledge and are respectful of…[their] self-definition" (Tatum; 1992). Typically, people of color in the *Internalization* stage are "ready to build coalitions with members of other oppressed groups" (Tatum; 1992; p.12). Owens (1998) suggested that an "increase in ideological flexibility and a decline in strong anti-Caucasian American feelings" (p. 12) typify the *Internalization* stage for people of color. Helms (1990) added that, "internalization behavior may involve participation in social and political activities designed specifically

to eliminate racism and/or oppression" (p. 29). These factors may suggest an increased

willingness to engage in interracial dialogue by people of color at the Internalization

stage of racial identity.

On the other hand, Black people in the *Immersion* stage typically "withdraw into

Blackness and a Black world" (Helms, 1990, p. 26). Helms (1990) cited Cross's (1978)

work that characterized the *Immersion* stage with "either/or thinking…in that such

persons typically idealize Blackness and African heritage, but denigrate everything

thought to be White and of White Western heritage" (p. 27). Therefore, it seems

reasonable to expect that people of color at this stage would be less likely to participate

electively in an interracial dialogue.

Whites in the *Immersion/emersion* or *Autonomy* stage may be more inclined to

participate in an interracial group because these stages signify an active inquiry about

race, racism, and self/group identity. For example, O'Brien (1999) described White

antiracists who she studied as having "clearly given a lot of thought to their whiteness"

(p. 420). In the *Immersion* stage Whites "seek to replace racially related myths and

stereotypes with accurate information about what it means and has meant to be White in

U.S. society (Helms, 1990)" (Tatum, 1992, p. 16). Such racial exploration may prompt

one to participate in an interracial dialogue. An even stronger case can be made for the

connection to the *Autonomy* stage as "alliances with people of color can be more easily

forged at this stage of development than previously because the person's antiracist

behaviors and attitudes will be more consistently expressed" (Tatum, 1992, p. 17). In

addition, the autonomous person is more likely to be creating opportunities to learn about

other groups (Helms, 1990). By contrast, White people in the earlier *Reintegration* stage would be less likely to be involved in interracial dialogue because at that stage, "honest discussion of racial matters is most likely to occur among same-race peers" (Helms, 1990, p. 60).

Certainly, it is plausible that stage of racial identity, then, may be a factor contributing to decisions to partake in interracial interactions on race. In fact, according to racial development theory, one's participation (or avoidance of participation) in an interracial dialogue group would be a strong indicator of one's stage of racial development. Therefore, in attempting to assess the characteristics of those who participated in interracial dialogue, it seems crucial to examine other indicators of their stage of racial identity development.

Life experience

There seems to be substantial reason to explore the life experience of persons who engage in interracial dialogue in order to more completely capture factors that contribute to their decision to participate. Demographic information like gender, socio-economic information, career, and personal interests will be gathered. Education level in addition to formal and informal educational experiences may affect one's propensity toward interracial dialogue. More in-depth exploration of life experiences, like relationship issues and experience with oppression seems advisable, as well.

Although she noted the absence of significant research investigating who anti-racists are and even moreso, what they do, O'Brien (1999) noted a few studies that explored the characteristics of those termed to be anti-racists. She cited the work of

Herbert Aptheker (1992) who generalized that anti-racists tended to be female, from lower socio-economic levels (as opposed to higher), and have had substantial interaction with people who are of African origin.

Jennifer Eichstedt (1997) cited the approximating experiences of having relationships with people of color, experiencing the stigma of being Jewish, and having experienced sexual abuse or incest as three circumstances that were noted in her study of White antiracist women (as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). "This made these women more conscious of 'abuses of power' and thus enabled them to more closely approximate the experience of racism, another abuse of power (as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). Lastly, Ruth Frankenberg (1993) added "other routes to awareness of racism 'including feminist networks, college campuses, and the influence of friends and family' (as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). Frankenberg characterized Whites as antiracist who were aware of themselves as having a racial identity that is a position of privilege and who took some responsibility for racism (as cited by O'Brien, p. 414).

O'Brien's (1999) research found that her respondents were spread across socio-economic lines, contrary to Aptheker's findings. She, however, did find support for the concept of approximating experiences, but found most often that one experience with oppression was not enough to stimulate development of empathy. "I observe a sort of 'two-pronged' awareness occurring with many of the respondents. In other words, one experience 'planted the seed' so to speak, followed up by another experience that allowed that seed to take root"(p. 414). Although some men fit into the approximating

experiences concept, others related anti-Vietnam war activism and other causes as experiences that opened their eyes to racism (O'Brien, 1999).

<div align="center">Diversity competence and the counseling field</div>

The field of counseling has acknowledged through its professional standards and through its attention in recent years to cross-cultural counseling issues that multicultural competence has not only become a vital measure of counselor effectiveness in the profession, but has influenced the counseling field enough to be termed, by some, "the fourth force" in counseling (Pederson, 1991), (with psychodynamic, behavioral, and humanistic movements representing the first three). The fields of counseling and counseling psychology have placed substantial recent emphasis on multicultural issues as they affect their ability to work with a diverse clientele (Constantine & Ladany, 2000; LaFromboise, Coleman & Hernandez, 1991; Mobley & Cheatham, 1999; Ramsey, 1999). In fact, "the call for infusing multicultural competency criteria into standards of practice has been vocal, loud and compelling" (Sue, D. W., Carter, R. T., Casas, J. M., Fouad, N. A., Iveyk, A. E., Jensen, M.). Addressing racism specifically, Ridley (1995) urged that, "counselors cannot easily dismiss their responsibility in combating racism. Even counselors who are not bigots participate in a larger system that victimizes minorities" (p. 22).

Ponterotto (1991) stated that,

As mental health professionals and human development specialists, counselors and counseling psychologists must take a lead and be at the forefront in society's efforts to improve interethnic, interracial, and interreligious relationships. In fact,

some professionals actively involved in the leadership of the Association for

Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) believe that the counseling

profession has a professional and ethical responsibility to study and to intervene

in the area of prejudice (p. 216).

The ethical relevance of the relationship between racism and the counseling field

is illuminated by Ponterotto's interpretation.

It is also evident through examination of education and supervision needs, which are, at

their core, ethical as well, but also clinical and pragmatic. The literature in each area will

be examined more closely.

<u>Counselor Education</u>

Jung (1910) said,

The cause of repression can be found in the specific American Complex, namely,

to the living together with lower races, especially with Negroes. Living together

with barbaric races exerts a suggestive effect on the laboriously tamed instinct of

the White race and tends to pull it down (Thomas & Sillen, 1991, p. 14 as cited by

Locke & Faubert, 1999, p. 44).

Sentiments spoken by Carl Jung at the second Psychoanalytic Congress in 1910, words,

(by the way, reportedly not challenged by other participants) are a brief, yet powerful

reminder that the history of counseling and psychology are a product of a racist

environment, and have not been immune from racist and culturally biased assumptions

and worldviews. From their inception, the fields of counseling and psychology have

studied and created theory largely from the experience of White people in White

dominated societies, as the field of psychology grew out of the cultural context of 19th and 20th century Europe (Arredondo, 1999; Cheatham, 1999; Pederson, 1999; Tomlinson-Clarke & Wang, 1999). Ridley (1995) added that,

> unfortunately, racism in mental health delivery systems is not new, nor has it been adequately dealt with in the decades since the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The history of racism in mental health care dates back to the early years of this country…Compared to White clients, minority clients are more likely to have unfavorable experiences in many aspects of counseling. These include diagnosis…staff assignment…treatment modality…utilization…[and] treatment duration (p. 6).

The unfavorable experience of people of color in counseling should not be surprising given many counselors' discomfort regarding race.

> Some clients of color who work with counselors who tend to avoid or minimize racial or ethnic issues may perceive that their counselors (a) are uncomfortable dealing with such topics, (b) are not equipped or competent to address these issues, or (c) do not consider racial or ethnic issues to be important. This perceived unwillingness to bring up and explore racial and ethnic issues may greatly affect salient therapeutic issues such as safety, trust, and intimacy, and may ultimately result in clients being underserved (Constantine, 1999, p. 71).

Incompetence in addressing a significant dimension of the human experience, namely race and ethnicity, is a serious obstacle to providing professional and ethical care.

Ridley (1995) suggested that racism permeates the entire mental health system. Helm's (1994) view deepened this perspective with her reflection that "race, per se rarely has been investigated as a psychological variable in psychotherapy research heretofore" (p. 163). It is reasonable to imagine that the neglect of race as an intentional factor in psychological research would contribute to its mishandling, avoidance, or to its marginalized status as an issue at multiple points in the therapy process. Clearly, the mental health field in the United States is the product of a society where racial inequity is a legacy.

In the last few decades, the multicultural movement has instigated ongoing evaluation and redefinition of counseling and counselor education programs (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1991; D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991; LaFromboise et al., 1991; Manese, Wu, & Nepomuceno, 2001; McRae & Johnson, 1991; Midgette & Meggert, 1991; Mobley & Cheatham, 1999; Pederson, 1991; Tomlinson-Clarke & Wang, 1999). As could be expected with any programmatic response to a paradigm shift, it is reasonable to assert that this emphasis on multicultural issues has had and will continue to have substantial impact on the counseling field and on counselor education programs in particular.

Due to the increased interest in multiculturalism in the field of counseling, the question of how to best prepare counselors for competence in this area, and then, how to assess the effectiveness of that multicultural training has been a focus of counselor educators (Arredondo, 1999; D'Andrea & Daniels, 1991b; D'Andrea et al., 1991; Kiselica, 1999; Locke & Faubert, 1999: Manese et al. , 2001; McRae & Johnson, 1991;

Midgette & Meggert, 1991; Mobley & Cheatham, 1999; Pederson, 1991b; Sue, 1991;

Ridley, 1995; Tomlinson-Clarke & Wang, 1999; Worthington, Mobley, Franks, & Tan,

2000). Multicultural competencies as defined by the American Counseling Association

include "understanding yourself as a racial/cultural being and the potential impact it

might have in the therapeutic relationship" (Sue, et al., 1998, p. 125).   Tomlinson-

Clarke and Wang (1999) added further detail about the need for counselors to address

race specifically.

> [A] need exists for educators developing training programs to incorporate racial-
> cultural self-exploration as a goal in providing counselors with experiences to
> prepare for a variety of interactions with clients representing varying aspects of
> human diversity (Carter, 1995; Pinderhughes, 1989; Sue & Sue, 1990).
> Clarifying one's own racial and cultural identities, and developing a sense of
> comfort and self-acceptance, are necessary prerequisites to developing the
> abilities to relate respectfully to people from differing racial and cultural groups
> and to function effectively within culturally diverse groups (Banks, 1997; Carter,
> 1995) (p. 159).

Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang specifically suggested attention to individual or personal

development with regard to race that is needed in order to become a competent counselor.

Glauser (1999) concurred by stating that,

> Counselor training programs have an ethical responsibility to provide information
> and opportunities for counselors to confront their won cultural biases that may
> perpetuate racist attitudes and behaviors….D'Andrea (1999) states that… 'by

failing to address this problem, the profession inadvertently helps to perpetuate racism in the United States by acquiescing to what I have called the violence of our silence' (p. 41) (p. 64).

As counselor education programs have begun to implement coursework to educate counselors multiculturally, there have been two primary approaches that preparatory programs have implemented (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1991; D'Andrea et al., 1991; Midgette & Meggert, 1991). One strategy taken by preparatory programs has been the stand-alone course in multicultural counseling and another has been the integrated approach that infuses multiculturalism throughout the program's curriculum (D'Andrea et al., 1991; Midgette & Meggert, 1991).

Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) discussed cross-cultural contact as an important tool in multicultural training. They cited two studies (Merta, Stringham, & Ponterotto, 1988; Mio, 1989) that suggest that participants in training viewed guest speakers from different cultural groups as "the most important course component in helping them achieve their desired changes" (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, p. 43). There is limited empirical literature on specific training approaches. One recent article that studied the effects of multicultural counseling training suggested that, "there needs to be more studies that focus on the effect of interventions" (Manese et al., 2001, p. 39).

D'Andrea and Daniels (1999c) conducted research that examined the disposition of counselor educators, practitioners, and students with regard to the effects of White racism. They found that,

even though they express interest in increasing their understanding of a variety of issues related to the mental health needs of persons from diverse groups…they generally exhibit less motivation to learn about the ways in which White racism has impacted the mental health and personal well-being of non-White persons in this country. Most of these counselor educators, practitioners and students also indicate that they do not see themselves as being particularly motivated to address this issue in their personal or professional lives (p. 72).

This lukewarm concern about racism is not an unusual reaction to this complex social problem. Hudson and Hines-Hudson (1999) suggested that, many Americans,

exhibit little or no interest in changing the racial status quo. As Pettigrew (1979) commented, "White Americans increasingly reject racial injustice in principle, but remain reluctant to accept the measures necessary to eliminate the injustice" in practice. Consequently, one cannot safely assume that even whites who are "unbiased in their thinking will always behave in an unbiased manner. In other words, *persons of color have many sympathizers but few real allies* (p. 28).

As confirmed by D'Andrea and Daniels (1999a &1999c), counselors and counselor educators do not appear to be motivated to examine racism in their personal spheres of influence and therefore are not adequately prepared to act as resources to educational or corporate consumers that may seek consultation on appropriate interventions for racist behavior.

D'Andrea and Daniels (1999a) characterized counselors and psychologists as willing to talk about racism but notably unmoved and lacking any anger about the ways in which people of color continue to be marginalized by mental health systems.

> Besides the heightened level of apathy…another factor that seemed to contribute to lack of motivation to deal with the problem of racism included a low level of empathy that individuals operating from the liberal disposition displayed toward persons who are routinely victimized by various forms of racism (D'Andrea, Locke, & Daniels, 1997) …This apathetic attitude and lack of empathy…may be linked to the minimal personal contact many White persons have with people of color in this country… [and may be also] tied to the fact that many residential areas and public schools in the United States continue to be racially segregated (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999a, p. 231).

Even those counselor educators who themselves had a deep understanding of the effects of white racism, how racism in many forms exists in the United States, and the "complex interrelationship between various forms of White privilege" (D'Andrea & Daniels, p. 77), were found to display reluctance to discuss the impact that racism has in professional settings. Speaking of the White majority, Thompson (2000) reflected that, "I'm struck by the relative absence of [the] voices of allies in the fight against racism" (p. 109).

This lack of enthusiasm is due to the hostility from other Whites that they experience when broaching the subject and their frustration with other Whites' "inability or unwillingness to recognize and help address…racism" (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1999c, p. 78). Even "white liberals…are often unwilling to take antiracist actions if there is a

significant loss attached" (Feagin & Vera, 1995, p. 158). The fear of being labeled or

incurring negative reactions from colleagues prevents many White educators from being

more vocal about racism. "Being the one who often raises multicultural issues and

identifies the influence of racism in counseling, regardless of your own racial and ethnic

background, can have detrimental professional consequences" (Reynolds, 1999, p. 182).

Similarly, other counselor educators observe that, "White counselor educators,

practitioners, and students who are willing to openly articulate their concerns about the

perpetuation of racism in society in general and in the counseling profession in

particular… [are often discredited]" (Arredondo, 1999, p. 98). For many Whites,

including counselors, the costs are considered too high to put forth the needed effort to

intervene in the status quo.

Kiselica (1999) noted that faculty who teach multicultural counseling courses are

faced with the challenges of encouraging dialogue about prejudice and racism. He

explained the, now familiar, scenario that,

> students tend to avoid the subjects of racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism
>
> for several reasons. Students who have been the victims of several forms of
>
> oppression fear that their experiences will not be affirmed….Most students worry
>
> that they will offend someone else by stating their beliefs and that they will be
>
> accused of being a racist, sexist [etc.]; and they often decide it is better to play it
>
> safe and keep quiet rather than risk stating their opinions. On an unconscious
>
> level, many students are anxious about discovering their own prejudicial

practices, so they find ways to avoid talking about forms of prejudice altogether

(p. 138).

Kiselica went on to suggest that almost all students are anxious about how their own

culture might be portrayed and are fearful that they may not be able to remain controlled

if they begin to feel defensive or angry about comments or characterizations that are

made. Some, Kiselica suggested, try to remain silently in control "until they can hold

back no longer and explode with intense emotions that frighten other classmates from

saying anything further" (p. 138).

Here, once again, is an example of the resistance displayed toward discussion of

racism, even in a forum where one might expect, if such a place existed, that racism

could be safely discussed. The idea that future and current counselors seek to avoid such

conversation is indicative of widespread national incompetence, laced with underlying

fear. The counselors' profession requires a high degree of skill and training in human

interaction. In addition, many counselors work with a diverse population. One might

expect, then, that the level of counselors' skill in the area of interracial dialogue on race

might represent "the crème of the crop." The literature that outlines the lack of

preparedness of this group, then, suggests that the level of skill for most other Americans

without the benefit of human relations training is poor.

Ottavi, Pope-Davis, and Dings (1994) reported on the relationship between White

racial identity attitudes and self-reported multicultural counseling competencies.

Although, due to their data collection methods, their findings did not support a causal

relationship between higher levels of racial identity attitudes and multicultural counseling

competencies, they suggested that further research in this area is recommended. There is support for the argument that White racial identity attitudes influence interventions to improve multicultural counseling competencies (Ottavi, Pope-Davis, & Dings, 1994). Also, Ottavi, et al. reported that, "results support the often-cited belief that student's attitudes and beliefs about racial issues are an important part of multicultural competency development" (p. 153).

In fact, Sue, et al. (1998) cited understanding of the major models of White and "minority" racial identity development as a multicultural competency expected of counselors. Further they indicated that the "ultimate goal of healthy White and [minority identity] development is related to understanding self as a racial/cultural being" (p. 47), which suggests that evolution to the higher stages of White identity development is an expectation for counselors. The racial self-exploration involved in advancing to higher stages of racial identity development emphasizes the need for counselor educators to address issues of race and racism in counseling programs, on a personal, not just an academic level. Clauss (1999) made the connection between examination of the personal racial identity to professional implications. She wrote,

> Helms' model of White racial identity addresses both the individual's expressed attitudes towards his or her racial group, as well as the individual's attitudes towards other racial groups. For instance, White racial identity theory includes the White person's attitudes about Whites, in addition to attitudes about Blacks. The theory also accounts for the individual's attitudes, thoughts, and feelings about race, and the extent to which the individual identifies with cultural racism in

the United States. Thus, White racial identity theory assumes a connection

between racial identity development and a social context in which culture is the

most important cause of racism (Tatum, 1997) (p. 4).

This link between personal exploration of race and one's multicultural competency is

significant to the work of the counselor as professional helper. The relatively little

attention that is paid to issues of race and racism in the counseling arena is noted

(Reynolds, 1999; Tomlinson-Clarke & Wang, 1999).

Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang (1999) specifically commented on the counseling

profession's silence about race and explained why it is essential for counselors and

counselor educators to more adequately address this area of competence.

Discussions of race and racism often result in "the conspiracy of silence about

racism; as if not speaking about it will make it disappear" (Nieto, 1997, p. 392),

however. Emotionally powerful feelings, potentially explosive situations, and

feelings of guilt from members of racial groups who have intentionally or

unintentionally benefited from who they are (e.g., White privilege) have often

fueled this conspiracy of silence. Although a "racial veil of silence" may exist by

the desire of some to deny the existence of racism in today's society, this silence

also screams, begging to have issues of race and racism addressed—together with

the range of related feelings and emotions. Thus we as well as other educators

(Carter, 1995; Ridley, 1995) believe that encouraging students to speak about

their experiences as racial people and about their experiences with racism and

other biases is one method of creating and developing an antiracist perspective.

As Nieto has so aptly stated, "[W]hen students are given time and support for expressing their views, the result can be powerful because their experiences are legitimated and used in the service of their learning" (1997, p. 392). To this end, an antiracist perspective becomes an apparent part of the training curriculum as well as the over-all counselor training program culture. In moving counselors beyond a cognitive and intellectual understanding of the impact of racism and oppression, we propose a paradigm for teaching racial-cultural issues within a training climate that respects practitioners and clients alike as racial-cultural people within their sociopolitical contexts (p. 160).

With their description of the silence that also screams, Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang precisely characterize the American race obsession-avoidance paradox in action in the counseling profession.

Counselor supervision

The need to attend to the admittance of and support the experience of people of color in counselor education programs was expressed by Sue (1991, p. 99). Counselor supervisors surely have a prominent role to play in providing support to the recruitment and retention of people of color who are entering the counseling profession. Duan and Roehlke (2001) said that, "although positive attitudes and behaviors from supervisors are obviously important in any supervisory relationship, they seem to be especially important for minority counseling students" (p. 142). Racial identity development has also been implicated as having significant impact on the supervisory relationship (Hird, Cavalieri, Dulko, Felice & Ho, 2001). "The key recommendation for building a solid cross-cultural

supervisory relationship is to openly address issues of racial or cultural differences" early in the relationship in order to develop a rapport around the cultural context of the supervisee (Duan & Roehlke, 2001; Hird, et al., 2001). This is a clear expression of the need for counseling supervisors to be comfortable with and adept at interracial dialogue. Duan and Roehlke suggest that there are gaps in supervisory competence in this area and that more research is needed to clarify what is culturally effective supervision…[and] how to provide it to counseling students" (p. 145).

Another area of the counseling profession, that is counseling research, as well as research in other fields, is jeopardized due to difficulties in interracial interactions. Seidman (1998) said that, "in our society, with its history of racism, researchers and participants of different racial and ethnic backgrounds face difficulties in establishing an effective interviewing relationship" (p. 83). "My experience is that racial politics can make interracial and cross-ethnic interviewing, no matter the structure of the interviews and the sensitivity of the interviewers, difficult to negotiate" (p. 84). Arredondo concluded that,

> very little has been written about the sense of isolation and suspicion that many White people experience as a result of making an effort to address the problem of White racism in their personal and professional lives. However, we have noted that these factors play an important role in promoting a sense of cynicism, reducing individuals' sense of hopefulness, and undermining their motivation to continue to demonstrate the courage and commitment that are needed to effectively address the problem of White racism in this nation (p. 99).

In light of this examination of the status of racism and race relations in the counseling

field is easy to see how counselors can be seen as perpetuating problem of racism. This

is an especially disturbing problem because of the seemingly unrealized potential that

exists. "Counselors can be powerful agents in affirming racial and cultural identity. Lee

(1997) and D'Andrea (1999) refer to counselors as 'social change agents' who can

contribute to the deconstruction of myths and stories that perpetuate racism and other

forms of prejudice" (Glauser, 1999, p. 64). The role of counselors puts them in an ideal

position to help others confront and heal from the pain of racism yet many counselors

have not been equipped for such a responsibility.

(Not) Addressing racism in social services

Bowser and Hunt (1996) outlined key developments in what they call the

managing diversity movement. They indicated that the corporate world is beginning to

see that attention to diversity issues is an economic necessity due to changing racial

demographics of both employees and consumers. An inadequacy that they note is that

most multicultural training does not address race and racism in a way that addresses

institutionalized racism or the power and privilege dynamics of racism.

So, too, with the social services, the choice of language is meaningful.

"Multicultural" or "diversity" is the common terminology, whereas race and racism are

typically only vaguely mentioned within a list of factors to be considered. This is

significant because it validates critics who indicate that racism and power are not

addressed sufficiently in the human services field. Ridley (1995) asserted that,

part of the answer is that many counselors do not really understand racism.

Racism is what people do, regardless of what they think or feel. It is a complex

social problem. To really understand racism, careful analysis is needed. The

problem is that many counselors cling to oversimplified explanations (p. 10).

The focus in multicultural coursework is largely on multiculturalism versus examination

of race or racism specifically, or on the broader issues of privilege and oppression.

Recent criticisms of such a focus in psychology and social work literature take issue with

multicultural curricula for, in a sense, "watering down" the issues of race and power

differences by failing to address racism at all (Briggs, 2001; Goodman, 2000; Morelli &

Spencer, 2000). Not only do issues of race not get adequately addressed through many

courses on multiculturalism, but Helms (1994) added that, "the virtual absence of

conceptualizations of the effects of race on the therapy process can be attributed, in part,

to the lack of an ambiguous lexicon for differentiating racial factors from other cultural

factors" (p. 162). In other words, if "multicultural" factors are addressed in only

generalities, there is no measurement, understanding, or professional discourse on what

may be germane to race in specific. Helms' (1994) clarified that, "the concept of

multiculturalism may have become overly simplified because it encompasses too many

phenomena" (p. 164).

Rutstein (1997) discussed the shortcomings of the multicultural movement for its

impotence in directly addressing this "psychological disorder" (p. 80), which is his

definition of racism. He argued that even for many who consider themselves to be social

activists, "all of that activity creates a false sense of progress for well meaning whites.

What makes it false? The absence of confronting the obsessional neurosis called racism that plagues them and everyone else" (p. 87). Rutstein suggested that for many Blacks, multiculturalism seems like "another white man's exercise in futility in trying to end racism" (p. 87) precisely because of the tendency for multicultural efforts to avoid dealing with the issues of race, institutional power, and White privilege.

For example, diversity and multicultural curricula for counselors tends to involve somewhat of a survey approach to studying different racial or ethnic groups in order to become more familiar with the needs of each. The underlying message often tends to communicate that *we are different, and here's how, yet in many ways we are the same.* This is a legitimate and relevant message; however, it can be viewed as not getting to the crux of the issue of racism in America and how this far-reaching social system affects our worldview, theoretical constructs, and daily personal and professional interactions. This approach also allows counseling students (and faculty) to ignore their own racial identity and self-exploration. Multicultural counseling competencies emphasize that effective counselors will understand their own racial identity and its meaning within the cultural context (Sue, et al., 1998). With regard to the specific issue of racism, most training programs are inadequate. Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang (1999) noted that, "unfortunately, little research and few related multicultural training models exist that focus specifically on the importance of exploring one's own race, issues of racism, and racial identity development among White and visible racial-ethnic minority counselors" (p. 159). As has been discussed, the counseling profession is not significantly different than the general population when it comes to cultural reluctance to deal with racism.

Locke and Faubert (1999) cited the theoretical paradigm of Paulo Freire, a well known Brazilian educator who further addresses this shortcoming. "His [Freire's] general critique of education presents an analysis that challenges the neutrality of the models dominant in the U.S. schools. Freire argued that any curriculum that ignores racism, sexism, the exploitation of workers, and other forms of oppression is one that sanctions, sustains, and even promotes continuing dehumanization of the oppressor and the oppressed" (p. 43-44).

For educators and students alike, a curriculum that provides only the overall message that "all cultures are different, but all OK" is relatively comfortable and non-confrontational. Such approaches, however, tend to ignore the historical power and privilege differences between races, and do not address the real sources of acrimony and complexity of race relations in the United States (Briggs, 2001; Goodman, 2000; Morelli & Spencer, 2000). Once again, direct confrontation of the issue of racism seems to be avoided, even by human services professionals.

Other service professionals as well are experts at avoiding racial discussion. Politicians view race as such a sensitive and controversial topic that they typically either avoid it or take advantage of it for political gain (Shipler, 1997). The military is one place where diversity and dealing with race has been attempted with some success, probably because the first major experiment with integration was thrust upon the armed services. Upon describing a racial conflict skillfully facilitated by an army sergeant, Shipler (1997) remarked that

face-to-face resolution [of racial incidences], brokered by the boss, is exceedingly

rare in civilian life, where police commanders, high school principals, college

presidents, and chief executive officers don't usually care to get involved.

Without visible commitment from the leadership, a tone of concern is never set

throughout an institution. Without mechanisms of monitoring as well developed

as the military's, the wounds are left to fester. And where education in the form

of diversity training is done sporadically, poorly, or not at all, people may remain

insensitive to the signals they are sending, to the complicated messages that travel

back and forth across the color line" (p. 537).

Shipler's comments suggest wide spread incompetence among American leaders with

regard to racism and the management of racial conflict. There is little mystery as to why

interracial dialogue is not commonplace, as those in the public and social services who

would be relied upon to provide modeling, instruction, and guidance on interpersonal

issues seem to be ill-prepared to provide such direction. Despite the growing corporate

demand for attention to diversity issues, many Americans remain unconvinced that

interracial engagement matters.

Why does it matter if we talk?

See that man over there?
Yes.
Well, I hate him.
But you don't know him.
That's why I hate him.

(Allport, 1954 as cited in Owens, 1998, p. 18)

The documentary that aired in January of 2003 on PBS entitled, "Two Towns of Jasper" by Marco Williams and Whitney Dow, illustrated just how current and vital this issue of racial hatred is to America. The lack of genuine discourse on race and racism in a small town was one of the factors cited by townspeople that paved the way for heinous violence against James Byrd, Jr., a Black man who was dragged to his death behind a truck by three White men in Jasper, Texas in 1998. The broadcast town hall meeting entitled, *America in Black and White: Jasper, Texas with Ted Koppel*, was presented by ABC News "Nightline" and P.O.V./American Documentary on January 23, 2003. The town hall meeting was held with the citizens of Jasper, many of whom were interviewed for the documentary. Summarizing the point of view of many with whom he had spoken, Ted Koppel stated that, "for [Blacks], Byrd's murder is not an anomaly, but an extreme expression of a danger always felt just beneath the surface. Oddly, however, *few in either community speak out to confront these atrocities* [italics added]". Discussions on subsequent television broadcasts about the documentary, led by Ted Koppel and Oprah Winfrey, suggested that, at least in the public's eye, the division between the Black and

White points of view in Jasper, Texas may, in fact, represent the situation in 'Everytown, USA.'

Despite the American ideal that touts a racially integrated society, meaningful interracial dialogue is unusual. Rutstein (1997) posited that,

intercultural fraternizing is frowned upon. On almost every university campus, in every school in a so-called integrated neighborhood, black and white students avoid any meaningful, sustained social interaction with each other. This is most evident in the schools' dining halls and cafeterias, on the school grounds, and the nearby ice cream and soda shops. There, one observes a sophisticated form of apartheid in America that most people are willing to accept if that's what's needed to assure community safety and peace (p. 86).

In their study of racial interactions in a school district, researchers' findings confirmed Rutstein's position. The study found that students in the schools studied "tend to associate with students of the same race, do not easily interact across racial groups, have concerns for personal safety, and do not show respect for students racial differences" (Bacon, et al., 1991, p. 11). Helms (1990) wrote that, "if a [White] person continues to interact with Blacks, sooner or later significant others in the person's environment will make it known that such behavior is unacceptable if one wishes to remain a member in good standing of the "White" group" (p. 57).

Diversity trainer, John Gray, discussed the ramifications of subtle messages about race and explained the significance of engaging in dialogue about race. His poignant example was quoted by Shipler (1997).

If a white student in a school yells "nigger" in a hallway, …that minority student does not hear one white person saying 'nigger.' [He] hears the whole school saying it, hears the teacher saying it, the principal saying it, the cafeteria workers saying it, the custodian saying it, see. Because of the silence. So one of the most effective strategies you can use, to begin with, is to—' and here he paused for emphasis after each word: 'break—your—silence. So what we have to focus on is developing skills as to how to break that silence (Shipler, 1997, p. 557).

Gray emphasized the idea that silence surrounding racism is perhaps just as harmful as the hurling of epithets. When racial confrontations arise, the passivity of the standers-by often is interpreted as tolerance for racist ideology. There is some historical reference to such interpretations, as Americans have a well-documented history of either silent or cheering crowds of Whites gathering to watch public lynchings of Blacks. Gray's story also is an effective example of how differently White people and people of color can react to and perceive the same event, because of their divergent life experiences. Gray's plea for Americans to develop the skills needed to break the silence strikes at the heart of the need for interracial dialogue.

In September of 2000, Newsweek published a special report entitled, *Redefining Race in America.* The 2000 census stimulated a flurry of public conversation about racial categories and changing demographics in America. This rather lengthy excerpt is from Meacham's (2000) article, *The New Face of Race.* It is cited here in its entirety because it so vividly depicts the evolving racial status of Americans and gives a few clear

illustrations of why it is so imminent that Americans learn to talk about race and cultural differences. Meacham states,

> in 1860, just before Fort Sumter, there were only three Census categories—white, black, and 'quadroon.' This year, there are 30, from Asian Indian to Other Pacific Islander, and there are 11 subcategories under 'Hispanic ethnicity." Last week white Californians became a 'minority,' at 49.9 percent; two other states (Hawaii and New Mexico) and Washington, D.C., are also 'majority-minority.' Florida and Texas will reach the same tipping point before the decade is out. The definitions of race and ethnicity have rarely been more fluid, the promise greater, the possible perils more pronounced. This is not a futuristic vision; it's here….The young, in fact, are already living in a new country…[and have been] set out to work in the New Economy, where there are few walls and little hierarchy. By 2010, Latinos will outpace blacks as the nation's largest minority population. By 2020 the number of people of Asian descent will double from 10 million to 20 million. By 2050 whites will make up a slim majority—53 percent. Last week the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the number of foreign-born workers has hit 15.7 million, the highest level in seven decades. Nashville is desperate for Spanish speakers to respond to 911 calls, and teachers in Rogers, Ark., are dispatched to Mexico in the summers to better absorb the culture from which so many of their pupils come. A lawyer in Birmingham recently built a new swimming pool. The languages spoken by the workers: Polish, Italian, Spanish and Arabic (p. 40).

Taylor (1992) foretold these circumstances when he stated that, "race, in ever more complex combinations, will continue to be the great American dilemma" (p. 10). Disregard for and discomfort regarding racial issues, sanctioned by American culture, is clearly becoming an economic and social albatross. Skerry (2000) reported that despite the United States' census being "inextricably bound up with race" (p. 3), during his investigation of the census project, bureau officials,

> tried, usually subtly and rarely explicitly, to divert my focus. I was specifically steered away from racial issues by senior officials at the Census Bureau, some of whom directed my attention, for example, to privacy issues. It is probably no accident that during this same period the bureau in its public pronouncements was doing its best to discount the importance of race—for example, by justifying statistical adjustment in terms not of racial equity but of reducing costs…In 2000 any avoidance of race seems increasingly implausible, and it has accordingly been less evident. Nevertheless, as I will argue here, there is a persistent and pervasive tendency at the Census Bureau and at the Office of Management and Budget to downplay racial matters and even to deny their importance (p. 4).

Here again, even in a professional arena where race is arguably a major factor to be distilled and discerned, where decisions about racial factors have the potential to effect public policy, fiscal and social programs, and basically, the lives of all United States citizens, the theme of avoidance and denial is noteworthy and documented by qualified observers. This further supports the idea that dialogue is not only lacking, but critical.

Americans need to talk because in the workplace and at the grocery store, the

diner, and the ballpark, they will be forced to deal with one another. Pettigrew (1996)

said that, "one immediate result of…lack of interracial contact is an ever-widening

divergence of views between [people of color] and white Americans" (p. xi). He

suggested that we consider the implications. "One large part of the American population

is uncomfortable with and unskilled at interacting with another large part of the

population" (p. xi). According to Cohen (1998) the solution is that,

> Americans have to stop *teaching* prejudice and hatred. Whatever "natural" or
>
> even cultural tendency people may have to prefer their own kind and fear "others"
>
> can clearly be redirected by formal and especially informal education. We do it
>
> all the time. Hated "others" become friends and allies when they are traded to our
>
> basketball team, move to our school, play different roles, become known as
>
> individuals, or become allies in fighting a particular battle or war. …We have to
>
> construct situations in which people will be exposed to one another under
>
> conditions that make positive interaction possible and permit them to build mutual
>
> respect (p. 308).

Such conditions that make positive interaction possible have their parallel in Allport's

1954 criteria for positive inter-group relations which are, "equal status of all group

members within the contact situation, cooperative interdependence among group

members, normative support of positive relations…and interactions that disconfirm

stereotypes and encourage the transmission of individuating information about group

members" (Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, 1998, p. 815). Interracial dialogues, whether

formal or informal, that meet these criteria, have the potential to bridge the chasm that still exists between Whites and people of color.

Rutstein (1997) said that the elimination of an obsession such as race, "takes time, patience, persistence, and most of all a genuine willingness to engage in the healing process, which can be painful at times" (p. 82). Thus, despite the discomfort that interracial dialogue stimulates, it is important to the process of racial healing. Interracial dialogue has the potential to reduce anxieties about intergroup contact. Diaz-Lazaro (2001) indicated that one-to-one exchanges between people of different cultures resulted in reportedly richer experiences than in just participant-observation experiences. Mio (1989) concluded that the actual one-to-one exchange of ideas with an individual can greatly enhance one's experience with members of another cultural group above and beyond factual knowledge about the group (p. 43).

Kivel (1996) posited that,

racism is an everyday influence on our lives which has great power partly because we don't talk about it. Talking about racism lessens its power, breaks the awful, uncomfortable silence we live within. Talking about it makes it less scary. Talking about racism is an opportunity to learn…and to reclaim our lives and our true histories. We can ask questions, learn and grow in exciting ways that have been denied us….Talking about racism keeps us from passing it on to our children. Talking about racism allows us to do something about it (p. 95).

There is reason to believe that interracial dialogue can reduce racial prejudice. Hudson and Hines-Hudson (1999) argue that talking is important because "knowledge of the

culture and history of African Americans, *along with frequent interaction across racial line* [sic], tended to diminish—if not extinguish—racially stereotypical thinking on the part of both African Americans and whites" (p. 27). It matters if we talk because, "racism is a gross injustice which kills people of color, damages democracy and is linked to many of our social problems" (Kivel, 1996, p. 95). Locke and Kiselica (1999) concurred that,

> The topic of racism is one of the most emotionally charged subjects of our time. Understanding racism—both as an intellectual concept and as a profoundly human experience—is vital to heal the widespread pain that racism has caused. Racism hurts people of color and Whites alike. It creates barriers between peoples and prevents them from making substantive human contact with each other, from discovering and enjoying the beauty that each group has to offer. It keeps people of different colors at a distance from each other, locked within their own fears and misconceptions. Bringing up the topic of racism stirs up these fears and misconceptions. Many people, especially Whites would rather side-step discussions about racism to avoid the pain and fears associated with the topic. But gently and lovingly challenging people to address these fears can help them to move beyond their pain and fears, examine their erroneous beliefs about one another, and consider possibilities—such as crossing cultural boundaries—that were previously denied to them. Therefore, discourse on racial matters must be undertaken…" (p. 81).

It matters if we talk because engaging in such discourses may be the key to prejudice reduction and the only hope of eliminating racism.

Summary

Chapter II has reflected the public and professional discourses related to the subject of interracial dialogue. A brief discussion of the history of racism in the United States has been presented as the context within which interracial dialogue must be considered. Definitions and descriptions of modern and systemic racism have been presented as key to understanding the current state of race relations. Challenges and supports to interracial dialogue have been included. Factors that may contribute to the propensity for interracial dialogue, based on supporting literature, have been presented as areas to be explored during data collection. In addition, discussion of the significance of interracial dialogue for the field of counselor education and supervision has been discussed. Finally, reasons why interracial dialogue is relevant have been examined.

This review of the discourses on interracial dialogue on race provides direction and focus to the research conducted with participants in such dialogues. The purpose of this research is to seek insight into the intentional choice that individuals make to engage in interracial dialogue, within the context of race relations in the United States as reviewed here. Chapter III presents a description of the methodological design and process that will direct the data collection portion of this dissertation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

That this obsession with race, on the one hand, and the avoidance of racial

dialogue, on the other, co-exist in the same culture is the context within which this

inquiry is conducted. This dissertation examined the propensity of volunteers to

participate in mixed-race study circles formed to discuss racism, despite societal norms

that discourage engagement on the topic of racism.

Methodological orientation

This dissertation was inductively constructed, meaning that it begins with specific

and individual observations that are used to inform the supposition of a general pattern

(Patton, 2002, p. 55-56). A case study approach has been applied in this inquiry in two

ways. As Patton (2002) explained, "case study can refer to either the process of analysis

or the product of analysis, or both" (p. 447).   This inquiry has applied a case study

process in that the twenty individuals whose lives were examined constituted twenty case

studies, where "the purpose [was] to gather comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth

information about each case of interest" (p. 447).   In addition, the product in its entirety

could also be termed a case study. The case in this use of the term is the resulting

product: the results of the examination of participants in interracial dialogue on race.

Further, this study is both naturalistic and descriptive. It is naturalistic in that, as

the researcher, I was not instrumental in the formation of the original study groups nor

have I "attempt[ed] to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton, 2002, p. 39) in any other manner. These race study circles were already functioning under the coordination of the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training, and therefore, were not structured for the purpose of this proposed study. These study circles could be viewed as a type of naturally occurring focus group. My interaction with the participants took place after their participation in the study circle had been completed. This type of study is considered naturalistic because it asked participants to reflect upon their naturally occurring behavior that was not manipulated by the researcher.

This study is also descriptive in that it seeks to illuminate and understand characteristics of a group of people and the meaning of a set of behaviors viewed within a particular social context. I, along with the participants, have become a co-constructor of meaning because these findings were gathered, interpreted, and presented by me as the sole researcher. In fact, my selection of the research topic and research questions at the outset were necessarily shaped by my biases, interests, and assumptions.

It is my execution of the interviews, interpretation of the individual case studies, and my understanding of their connections that reveals their meaning but also, creates their meaning.

van Manen (1990) offered that,

a good description that constitutes the essence of something is construed so that

the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are

now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto

unseen way (p. 39).

Toward the goal of revealing the essence of an, as yet, unexplored experience, this

inquiry examined skills, characteristics, and life experiences of a purposefully selected

sample of participants in an interracial study circle on race. The data collected clarifies

the factors that contributed to their participation. This type of exploration is intended to

illuminate this heretofore unexamined lived experience and to interpret its meaning.

van Manen (1990) cited Gadamer's clarification of the two meanings of

interpretation.

In its original meaning, he [Gadamer] says, interpretation is a *pointing to*

something; and interpretation is *pointing out* the meaning of something….The

first kind of interpreting 'is not a reading in of some meaning, but clearly a

revealing of what the thing itself already points to….We attempt to interpret that

which at the same time conceals itself"(p.26).

The second type of interpretation is hermeneutically descriptive in the sense that it does

not merely reveal a phenomenon, but creates some meaning out of its existence (van

Manen, p. 26). This study, therefore, is hermeneutic in that it both reveals and attaches

meaning to a phenomenon. It reveals the essence and significance of participation in an

interracial study circle and closely examines the antecedents of, or contributing factors

toward, such behavior. No body of research exists that investigates this particular angle

on intergroup participation.

The methodological orientation underlying the design of this study borrows

principles from the emerging paradigm of participation. Participation refers to a

qualitative data gathering approach that recognizes the generation of new knowledge by

the indigenous culture being examined (Campbell & Salagrama, 2000). The philosophical

orientation of participation is rooted in sociological and anthropological approaches to

data gathering (Canadian International Development Agency, 1997). Although the

individuals who participated in this study could not be accurately viewed as an

indigenous culture, when considered through their unique common experience they are a

distinct group, or sub-culture. The vantage point of this type of participatory orientation

borrowed from sociological and anthropological researchers is that the individuals who

are the subjects of the research are the experts and that it is their knowledge of the topic

that gives the research direction. This qualitative approach is thus distinguished from

more traditional quantitative research where the researcher imposes the parameters on

knowledge acquisition. In a traditional quantitative strategy the researcher determines the

variables that are most salient and worthy of attention through some sort of manipulation.

Participation makes explicit use of the more typically qualitative characteristic of flexible

structure and informal data gathering.

Campbell and Salagrama (2000) said "the use of participation is considered by

many development practitioners to have provided a new paradigm in research and

development, one that is completely different from the more conventional top-down

approaches" (p. 1). Motives behind the use of participation can be to empower the

population through their participation, or to help to close the gap between the world of

science and the world of indigenous cultures (Campbell & Salagrama). Participatory methods utilize a more collaborative strategy between participants and researcher than is typical with more traditional approaches.

Participation has received attention in recent years from development researchers in particular for its strengths in facilitating timely and useable data to make programmatic decisions. In addition, researchers and financiers of programs have begun to realize the economic and philosophical importance of social and cultural factors to accurate and meaningful collection of information (Kane, 1997). In other words, asking questions directly of those embedded in a particular culture has been shown to produce meaningful data that is relevant to the particular context being examined. This type of orientation avoids the sole use of quantitative data which typically uses surveys, censuses, or administrative records as sources of information that are designed by, and thus reflect the biases of, individuals outside of the culture in question. Qualitative indicators, "because they are people's perceptions and viewpoints…are typically obtained from sources such as public hearings, attitude surveys, interviews, participatory rural appraisal, participant observation, and sociological or anthropological field work" (Canadian International Development Agency, 1997).

The major motive for the use of participation here was functional in that a qualitative approach like participation is the most effective avenue for knowledge enhancement regarding this topic. "Qualitative analysis is used to understand social processes, [like] why and how a particular situation that indicators measure came into being" (Canadian International Development Agency, 1997). The questions of "why"

and "how" can typically not be answered completely through the use of a formal survey

that allows for a set of forced choice responses. Given the dearth of research on

participants in interracial dialogue on race, an attempt at this point to isolate variables or

to quantify factors for statistical analysis would have been framed with only speculative

support. Primary involvement of the individuals who can most personally and expertly

respond to the research questions indicated the appropriateness of this participant-

oriented study that seeks to examine the intricacies of a socio-cultural phenomenon.

Race Study Circles

The race study circles selected for this study are coordinated by the YWCA of

Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training. The Study

Circle Resource Center in Pomfret, Connecticut provides a curriculum, available

nationally, that is a clear example of a program designed to create a forum for intentional

discussion on race relations (Flavin-McDonald, & McCoy, 1997). The study circles

coordinated by the Center use a modification of this curriculum as the foundation for

their group dialogues. A race study circle, as defined by the Center and for the purposes

of this inquiry, is a five-to-twelve-member group of adults of different races convened to

discuss race and racism. The community dialogue groups are facilitated by an interracial

team, which has participated in a previous study circle and has been trained to facilitate

the exploration of a prescribed curriculum on race.

Weekly, for five, two-hour sessions, group members sit together and discuss such

topics as their own experiences with race, definitions of racism and related terms, the

nature of the race problem, proposals for progress, White skin privilege, internalized racism, and affirmative action. A participant in a community study circle, for the purposes of this inquiry, will be considered persons who not only joined, but also persisted through the entire course of the study circle.

Purposeful sample

In light of the need for more research on race-related education and intergroup dialogue, this study examined the characteristics, skills, life experiences, racial identity, and motivations of participants relative to their participation in interracial, race study circles. This examination of participants in race study circles is ripe for intellectual inquiry for several reasons. Participants in such a group have characteristics that are worthy of examination because they are *voluntarily and intentionally* participating in a unique process that involves both intergroup contact and engagement on the topic of race and racism.

These participants are unusual because typically cultural norms and intergroup anxiety prevent individuals from participating in such intergroup discussions, however, these individuals volunteered for such an experience. Therefore, these individuals are a rich source of information on the propensity to engage in racial dialogue and on the motivating factors and lived experiences that allow the participant to overcome, cope with, or dilute the social anxiety that typically discourages interracial race discussion. In addition, these individuals do not have any known prior experience with their group that

would affect or bias their responses to me, the interviewer, regarding any of the characteristics to be examined in specific.

The study circles coordinated by the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training are utilized in this study because they have the greatest potential for capturing the most representative sample of the phenomenon in question. Although other interracial discussions are facilitated by other organizations, they often integrate additional issues or focus areas that might confound this research. For example, mediation centers coordinate interracial groups but specifically attract participants who have interest in mediation and the legal system. Jewish centers or other religious groups organize interracial events or discussions but do so within a particular religious context and may attract participants that subscribe to particular religious beliefs. Although the YWCA was founded as a Christian organization, its widespread use by people of all religious and secular traditions renders it, in a modern and practical sense, religiously unaffiliated.

The study circles examined here are more narrowly and intentionally focused on the issue of racism without the introduction of any other variable implied by the organization or coordinating body. The YWCA has an established history of focus on the issue of race and racism as demonstrated by the association's history, both nationally and in the Pittsburgh area where these particular study circles are coordinated. A brief outline of YWCA history makes this point.

In 1889, the first branch of the YWCA was founded and in 1916, English as a second language classes were begun. The YWCA was a leader in the Civil Rights

movement founding its National Office of Racial Justice in 1965 and in the 1970s by

adopting its *One Imperative*: *to eliminate racism wherever it exits and by any means*

necessary. In particular*,* the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh has continually prioritized

programs that work toward eliminating racism and promoting diversity. In 1882, a home

for Black orphans and children in need of foster parents was established and in 1917 the

"Committee for Colored Work" was founded to assist African-American workers who

wanted housing and jobs in wartime. In the 1970's, the Pittsburgh YWCA sponsored

dialogue teams, a precursor to the study circles. In 1992, Racial Justice Awards were

established to honor leaders in the community who work to eliminate racism. The

establishment of the Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training in 1996 is

particularly significant in that its singular purpose is to provide opportunities for

discourse and training related specifically to race, racism, and other forms of oppression

(YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh, Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training,

2002).

　　　　Considering this combination of factors, examination of the study circles

coordinated by the Center for Race Relations offers a unique opportunity to explore a

specific group of people, gathered for a particular purpose. The issue of race and racism

is the singular focus of the study circles; therefore, the likelihood that participants

decided to partake in the group for some reason other than the exploration of the issue of

racism is remote. If the goal, as it is here, is to study the factors that promote interracial

dialogue, the study circles coordinated by the Center for Race Relations are arguably the

"purest" example of that phenomenon.

Interracial contact, such as these study groups, is worthy of inquiry because of its suggested ability to improve inter-group relations. According to the contact hypothesis, first suggested by Allport in 1954, prejudice and conflict will be reduced by inter-group contact if certain conditions are met in the interaction environment (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001, p. 43). The contact hypothesis is "among the most researched psychological principles for reducing interracial prejudice" (Wittig & Grant-Thompson, 1998, p. 798).

The YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training study circles potentially meet each of Allport's 1954 criteria for positive inter-group relations which are, "equal status of all group members within the contact situation, cooperative interdependence among group members, normative support of positive relations…and interactions that disconfirm stereotypes and encourage the transmission of individuating information about group members" (Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, 1998, p. 815). So, in addition to being the most representative sample of this behavior available, these study circle participants are ideal key informants for this particular research because a) the groups offer opportunities for individuals to have meaningful contact with people from different racial and ethnic groups; b) the mixed-race groups are specifically designed to discuss race and racism; c) the groups are democratically organized, participants are considered equals, and the group facilitators assist the group with developing positive group norms; d) the groups are relatively intensive, meeting for two hours once a week for five weeks and e) the members are

charged with completing cooperative tasks (like defining race or responding collectively to a case study).

According to Allport's (1954) theory, when such criteria are met, it is likely that prejudice reduction will occur. Healey's (1997) more recent version of the criteria that make prejudice reduction likely includes, "equal status, intensive interaction, noncompetitive relations, and cooperative tasks" (p. 49). Using either or both sets of criteria as a standard, the volunteer study circles are a viable and relevant strategy for prejudice reduction. Participants in such groups, therefore, whether or not they are familiar with the formal contact hypothesis, voluntarily engaged in a process that challenged them to question their own assumptions, to confront their own prejudices, and that explored a topic that invited conflict and controversy.

Typical avoidance of such contact is due to a) the discomfort and anxiety experienced by many individuals when anticipating interaction with people who are different racially and /or culturally from them; and b) the discomfort experienced when individuals are challenged to change their basic assumptions and beliefs about fundamental social constructs like race (cognitive dissonance). Although inter-group contact is cited as effective in reducing prejudice and increasing understanding, it is often resisted altogether or is terminated as quickly as possible (Stephen & Stephen, 1985). This further illustrates the uniqueness of these participants because their participation in the study circle required repeated exposure to the potentially, anxiety-provoking experience.

The critical second factor that makes these particular group participants worthy of research is the fact that the subject of the groups' discussion is race and racism. As suggested by many writers on the subject of race the discussion of this topic is typically avoided (Dalton, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Thompson & Carter, 1997; Thompson & Neville, 1999). A volunteer's decision to participate in an interracial study circle on the subject of race, in particular, is worthy of study because its topic of race signifies further deviance from the norm.

The decision to participate is made *despite* any feelings of inter-group anxiety or desires for avoidance that may be experienced, both toward an interracial group itself and toward discussion of the subject of racism. Definition of the motivating factors and lived-experience that allow the participant to overcome or cope with the social anxiety of interracial race discussion is at the crux of this probe. These volunteer participants as a group can be reasoned to be a unique and rich source of information on motivation to engage in interracial dialogue on race. These individuals represented an untapped, yet potentially fertile, source for descriptive data about how to engage people interpersonally on the subject of race.

<div align="center">Research Protocol</div>

Potential participants, specifically individuals who voluntarily completed a race study circle through the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations' program, were sent a letter to request their participation in this inquiry. A copy of the letter of invitation is provided in Appendix A. A mailing list was provided by the staff of the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations. The initial sample target

was approximately twenty individuals. This sample size of twenty was targeted because

it was manageable enough for in-depth interviewing but large enough to reasonably

imagine that the central, core factors would emerge. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested

a sample size large enough to reach a point of *redundancy*, where themes begin to repeat

with each new interview and no new themes emerge (p. 202). Twenty participants

seemed to meet this criteria for this study.

Participation in a community interview was originally requested, although only

five participants went through this process before it was altered. Originally, focus groups

or individual interviews were to follow. The plan for the interviews was for participants

to discuss their perceptions of factors that contributed to their participation in the study

circle.

Questions about the following factors provided some focus and structure to the

interview protocol: interpersonal skills and empathy, which are both associated with

emotional intelligence, moral development, racial identity, educational experiences, and

life experiences. Although these areas of concentration were targeted, as reasonable

areas of exploration based on the literature review, my goal was to remain open to other

relevant factors that revealed themselves through participant discussions. I anticipated

that themes and patterns would emerge, some of which will be unforeseen.

I planned that focus groups and individual interviews would be organized and

conducted based on interpretation of the preliminary data gathered from the community

interview process. Due to my experience with data collection in the first community

interview, one dyadic interview was scheduled, and then only individual interviews

thereafter. The reasons for these changes are explored in more detail in Chapter IV.

<div align="center">Research questions</div>

The guiding research question of this study is: What can be learned about factors that

contribute to the self-selection of participants in interracial dialogue on race relations?

The crux of the inquiry was designed to probe factors that develop the propensity to

engage in interracial dialogue on race despite cultural norms and common anxieties that

typically dissuade this type of dialogue. Subsidiary questions were also posed: 1) Which

skills in particular, if any, are implicated as important to the decision to participate? 2)

Are there other characteristics or experiences that this group might share? 3) How might

these factors be interpreted to inform further study in this area? There was some

indication, based on existing literature, that emotional intelligence factors such as

interpersonal skills and empathy may be related to the likelihood that an individual will

engage interracially. Very clearly, more research on multiculturalism, diversity, and race

relations, and these topics as they relate to the human services, is in demand. This study

contributes meaningful data to address these discourses.

<div align="center">Methodological design</div>

The specific participatory approach used in the study borrows principles from the

methodological approach, rapid appraisal. Rapid appraisal methods, in fact, are

recommended when attempting to assess the motivations and attitudes that may affect

behavior of individuals (Performance monitoring and evaluation tips, 1996), precisely

what this study will attempt to investigate.

> Rapid appraisal is fast and flexible but rigorous. It is grounded in recognition that
> all dimensions of a local system…cannot be identified in advance, and that
> attempts to do so reflect primarily the outsider's culture….The goal is to grasp an
> insider's perspective on the system and to understand it as a whole, rather than to
> come up with a statistical description of its constituent units (Sweetser, 1995,
> p.1).

Rapid appraisal accommodates a strategically broad and open-ended research question

and encourages responses that represent multiple perspectives on the system being

studied. These methods also allow for the flexibility of unanticipated ideas and issues to

be addressed as the data is collected (Performance monitoring and evaluation tips, 1996).

The goal of rapid appraisal is to get a holistic sense of the phenomenon being studied, by

combining information from multiple resources, "rather than to come up with a statistical

description of its constituent units" (Beebe, 1995, p. 1).   Beebe (1995) defined rapid

appraisal methods as characterized by three principles. First is the assumption of a

systems perspective.

> It is very important to note that the elements of a system cannot be identified in
> advance, nor can decisions be made in advance as to which elements of a system
> are most important for understanding a given situation. Rather, understanding can
> be gained by listening carefully to what interviewees mention. The first task of a

rapid appraisal team is to make rough approximations of the system and those

elements that might be most important in the specific context (Beebe, 1995, p.2).

In the case of the current study, the literature review suggested some avenues that

appeared to be worth exploration in the quest to understand individual reasons to engage

in interracial dialogue. However, the selected methodology of semi-structured

interviews, was designed to encourage the generation of fresh ideas by participants, that

may not have even been considered by the researcher.

The second principle by which Beebe (1995) described rapid appraisal is

triangulation. He defined triangulation as "systematically combining the observations of

team members with different backgrounds and using a variety of research methods" (p.

3). Due to the design of this study as a doctoral dissertation, there was only one

researcher. Although the original design of this study was to use multiple methods of

data collection to approximate triangulation, the final result was that triangulation was

not practical or effective due to the nature of this study. Rationale for this change is

discussed in Chapter IV. This alteration in data collection methodology is a prime

example of Beebe's third principle, iterative data collection and analysis.

Beebe's (1995) third principle of rapid appraisal methodology is iterative data

collection and analysis, which means that as data is collected it is used to "modify the

research process" (p.4). The methodological analysis begins with the first data collection

process. Subsequent collections of data are informed by the nature of earlier encounters

with the participants. "It can be thought of as an open system that uses feedback to

'learn' from its environment and progressively change itself" (p. 4). An iterative process

constantly revisits acquired knowledge to shape future procedure. The preliminary data collection is used to inform later processes, by suggesting areas to be explored. One researcher using rapid appraisal indicated that,

> we used the discussions to identify areas that required further exploration. When we saw or found something that we didn't expect to at all we had to go back and get more information on it. But we tried to go back with generic topics rather than a specific question to which people would say yes or no (The Participation Forum, No. 14).

The specific methods were originally planned were community interviews, focus groups, and key informant interviews. When the community interview and focus group process was eliminated, as will be explained in Chapter IV, it was necessary to reinterview some of the original community interview participants in order to obtain more complete information from them. The notion of an iterative process, open to modification based on initial data collection, became relevant to the development of the protocol in this study. A detailed explanation is provided in Chapter IV of the iterative process that evolved.

<center>Methods of gathering data</center>

The nature of this inquiry implicates a qualitative method of data gathering. It was the purpose of this study to seek understanding of the life circumstances surrounding personal decision-making. In addition, qualitative methods are utilized here because they are less likely than the more rigid data collection processes of quantitative methods, to lose meaningful information on social and cultural phenomena, such as, in this case,

participation in interracial groups. Qualitative methods were also advisable since little is known about the subject under study, the propensity toward interracial dialogue.

Rapid appraisal methods, the principles of which were used here, have the potential to provide in-depth understanding of complex socio-cultural systems, such as differentiating life experiences, skills, and characteristics of individuals (Performance monitoring and evaluation tips, 1996). "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 1998, p. 3). The use in this study of in-depth interviewing is an attempt to develop a composite picture or understanding of the experience of the participants.

The planned design of the protocol was that it would be molded and customized to take full advantage of the data collected by the preliminary exposure to the participants. Data collection was planned to consist of semi-structured community interviews, the administration of a skills assessment, and thereafter, focus groups, and key informant interviews. The process was designed to collect descriptions of the participants' experience, skills, characteristics, and perspectives, as well as their subjective interpretation of their participation in the study circle. The protocol that eventually evolved as data collection began was one community interview, thirteen in-depth key informant interviews, and two in-depth interviews of individuals who had been members of the community interview.

Data collection was done only with people who completed a race study circle through the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism

Training. I audio-taped interviews in order to assure accuracy in information collection.

Informed consent was reviewed orally and provided in written form, emphasizing the

voluntary nature of participation and the granting of permission to tape. Informed

consent forms are included in Appendix B. Confidentiality of shared information was

guaranteed, with the exception of those proceedings that were conducted in the group

forum. Every effort has been made toward participant anonymity in terms of published

information. Pseudonyms are used when participants are identified and details that may

lead to their identification have been either eliminated or described in more general

terms.

<div align="center">Community interviews</div>

It is important to understanding the nature of this study to clarify that participation

in the study circles themselves essentially constituted the first, albeit, naturally occurring,

community interviews. However, the first community interviews configured for the

purposes of this study were planned to broadly assess the question, *Who are these people*

who elected to engage in interracial dialogue on race? Community interviews are

generally conducted as public conferences where the interviewer and the participants

interact and the interviewer provides structure through a prepared interview protocol

(Performance monitoring and evaluation tips, 1996). Community interviews had been

planned to include an introduction, both of the interviewer to the participants, but also of

the participants to the purpose of the study and their role in it. One community interview

was conducted. Informed consent was reviewed and general information about the

research questions was provided as well as an outline of data gathering procedures.

Participants were asked to reflect on their view of what factors propelled them into race

study circle participation. Community interviews were not continued due to

methodological design changes explained more fully in Chapter IV. In short, data

collection from the initial community interview indicated that individual interviews were

more appropriate. It became apparent that a more in-depth probe into participants'

personal beliefs and attitudes would be needed and could be accomplished more

effectively and efficiently with individual sessions.

<div align="center">Focus groups</div>

Although focus groups eventually were not utilized in this study, it is important in

explaining the methodological process of this research to mention that they were

considered. They were originally thought to be a possible source of collective

brainstorming about what common factors may have propelled individuals to participate

in race study circles. Krueger and Casey (2000) suggested the use of focus groups when,

"the purpose is to uncover factors that influence opinions, behavior, or motivation. Focus

groups can provide insight into complicated topics when opinions are conditional or

when the area of concern relates to multifaceted behavior or motivation" (p. 24). Since

the goal of this research was to illuminate multiple factors that prompted a particular

behavior, focus groups were considered as a useful data collection tool.

Focus groups are often organized for groups of participants who emerge as

sharing a common social group identity or a common experience or skill. Such a

commonality may suggest that the shared factor is worthy of further probing, in which

case a focus group using that commonality may be organized. It was planned that the

gathering of preliminary data from the community interview would inform the

methodological strategy to follow. The plan was that focus groups would be organized

based on common factors that emerge from the initial community interviews. For

instance, participants who mentioned significant life experiences that influenced their

decision to participate in the study circle could have been grouped together for one focus

group. Those that clearly represented the characteristics of a particular stage of racial

identity could have constituted another focus group. Rationale for the altered protocol is

provided in Chapter IV, since it is integrated with the results of the study.

Concurrent with and/or subsequent to the focus groups, individual interviews

were planned to be conducted with participants who seemed to represent particularly rich

sources of information or whose circumstances seemed to warrant individual attention.

These key informant interviews played a crucial role in the data collection as the

methodological process developed.

Key informant interviews

It was the intent of this inquiry to make meaning from a collection of individual

stories or case studies. Van Manen (1990) explained that,

in hermeneutic phenomenological human science the interview serves very

specific purposes: (1) it may be used as a means for exploring and gathering

experiential narrative material that may serve as a resource for developing a richer

and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon, and (2) the interview may be

used as a vehicle to develop a conversational relation with a partner (interviewee)

about the meaning of an experience (p. 66).

The intention of reaching a deeper understanding of why individuals chose to participate

in a race study circle could be realized most fully with intense personalized interviews.

The decision to conduct interviews with some participants was initially viewed as an

appropriate strategy in order to effectively follow-up on information gathered either in

the community interview data or in the focus groups. After the first community

interview, however, it became clear that a more personalized approach was needed in

order to "get at" the detail of the information needed to answer the research question.

Krueger and Casey (2000) recommended individual sessions when "you are asking for

sensitive information that should not be shared in a group or could be harmful to

someone if it is shared in a group" (p. 25). The goal of key informant interviews was to

probe more deeply into the individual's life experience in order to generate self-

awareness that would enable the participant to more completely and thoughtfully

understand the factors that contributed to his or her decision to attend the study circle.

Seidman (1998) said,

I interview because I am interested in other people's stories….It is [the] process

of selecting constitutive details of experience, reflecting on them, giving them

order, and thereby making sense of them that makes telling stories a meaning-

making experience….Interviewing provides access to the context of people's

behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior (p. 1 & 4).

The ideal method for understanding the stories of individuals within their personal context is by providing a forum within which those stories can be told. The purpose of the individual interviews was to provide the time, place, and prompts for participants to reflect on what factors may have contributed to their participation in the study circles and what meaning that decision to participate had for them.

Final data collection

At the end of the data collection phase of this study, the process, although different that what was originally undertaken, resulted in the gathering of critical information in an efficient and meaningful way, while respecting the needs of participants. All interviews were audio-taped, except for the community interview which was video-taped. One community interview was conducted involving five participants. One interview was conducted with two participants. Thereafter, semi-structured, individual interviews were conducted with thirteen individuals. Finally two of the three community interview participants were re-interviewed individually, making the total of individual interviews, fifteen.

Data analysis

I collected information about the factors that prompted participants to engage in the interracial study circles on race through a community interview and individual interviews. Transcripts of each interview were compiled. Themes that emerged from

such research are valuable for their potential to provide insight into factors that facilitate

interracial dialogue and/or might be included in prejudice and/or violence prevention

curricula.

van Manen (1990) suggested that, "phenomenological text succeeds when it lets

us see that which shines through, that which tends to hide itself" (p. 130). This research

investigated an otherwise unexplored phenomenon and seeks to give it contextual

meaning. As suggested by Merriam (2001), "typically, qualitative research findings are

in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, even theory,

which have been inductively derived from the data" (p. 7-8). Likewise, it was my intent

to enter into this process anticipating that a classification scheme or coding method for

categories or themes would emerge from the collected information, as informed by my

emerging insights and tentative hypotheses. It was the intent of this study to suggest

indicators that, for this group of people, pointed to the propensity toward interracial

dialogue on race.

> An indicator is a pointer. It can be a measurement, a number, a fact or an opinion
>
> or a perception that points at a specific condition or situation and measures
>
> changes in that condition or situation over time. In other words indicators provide
>
> a close look at the results of initiatives and actions" (Canadian International
>
> Development Agency, p. 5).

Analysis of "indicators" in this study provides insight into ideas for future research on

what factors may promote interracial dialogue.

Throughout the data collection process, attentiveness to patterns and themes directed the methods of analysis and presentation of the data. In addition there was attention to compiling data on emotional intelligence, moral development, racial identity development, and particular life experiences that the research suggested may bear some relationship to the propensity to engage in interracial dialogue on race. Information about demographic groupings such as race, age, gender, education and socio-economic status of participants is also presented.

Study limitations

Educators, researchers, and students who apply these results and who plan future research in this area should consider the limitations of this study. There is no existing body of published literature on the subject of the propensity toward interracial dialogue. Therefore, the exploration of this topic will be broad in scope and will not examine details that may in retrospect prove worthy of deeper investigation. It is likely, too, that this study will not encompass all of the factors that might be relevant to the decision to engage in interracial dialogue and therefore, not "tell the whole story" as to what promotes interracial dialogue.

The participants in this study live within a limited geographical area. They also reflect a particular, purposeful sample of individuals. Any combination of these factors suggests that the results may not necessarily be generalizable to other populations. There may be some environmental circumstances or characteristics endemic to this group, not evident at this point, that may not exist in other populations.

Some individuals who participated in the interracial dialogues may elect not to participate in this study for a wide range of possible reasons. Therefore, the voices not heard in this investigation may represent another limitation.

Summary

This study considered the factors that contribute to participation in interracial dialogue on race. What is described as America's race obsession-avoidance paradox creates the socio-cultural background that formed the context for this study. Various public and professional discourses suggest the relevance of this topic to others and its cultural importance.

This descriptive inquiry, therefore, focused on semi-structured in-depth interviews to collect information from voluntary participants in race study circles on their decision to participate. Individuals were asked to respond to questions regarding both challenges and motivators to their participation in the study circle. The results and the analysis are described in Chapter IV, along with interpreted meaning from themes and patterns that emerged throughout the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Introduction

The discussion of methodological orientation in Chapter III, explained the use of

participatory approaches in data collection as appropriate to enhancing knowledge about

what factors propelled particular individuals to engage in interracial dialogue on race.

Participation draws upon the expertise of the individuals who are the subjects of the

research and acknowledges that it is their knowledge of the topic, their own behavior, that

gives the research direction. Chapter IV reviews the research protocol and discusses

changes that evolved as a result of initial data collection. The study findings describe the

participants and the factors that were found to contribute to their participation in the study

circles on race. Finally, analysis of the findings suggests common themes and provides

interpretation within the socio-cultural context framed in Chapter II.

Iteration of research protocol

Beebe (1995) suggested that rapid appraisal methods allow for "an open system

that uses feedback to 'learn' from its environment and progressively change itself" (p. 4).

Such a transitive process was invaluable to successful data collection in the case of this

project. The first planned step in the research protocol was to conduct community

interviews. Upon reviewing the interaction of those in the community interviews, my

plan was to establish focus groups or to conduct key informant interviews as dictated by initial findings.

As the sole investigator, I convened the first community interview on November 16, 2002 with five study participants. After reviewing informed consent and completing the emotional intelligence assessment, participants were asked, "What, do you think, made you choose to join a race study circle?" My expectation was that these participants would, together, be able to generate some factors that seemed central to their participation in the race study circles. I had envisioned community (group) interviews as a way to make the best use of time and to allow the group members to brainstorm and generate ideas through their discussion. Indeed, some of the participants contributed factors that were later explored fully.

However, the unanticipated results of the community interview were that: a) each person did have an opportunity to speak, however, there was not enough time for each person to answer the question completely; b) in an effort to be polite and orderly, the participants shared a bit about their perspective but because they had no established rapport with one another, they did not interact to generate collective ideas or to establish a problem-solving mentality; c) although thoughts relevant to the research question were broached, it became clear to me that it would be difficult to assess the ideas to any meaningful depth without time for follow up with each person; d) most participants had done only superficial self-reflection prior to the community interview on why they had joined the study circle, so therefore their responses were only surface-level versus deeply reflective; e) it became apparent very quickly that the quality of the discussion and the

likelihood of staying on task were too easily influenced by group dynamics, personal idiosyncrasies, and misinterpretation. In addition to these process-oriented concerns that restricted the quality of the content, the logistical challenges of finding a mutually convenient time and place for a group of people to meet was not conducive to efficiency. In actuality, the group forum resulted in a great deal of time off-task and was not an effective, efficient, or productive way to "get at" the research question.

The difficulties experienced in maintaining the group focus were a logical extension of the nature of the group. In Chapter III, I indicated that focus groups are often organized for groups of participants who emerge as sharing a common social group identity or a common experience or skill. Typically, then, it is that common experience that drives the discussion in a focus group. It becomes the connection and establishes the trust that encourages personal disclosure. In observing the group interaction it became clear to me that the common experience shared by the group was that they all participated in a race study circle so that experience was likely to become the focus of discussion. Although, the group that I convened certainly had an experience in common, it was not about that common experience that I wished them to talk. Rather, it was about their own personal journey that brought them to that experience that I needed them to explore.

When the first participant that spoke at the community interview did not seem to have a clear understanding of what was being asked, this issue was illuminated for me. This participant spoke for an extended period of time about her views on racism and her experience in the study circle, but failed to address my initial question of *why* she felt that she had joined the study circle. Therefore, some of the limited amount of time was spent

steering the group's focus back to the relevant question, which had subsequently been lost in the first speaker's soliloquy. I believe this initial experience was significant and allowed me to view the research question in a deeper way. With this understanding, it seemed clearer to me that group interviews would not be the most effective means toward obtaining the data that was needed. The initial attempt at group interviewing also alerted me to how susceptible my topic was to misinterpretation, avoidance, and tangential discussion. After one community interview, it became figural to me that the need to obtain in-depth information from each individual far outweighed any value that might have been gained in a group discussion. The implications of the community interview, therefore, directed me to abandon the thought of using additional focus groups in this investigation and emphasized for me that the individual interview was a more appropriate tool here.

My concerns were validated after conducting the second interview session with just two participants, which was my attempt to see if fewer people in the session would produce a more conducive dynamic. Although it was easier to spend more time focused on each participant's feedback, I became convinced that due to the nature of the discussions, it was more appropriate to conduct in depth individual interviews with participants from that point forward. If I probed for more detail as extensively as I thought was needed, I began to sense that the participant with whom I was not engaged was being put into a voyeuristic position that seemed awkward, or at best, peripheral. My experience as a counselor undoubtedly heightened my awareness that, because this was

not a therapeutic group, this dynamic would have an effect on my participant's sense of freedom and willingness to disclose.

Basically, the nature of my query defied simplistic, superficial answers and required a more investigative interview. van Manen (1990) explained that, "as we interview others about their experience of a certain phenomenon, it is imperative to stay close to experience as lived. As we ask what an experience is like, it may be helpful to be very concrete. Ask the person to think of a specific instance, situation, person, or event. Then explore the whole experience to the fullest" (p. 67). It became clear that I needed to take intense individual time with participants in order to not only hear their stories, but to draw out what was meaningful for them and this study.

With many, it was clear that I had to prod, ask for clarification, and probe their memories and their assumptions about their life experiences. The interviews in general were replete with prodding and probing to get the participants to dig more deeply into their decision-making, childhood influences, and life experiences that may have contributed to their participation in the study circles. In many cases, this process prompted significant memories to surface that had seemingly been forgotten or would have been dismissed or overlooked by the interviewees. Because of the subtleties of what I was asking, I needed to be finely focused and attune to the nuances of what they might reveal without they themselves necessarily being aware of its relevance. The group setting would have been inappropriate for such deeply introspective reflections.

For example, if a participant answered that they joined the study circle because it just looked interesting, I would ask, "what about it seemed interesting?" To which they

might respond, "I was interested in learning about other people's ideas and about my own prejudices". From that statement I would delve more deeply into how they became interested in others' experiences, and in exploring their own biases. What had transpired in their life experiences that had opened them to self-examination or to being sensitive to or curious about others' experience. If participants cited other anti-racism activities as a precursor to their participation in the study circle, I would probe them to explore what about the other activities was meaningful to them and how they saw that relating and leading to the study circle. The individual format allowed me to use a flexible structure but also to pursue a more natural conversation with each person. It allowed me to pursue lines of thought driven by their individual experience and perceptions and informed by my desire to get at underlying influences in their lives.

Since the nature of the research question necessitates delving into each participant's life experiences, the semi-structured interview protocol often looked more like it was "loosely-structured". Each interview contained its own idiosyncrasies, twists and turns and focus. I needed to ask them to extend their line of reasoning to beyond where they might have already gone to sometimes expose their basest values. For some, this became a point of personal discovery. Their personal life experiences and motivations for participating, although there would eventually be commonalities in my analysis, were unique, complex and often buried in their subconscious. To expect participants to process their own self-reflection and at the same time make connections among a group was too complex a task.

My further reflection about what had seeming "gone wrong" with the community interview led me into further discovery about my topic. My assumption, proved erroneous, was that participants would come to the meeting having done some significant self-reflection about the source of their interest in the race study circle, especially having already been introduced to my research topic. Some, it seemed evident, had done so, but perhaps hadn't probed any deeper than their initial responses to that question.

My goal was to dig deeper toward discovering what seeds had been planted at which points in their lives that had stimulated eagerness and, in fact, the level of commitment required to complete a study circle. I discovered that this question defies a single factor response and often requires digging past an individual's personal assumptions, circumstances or factors in their lives that they take for granted. To the extent that their participation in the race study circle was symbolic of their character, or symptomatic of their personhood, the underlying, more elemental question that I grew to understand that I was asking was "what made you the person that you are"?

This modification of the protocol in this study is a clear example of how the use of qualitative methodology can be a catalyst for an iterative data collection process. For the reasons explained, the protocol, then, evolved from group sessions to individual sessions, which were much more focused and fruitful. The thirteen interviews that followed the initial community interview and dyadic interview were, therefore, individually conducted. In addition, two participants from the first community interview were re-interviewed individually. I remain convinced that the quality of the data

collected through the evolution of this protocol is of substantially higher quality than if I had continued with the group format.

Use of language

In Chapter I, Shipler (1997) was quoted as saying, "discussions of race are imprisoned by words" (p. ix). This chapter illustrates the complexity and emotional charge of language use, as it seeks to document and understand the voices of the participants in this research. It is the nature of qualitative data collection, particularly when relying upon methods that emphasize participatory approaches, to reflect the precise language used by the participants. In the case of this study, there is some language used by participants that describes their identity or state of being in the world that is typically considered offensive in public discourse. However, I consider it my responsibility as the researcher to document the language, as it was used within the context of this study, and as it was conveyed to me, in order to maintain the veracity and integrity of the participant's voice. When participants are directly quoted, I have given my careful effort to, not only convey accurate language, but also to honor the context in which the language was used. I have used pseudonyms for each participant and an identification number as a citation for all participant quotes. A table of identification numbers and corresponding demographic reference information is included below for the reader's reference.

Research Questions

The main research question of this study introduced in Chapter I was: What can be learned about factors that contribute to the self-selection of participants in interracial dialogue on race relations? The following subsidiary questions were also posed: 1) Which skills in particular, if any, are implicated as important to the decision to participate? 2) Are there other characteristics or experiences that this group might share? 3) How might these factors be interpreted to inform further study in this area? Findings that address these questions are reviewed below beginning with descriptive data that begins the portrayal of the twenty participants.

Demographic Description of Participants

Participants were selected through their positive response to an invitation to be part of this research. They were sent a letter of invitation and explanation of the intent of the research based upon records made available by the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism Training that indicated their completion of a volunteer community race study circle (as opposed to a study circle mandated for a particular group).   Of the ninety letters of invitation that were mailed, responses were received from forty. Approximately nine mailings were returned to sender due to address changes.   Fourteen individuals declined participation. Some wrote notes about particularly busy schedules or other logistical issues, such as moving from the area, (in one case, from the country). Twenty-seven individuals indicated interest in participating and, of those, twenty participated, somewhat selected by the timeliness of their

correspondence with me and our ability to set up a mutually agreeable time and place to conduct an interview.

A sample of the demographic data sheet that each participant completed is attached as Appendix C. A reference of demographic information self-reported by each participant is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Reference

ID	Pseudonym	Gender	Age Range	Race
1	Alice	F	70s	African American
2	David	M	60s	African American
3	Laurie	F	40s	European American
4	Keith	M	30s	African American
5	Daniel	M	60s	African American
6	Abraham	M	40s	African American
7	Rose	F	70s	European American
8	Margaret	F	60s	European American
9	Sandi	F	40s	European American
10	Laura	F	40s	European American
11	Chris	M	30s	European American
12	Lynn	F	40s	European American
13	Monique	F	40s	African American
14	Mirta	F	60s	European American
15	Anika	F	40s	Asian (Indian) American
16	Alan	M	50s	African American
17	Melanie	F	50s	European American
18	Ann	F	40s	European American
19	Shelly	M	20s	European American
20	Jerry	M	40s	European American

Additional demographic data on the twenty participants is examined and summarized here. Thirteen are female, seven are male. One has completed a doctoral degree, eight hold a Master's degree, six hold a four-year college degree, three hold an associate's degree, and one completed high school, with one non-response. Two participants are in the 70-80 age range, four from the 60-70 age range, two from the 50-60 age range, seven from the 40-50 age range, two from the 30-40 age range and one from the 20-30 age range, with two as non-respondents. Six have a household income of $100,000 or more, two have a household income between $75,000 and $100,000, one between $50,000 and $75,000, two between $30,000 and $50,000; three between $15,000 and $30,000, and two under $15,000, with four not responding. All participants live and work in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area.

Other descriptive information was gathered through the interview process. The notable commonality observed among the participants is that over half are aligned with some form of education. Seven work in (one retired from) the field of education at some level and three work in social service agencies in roles that they view as educational in some capacity. One is a diversity affairs director at a financial institution where his role is largely educational in nature. One participant works for a property management company, where she has recently been compelled by circumstances to become somewhat of a leader/educator. Additionally, there is a noticeable tendency toward higher education among the participants. Nine, almost half, have obtained a Master's or Doctoral degree (only one with a doctorate). In addition, nine others have obtained a two or four year college degree, (six having four-year degrees).

There are a few trends worth noting. First, the vast majority of participants were forty or over, with only two in their thirties and only one in her late twenties. There may be some significance to age as viewed within the framework of developmental or stage theories such as racial identity development or moral development, both of which will be discussed in this chapter. A clear trend among the participants is that they are, in general, a highly educated group, many of whom are involved in education in some capacity as an occupation.

Outside of the educational realm, the vocations of the participants are more varied. One is a banker, and one does janitorial work. Two others are retirement-age homemakers, with significant experience as volunteers. Two are unemployed, one due to a physically disability, one due to a mental health disability. The range of religions among the group is extremely diverse. Not all respondents reported that they are strict practitioners of their faith, but several were "raised" in a certain faith tradition. Eight reported being raised Catholic, four Baptist, one Presbyterian, one Pentecostal, one Hindu and one Jewish. Many though, when asked, had responses that indicated that they subscribed to a spiritual belief system that seemed to transcend their religion. This will be discussed in more detail in the section on moral development in this chapter.

Racial description of participants

The racial demographic information from the participants seemed to warrant elaboration since there was room for commentary on the part of the participants, and because it is so integral to the topic of this inquiry. The form allowed participants to

select between African American, European American, Asian American, Native

American and Hispanic American with a blank space to "please specify in your own

words how you would more specifically define your race or ethnicity." Interestingly,

given the topic of this research, the sample was quite diverse. Twelve identified

themselves as European American, seven identified themselves as African American, and

one identified herself as Asian American. The following participants checked "African

American" and added comments directly quoted below.

- "I am a mixture of African American, Native American, and a Scottish
  American". (16)

- "Black niggar [sic]" (6)

- "As an American, born in America with views of being patriotic to America. The
  values as an American is to love your country, your fellow Americans and other
  people foreign and otherwise domestic. Spirituality is a fundamental quality of
  Americans." (1)

The following participants checked "European American" and added comments directly

quoted below.

- "American….I could be considered an Italian American. We have a very proud
  family culture. However, in the general course of life I do not see it as a factor of
  separation between me and my fellow Americans." (10)

- "I would just say American" (18)

- "Mixed Italian, German, Slovak, I do use 'European American'" (20)

- "Hungarian-English American" (19)

- "white" (3)

In light of the discussion in Chapter I on the definition of race, it is no surprise that the participants have different interpretations and explanations of their racial identity. For some who identified as European American, the role of ethnicity became figural. It is also not surprising that a few of the participants who identified as African American, provided expressive responses to the item on racial identity.

As was stated earlier in this work, language around race and racism can be emotionally charged and understood from many perspectives. Thus, the use of the term "niggar" as a self-identifier in this study is subject to multiple interpretations. The intended meaning of the particular individual who used the term here was not explicitly explored in his interview because his demographic information was not reviewed until after the conclusion of his interview. But, beyond the intended meaning for this particular participant, it is important to explore the multiple uses of the word 'nigger' at this juncture because of the insights that such a discussion can have about the current nuances of race relations in the United States. "Determining the social and political character of the N-word is essential, not only because the word is full of definitional ambiguity but also because language plays a critical role in the formation of individual and collective identities and, as a result, in one's personal politics" (Akom, 2000, p. 141).

Boyd (1997) described, 'nigger' as "perhaps the most hotly contested word in the English language" (as cited by Akom, p. 142). It is telling that dictionaries of the (American) English language do not even uniformly acknowledge the existence of this word. Its acknowledgement and definition have also evolved over time. The Oxford

Desk dictionary and thesaurus published in 1997 does not contain the word, 'nigger', but includes only the term, 'niggardly,' defined as "stingy; parsimonious; meager; [or] scanty" (Abate, p. 532). An older dictionary, Webster's New World Dictionary of the American language, published in 1962, defined nigger as, "a Negro; a member of any dark-skinned people. A vulgar, offensive term of hostility and contempt, as used by Negrophobes" (p. 991). As the range of dictionary entries and non-existent entries suggests, the meaning of the term has evolved with the socio-political landscape. In his article that discussed the use of the word, nigger, Akom (2000) clarified.

> Historically, as a way of imposing order and asserting dominance over others, Europeans used the word to transform their own social identities as well as to ascribe the social inferiority to those populations encountered and exploited in the New World, Asia, and Africa. As a result, the word Nigger in the archives of the American historical imagination is not only a word but also an idea—an idea expressing the centrality of race and racial reasoning in American cultural politics, as well as the lingering legacy of slavery and the world emerging in its aftermath (Smedley, 1993) (Akom, p. 142).

Therefore, in the 60s and 70s, "Nigga was a term linked to the world of White supremacy and, as a result, laden with derogatory meaning" (Akom, p. 143). The entertainment industry, in particular Black comedy and rap music, as well as the commercialization of the Black urban experience have changed the use of the word to "a term of endearment" (Akom, 2000, p. 145) or a "jocular term of friendship" (Pettigrew, 2003) among some people of color. Akom terms this the "linguistic transformation of the terms Nigger and

Nigga" (p. 143). There are socio-political implications that capture the power and underlying meaning behind such a label of oneself.

In a study of urban youth throughout the United States, Akom (2000) researched the use of the word nigger or nigga and its social and political character as it is used in urban youth culture. Akom's purpose was to "offer some observations as to why some Black (and non-Black) working-class youth have chosen to adopt a nuanced version of the word Nigger as an intricate part of their cultural identity" (p. 145). For some it is an act of defiance, for others an assertion of control and the power to self-define. In the last decade, "nigga as word and concept has been commercially appropriated by the culturel [sic] industry and thus deeply implicated in the burgeoning marketplace of creating an new Black cultural aesthetic mainly through a musical form called 'rap'" (p. 144).

Some people of color bristle at the use of the word and see its use as playing "a key role in perpetuating intraracial oppression (Drake, 1987). In other words, 'Niggers' as well as 'Niggaz' are not only victims but also agents of racial and class oppression (Kelley, 1994)" (Akom, p. 151). Many see its use as lowering expectations about one's own social or racial group. A similar interpretation is shared by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian adult educator who specialized in pedagogy of the oppressed. (Given this dissertation's topic of interracial dialogue, it is noteworthy as an aside that Freire reportedly said that his parents taught him at an early age to *prize dialogue* and to respect the choices of others—key elements in his understanding of adult education.)

In Freire's framework, oppression is described as *cultural invasion*, a tool of

oppression in which members of the dominant culture impose not only their

values on the oppressed but also the very definition of self that the oppressor

holds of the oppressed. The oppressed begin to define themselves as the

oppressor defines them (Locke & Faubert, 1999, p. 44).

In this interpretation, such self-labeling, the act of a person of color calling his/herself

'nigger,' is striking in that it is a clear example of the oppressed taking on the label of the

oppressor, which, according to Freire, embodies the very nature of oppression.

The use of the N-word can be considered a political statement, a social

confrontation, a hip slang identifier, or even 'tongue-in-cheek'. In some instances, it may

indicate a self-perception of how one is seen in the world or how one sees the self. This

view of oneself in the world has tremendous implications for how one's life is lived and

interpreted. "A great deal of what the word *Nigga* means, how it is received, and its

social conventions have to do with the social spaces that one occupies when using the

word—be it work, leisure, or community—and one's position vis-à-vis existing racial

and class hierarchies" (Akom, 2000, p. 148).

Critical to this inquiry is the underlying issue mentioned by Akom (2000) that,

"the word Nigger in the archives of the American historical imagination is not only a

word but also an idea—an idea expressing the centrality of race and racial reasoning in

American cultural politics" (p. 142). Reinforced here, again, is the idea that racial

obsession has been a distinguishing characteristic of the United States and has been

central to its self-definition. Also important to this study, is the pointed "complexity and

confusing lines of demarcation involved in using the words Nigger or Nigga" (Akom,

2000, p. 155). It is an especially clear example of the intricacies involved in

understanding current race relations in the United States that is exacerbated by the

difficulties and complexities regarding language use. For many White people,

comprehending the nuances of the use of the word nigger can be confusing and

circuitous. Such confusion about and emotional charge associated with language, as

mentioned earlier, acts as a challenge to interracial dialogue and only adds to the view of

interracial dialogue, when it occurs, as an exceptional phenomenon.

Results

Findings organized by theme and thematic content are presented first. Tables are

used as a format to summarize the data according to its evolution during the interview

process. Next, findings in relation to racial identity development theory are presented by

demonstrating evidence of individual's progression through identifiable stages. Analysis

is discussed as themes are presented. The second format that is used to present results

takes the form of case studies. Excerpts from the interview transcripts of two individual

participants are presented in order to illustrate how the general themes can be identified

through an in-depth look at a few individuals who are rich examples of participants in

interracial dialogue on race.

Organization of thematic findings

The themes and factors that were found to contribute to the propensity for

interracial dialogue are organized by category below. The data collection process, as it

unfolded, resulted in a layering effect of information, similar to the layers of an onion.

This analogy is applicable because each layer as it is peeled off, gets deeper into the

onion. Therefore, the first, outer layer is used to describe the participants' initial, surface

level responses to the research question. The second layer is the result of more

discussion about the participants' life experiences and how those experiences may have

contributed to their interest in the race study circle. The third layer, moving closer to the

core of the onion, represents the results of further probing for the participants' core

beliefs and sense of morality that are foundational to their worldview. The findings,

organized into these three layers, are discussed below. A table is provided following

each section as a summary of each layer. Following the three layers of response provided

by participants is an additional discussion of themes that became evident throughout the

analysis and interpretation process. Together, these narratives and tables give a

representation of the findings as they are organized by thematic content.

Level I-Themes and content initially reported by participants

      There were three common themes that captured the initial responses of

participants to the question, "what prompted your participation in the race study circle?"

The themes presented are (a) early interest/curiosity about race, (b) improvement of work

competency or environment, and (c) improvement of personal understanding of racism.

      Early interest or curiosity.

Several of the participants expressed some recollection of an early interest in or curiosity

about race that was expressed very directly. A few examples are, "since I was a teenager

I've been interested in race" (8); and "I've always been interested in race relations" (20).

For some participants, this early interest was expressed in language that communicated

some interpretation that what they were seeing and experiencing with regard to race or

racism was wrong. Their sense of fairness or justice or care for other human beings was

somehow insulted by what they observed and interpreted. For example, one participant

made statements like, "I couldn't figure out why people could hate each other and I knew

it was wrong" (7). Another participant referred to seeing segregated public restrooms,

drinking fountains, and theatre seating sections in the South by saying, it "seemed

absolutely incongruous to me. I didn't see the point" (14).

A few African American men recalled curiosity and interest about racism as rising

out of their family experience. One commented that racism was a constant topic at the

dinner table and among family while growing up—"What are we Blacks going to do

about it?" was the question discussed by adults in his family who wondered and spoke

"out of the wellspring of their own experience" (2). Another African American man in

his sixties clearly recalled a childhood memory that piqued his curiosity about race. He

said,

> dad had all these wrenches lying around the house when I was a boy coming up.
>
> Styltson wrench, pipe wrenches…I said, why do you have these wrenches?
>
> Daniel, I had these wrenches when I was in Montgomery, Alabama. When I
>
> came to Pittsburgh, I wanted to use these wrenches. But when I went to get a job
>
> and they gave me a test of what I could do, I was told that if we hire you, every
>
> white man on this job would walk off…And I wondered why…. and then later in
>
> life, when I'd get to wondering *why,* I went to different places (5).

This poignant episode captures one father's painful experience of educating his son about

the realities and injustices of racism, a lesson that the son, now in his sixties, still

remembers vividly. Clearly, Daniel's sense of curiosity and sense that there was something "wrong" with this view of the world fueled his interest in race and eventually, his participation in the race study circle. His reference to "different places" was to, among other life travels, his subsequent life experiences as a college student, as one of only two African Americans on campus, and to his service in the military that required travel. These two experiences seemed in some ways to provide opportunities to discover the world and in particular to bring further understanding to his curiosity about racism. This curiosity, more deeply examined, seems to indicate an interest in human psychology as it relates to race. He said,

> I've always wanted to find out more about myself. I've wanted to find out why some people are so fearful…I wanted to find out more about what is going on with other people, myself and everyone else. Since I was going to be a teacher, because that's what I wanted to be, I wanted to find out more about my people. I wanted to find out more about why the other people disliked us or were so jealous of someone like me. And then I wanted to find out, are they scared of this? [points to his skin] (5).

He demonstrated a desire to understand the social process by which people develop understanding of race and give social meaning to a value-neutral characteristic like skin color. A European American woman expressed similar curiosities about her own racial group. She indicated that she was interested in joining the study circle in order "to hear and to try to understand other white people and… why…they think the way they do" (3). For another participant, early recollection of racism included curiosity about social

practices regarding race. She remembered asking herself in school, "why are they keeping themselves so really, so separate?…I was lacking the background to really understand that" (9). One participant's comment encapsulated early recollection, curiosity, as well as an early interpretation of racism as wrong. This European American woman had memories of being very young and being interested in racial difference. She remembered staring at the only black kid in her second grade class. She also had strong memories of always challenging her family on racism, a dynamic that she said continues today. She is currently involved in an interracial relationship that has been the source of conflict in her family. In each of these cases, the participant spoke of some expressed interest in the psychology of racism and had a desire to learn, in essence, 'what makes people hate.'

Improvement of work competency.

The second theme that emerged as an immediate response to the research question, "what factors prompted you to participate in the race study circle?" was the improvement of work competency or environment. There were two types of work experiences or circumstances that seemed to drive the need for increased knowledge or understanding of racism or diversity issues in general. First, for some, the need to address diversity issues emerged out of particular work settings or circumstances. The most striking of these examples is the story of a European American woman (10) who worked for a property management company that found itself in the position of integrating a government subsidized housing project, (which would house approximately fifty percent African Americans), into a predominantly White community. She found

herself launched into community politics, dealing with public relations, strategizing, advocating and educating in the arena of race relations where she had some strong values but limited experience. Another woman (12) became interested in dealing with race issues through her work with mediation. It became evident to her that in order to mediate conflicts that involved people of color that she needed to become more knowledgeable about the dynamics of race and racism. She saw her participation in the study circle, therefore, as part of the personal and professional development work that she needed in order to do her work more competently.

Another woman (18) worked in the District Attorney's office just after graduating from college and experienced her first mixed-race environment. She described that experience as having had an impact on her view of race. In her discussion of the experience it seemed that it raised the level of her awareness of racism, and her own understanding that it was important to discuss. One woman (13) mentioned that after college she sold insurance and that everything that she's done since college has kept her involved with many different types of people. Through those career interactions, working with people who are different from her has illuminated the need for her to continue to develop competencies in that area. Other examples are the classroom teacher (11) who wants his diversity competence to benefit his students and to improve classroom learning as well as the African American school principal (16) in a predominantly White school district whose livelihood virtually depends upon his interracial competence.

The other circumstance that seemed to drive the desire for increased knowledge of diversity issues was the needs of those people who work in a role or job where diversity is a focus. One man (4) who is a diversity administrator in a corporate setting considered the study circles as a good program to use as a resource for work encounters. A woman (15) who is a teacher and school administrator saw the study circles as an important supplement to her work on her school's multicultural committee. One woman (13) worked in a social service organization when she joined a study circle and was charged with implementing strategies to diversify the population of young people involved in the agency. Another woman (19) was actively studying race and ethnicity at the time she participated in the study circle and is now teaching these subjects at a university. These participants made it clear that they viewed their participation in the study circles, on a practical level, as a way of achieving greater competency in their role at work.

Improvement of personal understanding.

The third theme in Level 1, or immediate reactions to the research question, is desire to improve personal understanding of racism. For some participants, this desire was stated as a need to unlearn racism. Comments such as, "I want to correct…the misconceptions that have been established in my brain" (9) , "I started to question my own bias as well " (9), and "I wanted to be honest with myself to find out is there still something inside of me that is [racist]" (11) all assume some understanding of preexisting biases. Margaret stated, "part of it I was upset with myself, and part of it I was upset with other people" (8). Mirta used the opportunity of the study circle to reflect on a childhood

interracial friendship that had soured. She said that she has revised theories and asked herself questions over the years about her behavior toward her.

Other participants expressed their desire for personal understanding of racism as a journey into the self. For them, the study circle was, "just to learn more about myself and hoping that I could understand myself better" (3), and because, "I've always wanted to find out more about myself" (5). Said Laura, "I [went] there to receive more than to act. I mean, not to impact people, but much more to get the impact from" (10). Chris verbalized his curiosity and indicated that the study circle for him would be a path to deeper understanding of the self. "I wanted to join the study circle because I was curious. I wanted to see how other people felt. I was curious to get other people's responses. I was curious to see if it would be beneficial for me and if I could learn anything to help out my family" (11). Table 2 presents the initial responses of participants as to why they participated in race study circles.

Table 2: Level I-Themes and content initially reported by participants

Early interest/curiosity about race	Improvement of work competency/environment	Improvement of personal understanding
Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:
Recollection of youth interest	Need emerged out of work circumstances (unanticipated)	To address possible preexisting biases
Curiosity about psychology of race and racism	Need was inherent in the job (anticipated)	To delve deeper into the self
Sense of moral "wrongness"		

Table 2 includes themes that were offered as the participant's initial responses to the

research question, "what prompted your participation in the race study circle?" Most of

the participants cited some early interest in the subject of race. They had recalled a

youthful interest in race, expressed some particular curiosity about race and racism, and

seemed to have some sense that racism was morally wrong even as a young person.

Many participants cited their work as an impetus to getting involved in the race study

circle. For some the need to increase their competency in this area developed in response

to work environment or task demands and for others the need for diversity competence

was inherent in their work. Many participants in their initial responses reiterated a third

theme, a desire to improve personal understanding of race and racism. Some participants

wanted to address what they thought may be preexisting biases of which they could be

unaware, and others merely expressed a desire to delve more deeply into their own

understanding of racial issues. These were the initial responses that participants had to the research question. The next section, level 2, examines thoughts that were revealed as the interview discussion unfolded. This section represents the themes that were identified as a result of analyzing those thoughts.

Level 2: Themes that emerged through discussion

The next level, Level 2 explores themes that emerged through more detailed conversation with the participants about their life experiences and characteristics. The themes presented are (a) for Whites, having a one-on-one relationship with someone of another race; (b) for people of color, experiences with racism, and for both groups, (c) having the influence and inspiration of role models, and (d) taking on the role of educating others about racism

Whites, having a one-on-one relationship with someone of another race.

Many of the White participants were able to draw upon distinct memories of having one-on-one relationships with people of color. At some point in their lives, having significant contact with persons of another race seemed to move these people of other races from being "others" to being "someone in my world that matters to me". They were someone who didn't fit the stereotypes that they were hearing from the larger society. These participants were able to see instances of racial prejudice and the effects that they had on individuals. Racial prejudice became less an abstract concept that happened "out there somewhere else" and more a clear example of injustice in their world.

Rose grew up in a largely White neighborhood adjacent to a largely African American neighborhood and remembered that all of the children of both races walked to school together. This was an early memory that she cited as important in shaping her attitudes about racial tolerance. As an adult, she and her husband had nine children and moved into the city to find more affordable housing for their large family. They moved into a predominantly African American community and contributed significantly to community relations. She recalled experiencing the race riots in Pittsburgh in the sixties, "it was a frightening time but it was also a time that made ya stop and think… It was a good opportunity to talk to our kids about it….Then you could see how the African Americans were being mistreated, right in our own community, you know, the people we lived with, you know, so that just reinforced what I had thought" (7).

She remembered neighbors being refused house insurance because they lived on a particular street. Lending institutions were redlining people that wanted to buy houses in that area. She recalled that her son, as he got older, expressed some doubt that racism was still a current concern. He was working at a restaurant with another teenager who was African American. One night he came home and related that some steak knives had been reported missing at the restaurant. He saw the owners search the African American teen's bag as he was leaving work and as he left for the night they just said good night to him with no mention of checking his bag. Her son's view of racism subsequently changed to reflect his experience with seeing racial prejudice in action. Her life experiences and direct observations of injustice were significant to her attitudes about race and eventually to her decision to join the race study circle.

Margaret went to church next door to what was called a ward home, which was an agency home for young people who needed care. As she saw some young Black teens sitting outside on the porch of this ward home, what became figural for her was all of the advantages and love that her own four children had as compared with the children that she saw outside the ward home. She, in essence, took one young Black woman under her wing. She has remained an influence in her life throughout the young woman's adulthood. She also shared that she had proposed to the minister of her church that these young people from the ward house be invited to participate in the youth group activities in the church. The minister discouraged her. He told her that some of the Black kids had come to the church before, but that some in the congregation had been offended because the kids were fixing their hair in church. She decided not to push her idea because she thought that if the effort was not supported by the church leadership that it was not going to succeed.

Sandi worked as a teacher and observed a young Black woman come in to her school as a student teacher, preparing to enter the teaching profession. She recalled witnessing the discriminatory behaviors of others in her school. Laura was a friend of an African American child when they were both aged 13. Of her friend, she recalled, "he was just the nicest kid" (10). As an adult, this woman found herself responsible for the implementation of a new housing project that would increase the number of people of color in the community. This created great conflict in the community where significant resistance was demonstrated. The town officials were explicit in their rejection of the new housing project and eventually asked if all Blacks could be put in one area. She

reflected, "this was the mayor of the borough, the person in charge of the municipality asking me such a ridiculous and illegal question, supported by the Chief of Police who doesn't see anything wrong...I just couldn't believe people and they were serious..." (10). She also commented on the bias of the media that seemed to provide coverage only when something negative happened and never when there were successful or positive initiatives. According to her interpretation of the entire experience, the reactions of the community were so blatantly rooted in racist dogma, that she felt face-to-face with the ugliness of racial hatred and its effects. As of the time of our interview she was continuing to work in this community trying to facilitate this housing transition.

Chris remembered deep prejudices, the effects of which he observed in his hometown throughout his youth. He quoted a saying that he heard frequently as a young person, "If you're white, you're all right, if you're brown, you can stick around, and if you're black, get back" (11) He worked as a bartender as a young adult at country clubs where he reports that a 'no Blacks' policy was explicit. "Shoot", he said, "there were people upset that Lynn Swann got in up there" (11). Chris has an interracial marriage to an Asian (Indian) American woman. He has a young son. "My wife and I had done a lot of talking about having children in a multi-cultural relationship. Some of the struggles that we would have, some of the struggles that we had already faced and so that piqued my interest [in the study circle] just because it was my son". He said that after September 11, 2001, there were "...reports made about people that were Indian in culture who were being mistaken for Muslim and you know that was a scary feeling" (11). He recalled

having a football friend who was African American when he was in school. "I looked at him like a type of brother where as I just learned to ignore what people said".(11).

Lynn taught school in Harlem and observed, up close and personally, some of the issues of poverty and race intersecting. Shelly is involved in an interracial relationship and lived with her partner's family (African American) for a year. Through his life experiences and through her experiences in-relation to him, she has come face-to-face with racial prejudice.

Mirta recalled several childhood experiences that significantly shaped her views of race and racial prejudice. Her father was in the military and his assignments caused their moves to different locations in the United States. They moved from Philadelphia where she had good friends in school who were Black. She reflected, "it was just natural" (14). When they moved to the South, her experiences with seeing segregated facilities was shocking and vivid in her memory. She went to a movie house with a friend and sat in the Black section. A man came and told them they couldn't sit there because that is where the Blacks sit; they moved and the person came back again and told them that this is where the (Seminole) Indians sit;

> so we moved again and the man came by and we said "is this alright"—he said
> you're not from here, are you?" The change when we moved back to Philadelphia
> was extraordinary. I just decided that I never wanted to live in Florida again." "I
> can see that so clearly in my mind's eye today, because I'm very visual. I was
> just absolutely appalled. You know, I've never forgotten it. I can remember all
> the details of the drinking fountain… the benches in the bus station. Gosh, and

I'm actually really glad I saw it. I'm sorry it was there, but I'm really…It was like being picked up and dropped in a different country (14).

She related that her mother had taken her to pick up their clothes from the laundress, a Black woman. She remembered driving a distance away from the house that they were staying in while her father served in the military. She remembered the extreme poverty she saw, the complete segregation and remembered that her mother said that this is what the woman needed to do to make a living. She believes to this day that her mother took her there purposefully and she doesn't recall having gone any other time. What stands out in her mind, along with the shock of the woman's living conditions, was that her mother introduced she and her brother politely to the woman, as she would have to any other adult in their lives. The message that she received was that her mother was telling her that the laundress was worthy of being treated as politely as her White acquaintances and that she deserved their respect. While living in an affluent area in California she invited a Mexican girl to a birthday party and neighbor called to say, "Are you aware you had a Mexican at your party?" Her mom said, "yes, I am. She was an invited guest". "My mother was quite annoyed", (14) she recalled. Back in Philadelphia the family had housekeeper who was Black who was very close to the family, so much so that she felt like another mom. She said that these memories were important in shaping her awareness and beliefs about race and racism, which definitely had effect on her decision to join study circle.

Melanie's mother had a best friend who was African American back in the 1950s. As an adult, the participant adopted an African American child. She said that she knew

she would be open to adopting outside of her own race. She knew that it was more difficult for adoption agencies to place children of color and said that she couldn't stand the thought of any child not being wanted.

Finally, Shelly remembered being "blown away" (19) by the comment of high school friends who called a mutual Black friend a "porch monkey" (19).   She was deeply disturbed, especially because the Black kid was a friend of, not only her, but supposedly of this name-caller as well. This woman as an adult is involved in an interracial relationship.

People of color, experiences with racism.

In the interviews with the people of color, we also probed together for their experiences with race and racism, wondering how they related to their decision to join the study circle. They shared stories that conveyed painful memories and also a measure of the curiosity mentioned in the previous section. Their tone, which may not be conveyed easily through just the content of their interview, was often imbued with a sense of inquisitiveness as if to imply, "how can White people think the way they do about people like me?"

Alice had seen a paper that referred to "white values". She said, " I didn't know values had color. And these are people with Ph.D.s. I mean these are people on the upper level…What were they thinking about me?…" (1). Keith grew up in the South and said that it was the norm to see confederate flags flying on cars. What came to his mind when we talked about his direct experience with racism was going to a restaurant with his father that they frequented and one day getting a glimpse of a separate dining area where

there were tablecloths, whereas his family usually got their food for take-out. He asked

his father about it and his father explained that the other facility was mainly where the

White people ate. Part of his experience was being the lone Black kid in the advanced

courses in school. He remembered wondering about this at the time. Another experience

that he recalled was not getting an invitation to a friend's birthday party and wondering

why. He remembered his father explaining to him that it may not be the child that didn't

like him but that maybe the parents didn't like some kinds of people. In both of these

cases, the memories were clear and he felt that they were meaningful because he could

bring them to the surface so readily. The strongest sense that he remembered having as a

child in both of these instances was puzzlement and curiosity.

For David that sense of curiosity was aroused by many childhood encounters. His

mother and some others in his family could "pass"--meaning that they were light-skinned

and could appear to be White, so that they were often treated as White people if they

were out in public without their darker-skinned family members. To some extent, he

believed that the situations that they encountered, some ironic, and some, as he said,

hazardous, not only heightened his observations of racism, but also his sense of inquiry

into this complex phenomenon called racism.

His father was active in the Civil Rights movement and racism was daily fodder

for dinner conversation. When a Black man was killed in a police incident, his dad

organized a rally, went to the courthouse, and inspected the body because there were

mixed reports on how the man had been shot. The police started following his dad and

harassing him, stopping him for supposed traffic violations, and he remembers feeling

scared that they would kill his dad. As an adult he now understands that this would have been improbable due to his father's standing and visibility in the community.

Daniel recalled that, as a schoolboy, he reacted with a shove to a White girl who spit on him and was punished because the teacher (reportedly) only saw his reaction. He remembered, despite the passing of about fifty years, the words of his teacher telling him, "you're nothing. You never will be anything. You're a nobody". It was his father who was refused work to the level of his ability because, as he was told, Whites would walk off the job if he were hired. This participant was refused admittance to the Marines because he was Black, but joined the Army instead. He was hitchhiking as a college student (which he now characterized as 'stupid') and remembered a White trucker who picked him up and after some introductory conversation, asked to touch his skin (5). For this participant, his life experiences with racism were painful and he clearly saw that they limited his potential (and his father's potential). Underlying that pain for him was also the same curiosity that seemed to be borne out of the incongruities or nonsensical nature of racism. That he was refused by the Marines, yet considered fit to serve in the Army was incongruous. That his father had skills that went untapped because of his skin color was nonsensical. That a White man viewed his skin as a curiosity, was in and of itself, curious to him and seemed to introduce the thought that this fear called racism was rooted in ignorance and lack of understanding.

Abraham spoke in light of his present-day situation and expressed his anger and frustration at racial stratification and the interactive effects of race and poverty. He said,

I have to speak because I'm sittin' here watching what's going on. I'm sittin' in the catbird seat. I'm livin' close right next door to it, I mean, when you see me getting out of my car and looking cause last time I had a car out here somebody puts a tire on the front of my car and there's skids, but you can't say nothing to 'em and you see, I'm constantly in this minefield of hostility. I live this life, so I have learn how to respect and get along or try to sometimes play like you don't see some things that, you know what I mean, because it's important in order for you to survive. Where am I gonna go? That's the way I look at it. (6).

Later, he talks about seeing kids in his neighborhood doing wrong and he knows that if he says something, he will face retribution. His house will be broken into. "They hate everybody, they hate themselves" (6).

He spoke harshly of the Black youth in his community with whom he could sympathize on the one hand, but whose chosen path of crime and lives as hoodlums, as he saw it, he detested. He had been clearly pained by racism and felt that his and his parents' low expectations of what he would be able to accomplish in his lifetime had muted his potential. His experience of the incongruity of racism was centered around his global view that all humans are so interdependent that what we do to one group, we effectively do to all. He said, "we're all in this together. If we're not going to live together, we'll all die and that's it" (6). His anger was openly expressed and was laced with incredulousness that others didn't seem to see the incongruities that he saw. He expressed anger at Whites for racist beliefs and actions, but also at Blacks for what he saw as actions that would only inflame and perpetuate the problem of race relations and

for what he viewed as immoral acts that made his daily life difficult and miserable. Through the anger was curiosity that had been enflamed to the point of exasperation at the waste and futility of it all that was so figural for him.

Monique worked at a summer resort while in college and remembers being called "nigger" (13). She said, "I had never been called that before" (13). Even though she had seen some of the violence and indignities during the Civil Rights movement as a child on television, she still felt a sense of shock when she heard that term used to address her. Again, she acknowledged the pain of that encounter and yet beneath it was a sense of inquisitiveness that wondered what it was that would make someone call her that.

Alan recalled hearing about his grandfather, who was White, having rented an apartment. His grandmother, who was Black, came to clean and get the apartment ready to move in, which caused great consternation with the landlady, because she had believed that she had rented to Whites. The result was that they got rejected from the rented apartment because the woman wouldn't rent to Blacks. In his parents' generation he remembered that, "there were people who went to college and got degrees and then could only get jobs as a cabbie or train porter carrying bags of their white college classmates who sometimes did not perform as well as they had in school" (16). In the telling of these stories, the participant seemed to have a need to seek some kind of a healing for the bald injustices that his family endured. For him, the race study circle was one important way to contribute to the healing of racism.

<u>Role models.</u>

Another theme that emerged through discussion with the participants was that many of them had people in their lives who had served as role models to them with regard to addressing racism.   Lynn's parents were union activists and believed strongly in fighting for justice and equality. She has been active in the race study circle and in mediation programs to help people in conflict. Interestingly, the interest in social justice issues has also been passed to the next generation. She shared that her son is in the Peace Corps and is having the experience of being the only White face in another area of the world.

When asked why he would be interested in interracial dialogue after having so many experiences with racism, Alan said, simply, "Mrs. Columbo" (16). He explained that Mrs. Columbo was a teacher and was so kind to him in school, that she came to represent the good white people. He said, "I realized that there were other Mrs. Columbo's out there and I had not taken the time to find them" (16).

Other participants cited teachers as people who inspired them to become more aware of racism and more inclined to be active in its elimination. Shelly talked about a high school teacher who taught outside the bounds of the textbook to express ideas that challenged the traditional Western thinking about historical events. Jerry talked about a college professor who taught him about social injustice through classes in economics and politics. This participant also cited a woman whom he had met at workshop who had taken a housing discrimination case to the Supreme Court in the 1950s (and won).   He ran into her later in the city and expressed some interest in working on present day

housing discrimination issues and she directed him to the office where he could pursue such work. Melanie cited her mother as a role model for having a best friend who was Black during an era when many people would have disapproved. The participant felt that this was a powerful message about liking people for their character and about standing up for what is morally right. This friendship also undoubtedly planted seeds to assure her that interracial dialogue was not only possible, but also, fruitful.

Anika saw her father as an inspiring role model. His life, as she reported, was committed to helping others. He started a school in his small village in India so that kids didn't have to walk six miles to school. He paid salaries of the teachers and start up money for two years. She said that, "so many people came out of that village and did such good in their life and everything went back to that little school--that's how my dad was" …I always saw him as my ideal, what I wanted to be" (15).

David's father seemed to be the epitome of role models, providing a model of hard work, an activist spirit, clear attentiveness to the problems that racism created, and a model of a professional career where he was able to stay true to, and in fact promote, his beliefs. As a young man, David's father worked a janitorial job in the steel mill at night and went to a university during the day. Older men who were also janitors would give his dad a break so he could study or nap. These men were also perceived by David as role models because of their efforts to help the next generation become more successful than they were. David's father was a civil rights activist. He said,

> I think a lot of men must have been like him. Especially the guys that went out to
>
> picket. Now remember they had to picket to get the, I don't want to say the

crummy jobs, but they had to picket to get us into Isley's, to get us into

Kaufmann's and Horne's, to get us into banks, the little beginning jobs. We

weren't there. We were spending our money downtown, we were buying ice

cream at Isley's but we had to boycott and picket, THEY had to boycott and

picket…many, many other men like him, including many unlettered men, that is

men who had not gone to college, together they just would go and raise kane. And

that's a generation of guys who, of course, are dying off now….there's a whole

group of them and these are the unsung heroes of the pre-modern civil rights

movement. These guys were all decades before Martin Luther King and Malcolm

X. And so, to me, the development of the 60s and 70s were just a natural

outgrowth. It was just all of a sudden, we had the federal government on our

side…Our lives were so interesting because we were fighting, and I think back to

my dad and all these guys and they really had dragons to slay when they got up

every morning and that's what they did. They would be called militants today and

frequently they were criticized not only by Whites but by Blacks for being too

vocal, for risking gains that were made, by asking for too much too fast (2).

David's father was offered a job by the mayor of Pittsburgh but turned it down on

principle so that he wouldn't be led to stop criticizing the government. As an African

American pioneer in the national television industry he founded an industry professional

organization for African Americans. He became a speaker for historically Black

colleges, and for the NAACP throughout the south. He covered stories of the civil rights

movement and even became friends with Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. David,

although he admitted that his father's shoes were somewhat too big to fill, was largely

influenced by his father's life experiences, beliefs, and principled life. For him,

participation in the study circle was a natural fit in a life that had been full of intellectual

and practical discussion of the issue of race in the United States.

In role of educating others.

Another theme that emerged through discussion was that many of the participants

either found themselves or saw themselves in the role of educating others about race

relations. Sandi said, "I thought if I studied more about the differences in the races you

know, maybe I could help others understand too" (9). Laura found herself in the role of

encouraging others through education, to be more accepting in integrating a housing

project. Chris, a teacher, cited his class and his interest in "how well I could benefit other

students, what I could learn about other adults and their feelings, [and] what I could give

to the parents" (11).

Lynn had been a special education teacher and always liked working with people.

She eventually transitioned to mediation work because liked to help people solve their

problems and learn how to communicate. She said, of her reasons for joining a study

circle, "I liked the idea of helping and educating others" (12). Anika stated that working

as an educator in terms of race relations was very important to her self-concept because

she saw helping others as integral to her life goals. Melanie, who is a also a teacher,

stated that her goal is to educate children and to see them grow up with acceptance and an

appreciation of diversity. Her work on a multicultural committee in her school is integral

to how she views her role as an educator.

Alan, who is African American, works as a school principal in a largely White suburb. He explained that he uses Allport's contact theory whenever he can in his role as an educator. Allport's theory says that prejudice will be reduced whenever contact between races meets certain conditions, one of which is working toward common goals. He sees himself as a leader not only for his students, but for the teachers as well. He said, "If educators are incapable of bridging that [racial] gap then what can we expect from the youth whose education we're entrusting to their care?" Lastly, Jerry, a White man (20) saw himself as someone who is able to act as a bridge between the races. He said, "I see both sides, if I can help someone over to the right side, [I will feel like I have made a difference]" (20).

The assumption made by every participant was that diversity competence, learning to get along with others who are different from the self, is teachable. There was an assumption that education and dialogue would help individuals gain acceptance of others. In addition, for many participants, this role of educating others on race relations fit into their life's plan. The idea that they would provide leadership on issues of race relations seemed, to most participants, as a natural outgrowth of how they saw themselves in the world and within their spheres of influence. Table 3 represents themes and factors that were compiled as a result of detailed interviewing.

Table 3: Level 2 Themes and content emerged through interview

Whites-one-on-one with people of color	POC-face-to-face with racism	Role Models	Role of educating others
Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:
Care for individuals countered stereotypes	Expressed curiosity	Source of inspiration	Belief that diversity competence is teachable
Saw incongruities	Saw incongruities	Could be of same or different race	Working toward their life goals
Expressed indignance	Needed to seek healing	Family messages	

In summary, the themes that emerged from interviews with the participants were, for Whites, one-on-one relationships with people of color that countered stereotypes and that allowed them to see the incongruities of racism. For people of color their face-to-face experiences with racism elicited pain and also a sense of curiosity about the psychology of racism. This curiosity was fueled in some ways by the obvious incongruities that their experiences of racism revealed. Many participants cited individuals who acted as role models in their lives, as a source of inspiration in terms of living by guiding principles and acting on those principles. Finally, many participants saw themselves in the role of educating others. They had in common an assumption that getting along with others of a different race is something that can be learned about and

improved upon. They also saw their involvement in race relations as part of their life's

work and as a natural choice given their overall goals for their life.

The next section explores level 3 ideas that represent the most in-depth elements

that participants were able to provide about their core principles that are thought to be

related to their participation in the study circle.

Level 3 Themes and content from in-depth probe

The factors, organized below into three themes, were the result of careful

collaborative probing with the participants. These themes, illustrated by participant

commentary, are presented below as (1) moral consciousness/spirituality; (2) empathy;

and (3) social responsibility.

Moral development.

As the participants and I delved into their life experiences and what values they

had learned from their families, I asked questions specific to their religious or spiritual

life and beliefs. In addition, I asked them to reflect on their idea of morality and the

factors that they might consider when facing a moral dilemma. While this area of

questioning was abstract, many of the participants articulated a moral consciousness that

suggested higher levels of moral development as suggested by Kohlberg's (1978) stage

development theory, as explored in Chapter II. There were a few patterns of thought that

indicated that the participants were operating from higher stages of moral development.

First, many participants specified the significance of context to making any type of moral

decision. There were no indicators of dichotomous thinking that would have typified

lower level stages of moral development. For example, Shelly indicated that she

definitely would not make a judgment about a moral decision based on what is legal or not legal, but she goes by her gut feeling. She does not adhere to any particular religious creed; tries to think of the other side of things (opposing her gut reaction) to validate gut feeling; always considers greater social context.

Shelly's thought that she would not necessarily follow legal dictates is another indication that she has moved beyond Kohlberg's stage 4, which is the stage where people value social law as the measure of moral decision-making. Rose also offered a rejection of law as a solution to moral problems. She said, "nothing's gonna change 'til people's hearts change. You can set all the laws you want to…" (7).

Third, there were consistent references to moral decisions being based on the common good, with an eye toward doing no harm and treating others as they would like to be treated. In terms of organized religion, the participants seemed to have views that were seemingly polarized, but pointed to a larger moral commonality. Some participants expressed heavy involvement and reliance upon organized religion as a way of expressing their spiritual beliefs, while others, having witnessed what they considered hypocrisies in organized religion, did not consider themselves to be religious adherents. Interestingly, both those that were involved in religious groups and those that were not, all expressed similar types of spiritual beliefs that valued the common good. The other way that this value was unilaterally expressed by participants was the ideal of doing no harm to others.

Those that had strong religious identification saw this as a forum for expressing their view of moral behavior. Rose perhaps put this most succinctly when she said,

"religion has been important. Anybody who needed help, we'd help" (7). While acknowledging the importance of a religious life, for her that translated to helping others, no matter who they were. She explained that race or socio-economic status were not barriers to helping others, nor to the establishment good relationships, either to her family of origin, or, in turn, in her adult family. The expression of her religious beliefs was in line with her spiritual commitment to help others for the common good. David's family had a history of strong religious involvement and in fact built a Baptist church in Pittsburgh. For him, religious experience was in keeping with his values. David said, that, when faced with a moral dilemma, "I would be directed by my beliefs about God and about God's creation as I made my decision….how will this affect others, I wouldn't want to hurt someone else" (2).

Abraham said that, "My mother was in the church all her life. God was her anchor. If it wasn't for God and knowing there is God and knowing that the White man doesn't control God…. He controls the jobs and the money but he has no control over God. If it wasn't for God being in my life and my mother's life I would not be the person that I am today" (6). He was deeply disturbed at the prospect of the (at the time, impending) war in Iraq and had concerns about the "rightness" of the proposed war. He said,

> You're gonna have to realize that there's gotta be a better game plan…not no
> programs and not no handouts, not no... There's gotta be a better plan, I'm
> talking about medical, ah, medical for the elderly. I'm talking about for
> everybody. There's gotta be an overall, I mean, for the doctors to have

malpractice insurance. It's gotta be overall, world-wide, universal. To

everybody. Everybody's gotta have it. This is no other choice. If you think that

just because you put a flag up and call yourself something and you think that

that's it… its going to be a mess" (6).

Abraham's reference to putting up a flag was a direct reference to war and to nations

putting their own interests above what he perceives as the universal good. Again, he

expressed the principle of do no harm when he said, " I wouldn't hurt you… I wouldn't

break into your house… I wouldn't kill somebody, that I wouldn't, because that's not

how I'm made, never been how I'm made" (6). His principle of do no harm was also

implicit in his thinking about the possibility of going to war. He felt that such a war

would do harm to others and would not advance the common good.

Like Abraham, Alan identified church as a safety net for Blacks in the United

States. He said,

without the black church, and the belief in God that it instilled in my people we

could not have survived. I don't think that any people has ever experienced

anything worse than the American slave experience. Faith in God has helped me

deal with situations and people that otherwise I would have fled. I'm out here.

And this, I believe that this faith that I have has played a major role in propelling

me to where I am now so that I can speak and interact with people and they can

either see my light or feel the heat of my light and tear down barriers. (16)

He explained, "I can feel if something is morally right. I use my sense of intuition. My face is like a window into my soul and you can see how I feel" (6). He described morality and honor as very important to him.

The participants who indicated a general distrust of organized religion, or recognition of hypocrisies between the teachings and practice of organized religious groups said that they preferred instead to follow moral and spiritual principles that they felt captured a more just or morally right way of being in the world. For example, Keith referenced a general falling out with organized religion in college, but holds onto, as he put it, generic lessons of treating people as you would want to be treated. He explained his rationale for his as, "Well, Jesus was nice to all sorts of people, ya know, he hung out with lepers and tax collectors and all sorts of unsavory types and, ya know, counted some of them among his twelve best friends. And that being the case, I thought, 'well, this worked out really well for Jesus, why shouldn't it work out well for me?' I don't think of myself as deeply religious, but much more spiritual. Religion's just kind of a funnel for it" (4). Keith went on to provide an explicit example of the type of hypocrisy that he finds objectionable about organized religion. He said,

> why is it that people of faith, and particularly Christians, as a group, can on the
> one hand, jump up and down and read the Bible and say all these wonderful
> things about how we are all children of God and yet when I walked into the
> churches, that I went to as a kid, if there was any white person in there, they were
> immediately viewed with suspicion (why is he or she in here, what are they doing
> here), questions and questions and a noticeable buzz during service in the

congregation. Um, And it worked the other way too, if I showed up a church that was predominantly white (who is this guy, why is he here?) And it always kind of, it bothered me a great deal that the faith that I subscribed to, people that were supposed to be fellow believers along with me couldn't quite figure out that that was an unusual thing given what they professed to believe (4).

For Keith, living by his own sense of what Jesus taught was more important than any religious institution.

Monique explained that she and her parents were not churchgoers but that she lived by the "lesson that the Lord loves everybody… you should treat people like you want to be treated" (13). Lynn explained that her moral principles were that, "everyone has basic rights and if anything is done to hinder those basic rights, it's morally wrong. We're all human beings" (12). Mirta said that, "Catholicism didn't sit with me….We went to church at the Pittsburgh Oratory" (14). She described the other parishioners there as highly educated and highly intellectual and that the people were a highly stimulating group who had a sense of humor. When asked to describe her sense of morality relative to this experience, Mirta said, that she would consider whether something is right or not, and she would avoid hurting (do no harm), even if the thing was not necessarily pleasant or would require sacrifice. "I talk to everybody, everyplace….cuz I just really like people…I just think all people should live together in dignity " (14), she said.

Laura described her brand of morality as, "kindness to people, especially kids; and if you can't be kind, don't do harm…I think that if people do things at any such level that impact a life of a child, in a good way, great, that would be highly moral to me.

That's leaving your stand or your imprint" (10).   Shelly indicated that she has generally a cynical view of religion because she saw so many hypocrisies in religious institutions. Despite her rejection of organized religion, her sense of morality is well-defined, especially given her relatively young age (she is in her twenties). Her career commitment to teaching race and ethnic studies seemingly indicates that she is focused on the experience of others and has somewhat of a broad perspective on the human condition which would be a prerequisite to understanding the concepts required to teach such subjects.

Although Jerry did not consider himself an adherent to any particular religious faith, he saw his spiritual journey as significant to his life. He shared that he had read Victor Frankel's (1963) book entitled, Man's search for meaning during an extensive illness and did lots of soul searching (Frankel's work is his account and reflection of his experience in a Nazi concentration camp). Jerry joined a peace and justice organization while hospitalized and said, "now I just want to be around good people" (20). He considers himself significantly less materialistic now. When asked what factors should be considered when a moral question is raised, his answer was, "who would be harmed?" (20).

Anika spoke about religious orders as creating man-made separations where non should exist. For her, those separations tend to detract from the common humanity. She said,

> where these religions came from? It's human mind that made these things. And if
> we don't go and understand these things, that's where we fought and that's where

we stay behind and we should be above it all. We are not. So I would say I go by

religion of what they call it religion of rada, human being is one. One same god it

doesn't matter, we can call it Jesus Christ, Alla, Om or anybody else. Rada, radas

are the oldest book in the world. Nobody knows who wrote when and There are

four radas and that's what they say. It's one same human being. Absolute origin

and people say they are written before, (I don't know the English word) the

demolition of the whole Ark and then newly formed and then demolition and then

newly formed it was many times demolition before that they read it and there are

4 and let me tell you how, well, four redas and that's what I believe in and that's

basically actually all Hinduism is one that same thing. All so many gods…they

are one same gods. All that one same God's message is the same too for

everybody, but we have made all this [religious separation] (15).

Anika's moral and spiritual belief system is clearly one that recognizes the common good

and oneness of all humanity as a primary concept. Most of the participants, after having

the opportunity to reflect on the idea, felt that their decision to join the study circle was

rooted in their sense of morality. Although this was not a thought that sprung to their

mind when immediately asked about what factors contributed to their participation, after

probing with them into their thoughts about their belief system and sense of morality,

many of the participants agreed that their decision to join the study circle was ultimately

based on their moral convictions.

<u>Empathy.</u>

Another commonality that emerged when participants began to reflect deeply on their beliefs was their ability to view racial problems and the treatment of others from a perspective that I would describe as empathic. There was a focus on the experience of the other. They seemed to have an ability to look farther than the immediate concern and to think about issues as they relate to our greater humanness or to what kind of thinking must be adopted to move people from petty, superficial focus on differences to a more global view. Anika described human discrimination as beyond racial, and more as the need to "other" people and find a way to create barriers. She said, "if you are not at right position with the right mind and right things, then no matter what, you are going to be discriminated. Which is not good….but again, human values, if we don't have those things that's going to happen, based on looks, based on clothes, based on money, based on everything" (15). She went on to describe her own sense of humanity, which I interpret as viewing humans from a broader perspective. Anika said,

> I go by broader perspective, and also being a biology teacher, what I say to mean 'human being' is anybody with 23 pairs of chromosomes. We are all human being, it doesn't matter this part of the world, that part of the world or this color or that color or anything else, we are all one, same thing. And we all need to make sure to know that because that's where the differences are, we think, oh, I'm better because I belong to this group, or this village and all this and that. No, it's not, we are all one same thing (15).

Anika's statements consistently referred back to her belief that we are all one and that in order to solve racial problems, we need to step back and look at the bigger picture of our common humanity and focus on the commonness of our experience. Alan referred specifically to seeing the problems from a wider perspective.

There are some people who see the big picture, that understand that we live in an international community and though, if you're gonna survive in a highly competitive international community or if you're gonna survive and compete successfully, you have to have the very best people in every position. So any forward thinking organization or nation that does not create opportunities for those that possess those rare qualities to make their fair contribution, then that organization or that nation is not going to survive. You gotta have the best available. I have learned over the years that talent doesn't reside in one group of people, its everywhere and the challenge to any great society is to create venues through which the cream of the crop can rise to the top. That's what excites me about being an educator, when you see that sparkle in a kid's eye, and a lot of kids, ah, the love and attention that they receive from a caring adult has the same effect as the rays of the sun and the drops of rain upon the vegetation of this earth. And I love what I do and that's one of the reasons why I didn't retire. I love to see these kids. And wherever I go, its not about color with me, its about kids. Helping them to discover and unleash that potential. I believe that all kids can learn (16).

Although Alan is speaking about the United States, in specific, his way of thinking about human potential as being important beyond all the physical differences is significant to his values and indicates a global view. Lynn related her perspective on the common human experience of fear.

> Some friends I have now, they talk about not wanting to go into Homewood [a predominantly African American community], cuz they're afraid. And I say they [African Americans] live there too, they have less than you, they're more afraid that you are. And they don't want to go there. I feel safe or as safe as anyone could be in the area. Face it, we're all afraid of drive by shootings. And it can happen to anybody. And that's I think, maybe what people are referring to. I think growing up also there were kids who would, you would drive through an area and kids would run through the street and run to your car window and…snatch things out and people became fearful….but to blame a whole race of people for the actions of a couple of kids, was awful but it made them fearful and that's what drove people to not want to come to that area (12).

Lynn's ability to understand that fear can be a driving force for all people, demonstrated her ability to look at a local issue of racial distrust and to empathize with those that to her friend are considered the 'other'. She was also able to see the situation more globally, as a mutual experience of fear. Ann was able to look at her experience of being White in the United States as the intellectual version of the artist's negative space, meaning that what was figural for her was what she *didn't* see. She explained,

> When you live in ah, even though African Americans are a minority population, you live someplace you, you have white people and you have black people and you really don't intermingle and you don't see each other and you don't live near each other, that's profound. So it's a sense, did I see things? No, because I grew up in such a white area, its such a white community I don't think I did see things that touched me personally, but you know something's going on when you don't see anything…And when you see one or two black people in your high school and you wonder, and I remember thinking, how on earth can they be here and how can they have a normal dating life and social life and everything else that goes along with being in high school and what a sad thing that was (18).

Ann's lament about her experience in school demonstrated empathic feeling toward the students of color and demonstrated her striving to put herself in their shoes, to understand what their experience must have been like.

Lastly, Abraham succinctly made his view of the bigger picture clear in a statement that will be quoted in full later in the case studies section this Chapter. He said, "I look at it like we're all on the Titanic…. it's the bottom line, we better take care of all mankind" (6). This sense of global perspective of seeing the commonness of humankind seems to typify the thinking of the participants in this study.

Social interest.

A third theme that emerged through in-depth discussion with the participants was their involvement in the local and world-wide community. Their work from their perspective was toward the ultimate goal of making the world a better place. They

viewed their participation in the race study circle as part of that effort. For all

participants it was important to them to be someone who did their part, or who gave back,

or who made an effort to be a good citizen. The participants saw the race study circle,

and their other social justice work, as part of their responsibility. Mirta said,

> we were always brought up that you give back and you help other people…It was
>
> just a natural thing to do. It wasn't anything we pondered, except we wanted to
>
> do something that was meaningful. But it wasn't to impress anybody, I mean, it
>
> wasn't socially significant or anything like that, it was just expected of you (14).

Although she is physically unable to do the hands-on type of community service that she

used to do, she still gives to several charitable organizations, despite the fact that her

income is extremely modest. Margaret said, "I guess I felt like they needed me" (8),

when she was asked why she joined the study circle. Sandi remarked that,

> sometimes I would find myself …giving into those stereotypes…and I thought, if
>
> I'm giving in to them and I have some realization of the morality of this, how can
>
> I expect other people not to as well, so I thought if I studied more about the
>
> differences in the races you know, maybe I could help others understand too …I
>
> don't even think even now that I do enough, but…I would like to make some kind
>
> of a contribution although it's small (9).

Her drive to actively educate herself about race was stated as a civic responsibility or

obligation. Jerry spoke extensively about his awakening from being a racially prejudiced

person to being an anti-racist. Of his decision to participate in a race study circle and

other efforts he said, "if I can take people to the other side, it's kinda like my duty. I really see it as my duty" (20).

Keith made the following commentary during our interview,

[it] is important, to feel like I'm doing something that is additive to the society that I live in. Um, the opportunity came up and I took it because it seemed like a more meaningful way for me to give to the community that I came from. Um, as an African American it was always very important, at least in my household to give back and to not forget that there were people that had all kinds of horrible things happen to them, including getting killed, to get me the right to go to school, get a good education, be able to get a job in a company, ah, be able to advance in an organization and make a reasonable salary and that I owed something to that legacy, not to any individual, I owed something to the legacy. And, you know, the idea of being able to make some things a bit easier for the next person that comes along is very important (4).

My interpretation is that this individual has a sense of social obligation or social interest that has been well-developed.

Abraham had a different perspective on the social responsibility that he felt regarding the study circle. He was talking about living in his neighborhood where he sees the young Black men who have turned to crime and street life, a life that he had led for a short time. Within the context of that conversation, he said, "I must try to be better than what's out there because I know how easy it is to fall" (6). He viewed his responsibility as a Black man as important—as a role model for young Black men and

also, in his view, to be a more positive representative of his race than many of the young Black men that he sees "falling" on a daily basis.

For Laura, since her participation in the race study circle was so closely linked with her work as manager of a housing property, we explored the connection. She explained how embroiled the situation had become when her company attempted to integrate people of color into a white neighborhood and described the media coverage, harassment, lack of cooperation from town officials, and general intolerance, I asked her why she persisted with the work. Her response echoed the same sense of responsibility that other participants had suggested. She said,

> I felt responsible sort of and not responsible for it to happen but more responsible to do something and I don't know what that it is, but the two choices are you can either decide not to act or decide to do something to act and I can't still have a job and you know, go to sleep at night being happy with yourself [sic] if you decide to do nothing and watch that go by…I saw the personal responsibility first. ..I don't tend to be very politically active and don't see myself as somebody that can change the ways of a large group of people…Although, I won't say that it's not infuriating that I can't, because the whole reason I'm in the job that I am in is to have an impact… (10).

Laura's participation in the race study circle represented an extension of this sense of responsibility, since it was her work situation that prompted her to seek out help with interracial dialogue.

Likewise, for Lynn, her work involvement stimulated her interest in the race study circle. She said she is involved in mediation work because she enjoys helping people solve their problems and guiding them along. She does victim-offender mediation because she has an opportunity to "help them get on a better track, to make them aware of how to straighten their lives out, what to do and how to talk to people and how to approach life, so I guess it's all a background of teaching and learning" (12). She said that she believes in giving of herself and giving back to the community, and that those are the things she tries to impart on kids that she works with as well. Her sense of responsibility and interest in working towards the betterment of society is well-defined and at the forefront in her mind as she makes decisions about her career.

Anika told a family story about her great-grandfather. She said that he reportedly observed that lawyers in his community were misusing their education and their role just to make money without helping people. He had wanted his grandsons to be lawyers in order to serve people and do the job. This was a family message that came to represent the value that her family has placed on serving others. She disclosed that she has assumed many of these values (15). For Alan, his career as an educator that led him down paths to solve problems for youth with learning difficulties, "wasn't about me, it was about something that I wanted to do to help kids…I want to do for kids what my teachers did for me" (16).

Ann has distinct memories of her awareness as a young person of having wealth when others that she saw had so little. She recalled having thoughts of throwing away everything she had just to be fair, her father told her that, "you can help people when

you're in a position of power and you can't do it when you are powerless" (19). A "big sense of giving back and of making things better in the culture for others" (19) was a strong family message.

Another commonality among the participants that supports the idea of their commitment to social responsibility is that most of the participants and some of their parents have been active in social justice work or have taken significant actions that have benefited others. A listing of examples that further exemplify the theme of social responsibility that emerged among the participants is provided below. Of the twenty participants, fifteen of them are represented in the litany of experiences listed below (some individuals have more than one listing).

● Works with Jewish people on building religious and racial harmony (1)

● Is on church diocese racism commission (2)

● Works for a social service agency (3)

● Works with non-profits organizations and participates on Boards of Directors; worked in summer camp for kids as youth; parents are heavily involved through churches (4)

● Parents adopted child from woman who was not able to care for her (4)

● Moved to integrated community and got involved in community relations; would shop for people who were housebound in the projects (7)

● State Human Rights Commissioner, worked on hate crimes task force (8)

● Attended rally in protest of KKK presence (10)

● White single woman adopted an African American child (17)

- Volunteered for **'Meals on Wheels'**-worked in neighborhood of different race (11)

- Does community mediations, worked on adoption cases; does victim-offender mediation with juveniles; son is in the Peace Corps (12)

- Adopted a son; volunteered at clothesline shop; on Board of hospital (only quit due to a physical disability); gives to multiple charities, even though on a limited income (14)

- Works on Peace project (multicultural committee) member; son works in soup kitchen (15)

- Parents did neighborhood work, supported local organizations which did philanthropic work (18)

- Democratic committee person, husband is a judge; has been politically active for many years; contributes to gun control organization (18)

- Worked for social service agency that does anti-racism training; Volunteered for Upward Bound; Martin Luther King, Jr. day of service; English as a Second Language tutor; involved in race relations project similar to study circles which is an extension of race and ethnic relations class that she teaches, does racism outreach for campus (19)

  - Involved with Thomas Merton Center (which works to instill a consciousness of values, and to raise the moral questions involved in the issues of war, poverty, racism, and oppression), assisted in the Rock against Racism concert, Summit against Racism, volunteer for fair housing partnership (to expose landlords who are discriminatory); works as a 'Save Our Transit' community activist. (20)

In addition to explaining that they feel socially responsible, as a group, the actions of these individuals provide a clear demonstration of that value. Bar On (1997), a scholar of the concept of emotional intelligence, describes social responsibility this way.

> [These are] individuals who are cooperative, contributing, and constructive members of their social groups. These people are often described as responsible and dependable. This ability involves acting in a responsible manner, even though one may not benefit personally. Socially responsible people have social consciousness and a basic concern for others, which is manifested by being able to take on community-oriented responsibilities. This component relates to the ability to do things for and with others, accepting others, acting in accordance with one's conscience, and upholding social rules. These people possess interpersonal sensitivity and are able to accept others and use their talents for the good of the collective, not just the self. Social responsibility depends upon a basic positive feeling towards one's social group and the ability to identify with that group (p. 40).

Given this definition of social responsibility, it is my interpretation that most of the study participants have a well-developed sense of social responsibility, as evidenced by the portrayal above of both their beliefs and their actions. Although my original categorization of this theme was social responsibility, the reader will note that it has been in fact entitled, social interest. Social interest includes an attitude of fellowship toward not only one's own social group, but other social groups as well. The comparison and

contrast between social responsibility and social interest, is worth note and is explored

further in Chapter V.

Table 4 displays level 3 themes that represent the most in-depth group of thoughts

that participants were able to provide related to their participation in the study circle.

Table 4: Level 3 Themes and content from in-depth probe

Moral development/ Spiritual consciousness	Empathy	Social interest
Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:
Morality is seen as beyond 'the law'	Strive to understand the other	Verbalize sense of responsibility for giving back
Concern for greater good	See universality of human emotion	Take action to support value of social obligation
Doing no harm; Do unto others	Put local issues into global perspective/empathy toward groups of people	Take responsibility for greater good, beyond own social identity group

Table 4 represents themes of (1) moral consciousness/spirituality, (2) empathy; and (3)

social interest". In discussions about the participant's moral consciousness they

emphasized the importance of social context that would be a significant factor in

determining their behavior. Many saw their own sense of morality as being something

that went beyond what social or religious law would dictate. Those who were affiliated

religiously, and those who were not, consistently mentioned their concern for the greater

good. They advocated at least doing no harm and treating others as they would like to be

treated. Another emerging theme was the participants' ability to empathize. They were

able to view problems with an eye toward the bigger picture, being able to see from a

global as opposed to a narrow perspective. They tended to see human emotions and

feelings as universal. Finally, the theme of social interest became evident throughout the

interview process. Participants not only verbalized their intention and feeling of

responsibility toward society, but also cited actions that they were taking that exemplified

their commitment to the betterment of society as they see it. They also tended to

contribute toward the greater good versus just their own social identity group. These

themes that emerged as being integral to the participants' decision to complete the race

study circle are the product of collaboration with me throughout the interview process.

<u>Interpreted themes</u>

This section represents additional themes and observations that are the result of

my analysis and interpretation of the findings. These themes emerged in my view as the

interviews took place and represent my interpretation through the lens of the literature

review and the socio-cultural perspective outlined in Chapter I of this inquiry. The four

themes detailed in here, and summarized in Table 5 represent commonalities among

participants' characteristics and life experiences that I observed throughout the interview

process. The most prevalent commonality that I observed was that the participants placed

a high value on education, an appreciation passed down to them from their parents. Of

the very few that didn't mention education, hard work was seen as an important parental

teaching. The other important family influence that was common among participants was family messages of acceptance and tolerance of others. Most participants shared explicit and implicit messages that encouraged treating other races with respect and acceptance. Third, there was a common willingness to examine the self among many participants. Their tendency toward introspection was clearly a factor that contributed to their participation in the study circle. Fourth, above and beyond the willingness to self examine, was the willingness to be vulnerable and be viewed as a learner in the process of exploring diversity issues. There was a sense that they would welcome receiving input from others, even if it meant making themselves uncomfortable and open to critique.

Value education.

It is relevant to note that, as mentioned earlier, eleven of the participants are in the educational field at some level or perform an occupational function that involves education. Shelly, who has also functioned as a race study circle facilitator observed of others in her study circles,

> everybody seemed to be educated there…they chose the path of greater learning, not necessarily by some sort of semantic or degree program. They seemed to be educated, whether it was life-educated… and they saw it as teaching rather than 'something happened to me'…I came away with some ideas that I felt were very valuable (19).

These examples further illustrate this theme of valuing education through the use of the experiences and words of the participants. David reported early and frequent messages about the importance of education. His grandparents moved family from Virginia to

Homestead (Pittsburgh) in order for their children to have school for the full school year

instead of quitting for harvest, as was the common practice in Virginia at the time.

David's grandparents made sure, therefore, that their kids did well in school, and made

sure the school took them seriously also. As a result, all six of their children went to

college (including David's father) who went to the university during the day and worked

in a steel mill at night.

Keith concurred, "[My parents were] big believers in education. Neither one of

them graduated from college and it was understood that I would go to college and I

would graduate from college if it killed me. Ya know, they had to do whatever they had

to do to make sure that I did it" (4).

Daniel recalled the importance of education being passed down from his

grandparents' generation and knows that his parents were big believers in education.

Daniel was one of only two Black students on campus at Lock Haven State College when

he attended. His subsequent career as an educator was completed with a principal

position at an elementary school for thirteen years.

Monique reported that her parents "were big on education" (13). Her father did a

bit of college to become a printer, and her mother finished high school but always had

wanted to do more. She remembered hearing that, "if you get an education, nobody can

take that from you….it was like a ground for you to move further in life…I really saw

that it was going to be my way to make it" (13). Her parents taught her that, "people

would accept you more if you had more knowledge" (13). Monique attended a

predominantly Black school in Washington, D.C. In junior high, however, she had a

special opportunity to attend an international school across town near Embassy Row.

With her parents' encouragement and view that it would be good for her to get out of her

neighborhood, she got to attend one of the better schools in the whole D.C. area where

she experienced many different cultural events, theatre, and ethnic restaurants. She saw

drastic differences in comparison to her home school as far as opportunities offered,

availability of funding, which translated also into less striving for success. This year of

experience was significant in her life because if validated her parents' message about the

value of education and served to reinforce her commitment to continue her education.

She not only completed college, but also earned a Master's Degree.

Alan's father only went to third grade but was very intelligent and could

understand a few languages. He made a living in real estate. One of Alan's clear

memories from his youth was his mother and older members of the African American

community who would point to their heads and say, 'once you get it up here (pointing to

their head), no one can take that away from you'… and I was always encouraged to get

an education" (16). Alan reported that he had mostly White teachers—he, being an

African American man credits their tolerance and support with his educational success.

His commentary below illustrates how his belief in education has driven his career and

life's work.

> That's what excites me about being an educator, when you see that sparkle in a
>
> kid's eye, and a lot of kids, ah, the love and attention that they receive from a
>
> caring adult has the same effect as the rays of the sun and the drops of rain upon
>
> the vegetation of this earth. And I love what I do and that's one of the reasons

why I didn't retire. I love to see these kids. And wherever I go, it's not about color with me, its about kids. Helping them to discover and unleash that potential. I believe that all kids can learn (16).

He recalled that he had a group of eleventh grade football players who couldn't read and when he realized that he was not prepared to help them he sought out a reading specialist and ended up doing a Master's Degree in reading and language arts. In turn, his concern for student athletes led him to a local major university for his doctorate. He wanted to learn how he could improve athletes' prospects for success after sports. As he was quoted as saying earlier, "it wasn't about me, it was about something that I wanted to do to help kids…I want to do for kids what my teachers did for me" (16).

Anika's explained that her parents were both well educated in India. Her grandfather reportedly wanted all three of his grandsons to be lawyers. Her father became instead a professor of chemistry and held a doctorate in Hindi and in Chemistry. He held three Master's degrees in Chemistry and one in Hindi and his last Master's was completed at age 56. All four of his siblings also did Master's and collectively accumulated degrees in five different subjects of science. Her father's dream was to start a school where they could all teach a different subject. She reported that her mother had a bachelor's degree and was very education-oriented. Anika herself is now an educator and commented, "from the beginning I wouldn't study for myself, but because I would teach others. Why? Because I want my friend to do good. I don't think I ever cared that I want to do good [sic] as much as I cared that my friend should do good. So, rather than studying I would teach others" (15).

Mirta reported that both of her parents very well-educated. Her mother was a college graduate and her father was first a lawyer and then a judge. Her grandfather was also a lawyer for whom her father worked while going to law school at night. Their value of education was very clearly passed down to Mirta.

Jerry commented that neither of his parents has a degree but advocated for he and his brother to get a college education. He is extremely grateful for his educational experience and believes that his education allowed him to see racism by teaching him how to think and by teaching him to learn about *objectivity*. He believes that "racism is based on ignorance and misguided aggression of frustrated people" (20).

It is relevant to note that all of the people of color, with the exception of one, had parents that insisted upon and often went to great lengths to provide a higher education for their children. For the people of color, education was seen in their families as the avenue for upward mobility. It was viewed as an invaluable life experience since, once gained, it could not be taken away. Although the value of education was also passed down to the White participants, the sense of urgency and drive to obtain an education was not as strongly communicated to me by the White participants.

A consistent message from almost all of the participants (with a few exceptions noted below) was that they did not experience any formal educational efforts that specifically addressed race, racism or diversity competence. Quite the opposite, Ann remembered that,

> if kids of color in school didn't do well they were treated as if they weren't bright. They weren't treated on the same level. And there wasn't any dialogue. It was

just glossed over. There wasn't any talk of cultural differences from anybody.

Not even through college. There wasn't anything. It's sort of like, just forget it.

[Maybe they thought] OK, if we don't discuss it we can pretend like we're

treating everybody equal (18).

Other than this memory, that clearly created a lasting impression in this woman's mind,

no other educational experiences *related to secondary school* were cited by any of the

participants.

A few of the participants recalled college experiences.   One Black man in his

sixties went to a religious college and took lots of philosophy and sociology courses of

his own choosing and had many Black friends who were in the field of sociology. He

said, "I would be reading on my own and discussing with them [topics such as], 'what

should the Black man do?'" (2). His experience seemed to be largely self-initiated rather

than the result of a formal educational intervention.

Two other participants in their forties recalled specific college experiences that

were meaningful in terms of racial discussion. One Black woman took courses in Black

Studies and the other, a White man, recalled some liberal professors in sociology and

economics who had an effect on his thinking about social systems and justice. He

remembered that these classes had a significant impact on his sense of self in society. He

credits these college experiences with helping him develop from being extremely

prejudiced when he went into college to the active anti-racist that he identifies as today.

Two of the three youngest participants spoke of educational experiences that were

minor but noted. For one, there was a teacher preparation course that addressed diversity

issues, although this course did not seem to particularly inspire him. For another, who went to a prestigious boarding school that was diverse racially and ethnically, he recalls not formal curricular interventions but felt that the general principles of tolerance and acceptance were promulgated.

For another, the youngest participant in this study, a few formal educational experiences made a significant difference in her life and were undoubtedly a contributor to her eventual participation in the race study circle. She cited a teacher in high school that she described as "open-minded," and, as she put it, 'tried to teach real versus fabricated history" (19). When asked for an example she said that he introduced things that might not have been included in the textbooks like the fact that Thomas Jefferson had slaves. She said that she noticed that some of his teachings upset people. From that experience, however, she took Afro-Asian studies and reported that it "opened my eyes to diversity and differences in people" (19). In that class she remembered a unit on anthropology, where she recalled that she did an ethnographic study on the Zulu. That was her first exposure to academic material that dovetailed with her developing interests. She subsequently majored in anthropology in college, currently teaches courses in race and ethnicity, and is the participant referred to herein who worked for a social service agency that does anti-racism work.

Willingness to self examine.

Another theme that began to emerge as I interviewed participants was their willingness to examine their own characteristics and inner thoughts. Many specifically wanted to explore their own prejudices and biases so that they could be more aware of

how they were seeing others. There seemed to be an openness to scrutinizing the self that was a commonality among the participants. Sandi said, "I started to question my own bias as well…I want to correct…the misconceptions that have been established in my brain" (9). Margaret revealed that the study circle, "showed me how much more everybody has to learn…Part of it, I was upset with myself and part of it, I was upset with other people" (8). Laura indicated that, "I [went] there to receive more than to act. I mean not to impact people but much more to *get* the impact from" (10). In each of these comments is an underlying message that the participant was ready to look at their own misconceptions and to be self-critical.

Keith said specifically, that he had a "willingness to admit that there is a lot of stuff that I had no idea about" (4). When he began his job as a diversity director, he reportedly knew that he had issues of accepting people who were gay. He was aware of those biases and said, of his own preconceptions, "I'm gonna have to confront some things" (4). He took the job knowing that he would have to be willing to examine his own prejudices if he was going to ask others to do so as well. It was the same intention with which he joined the race study circle.

Chris said that, "I think one of the reasons that I joined the study circle was because I wanted to be open and honest with myself. I didn't want to shy away from anything and say I'm afraid to learn something about myself and make me say, 'Boy, I haven't been that understanding' or 'I need to change'" (11). This theme of self-scrutiny emerged throughout many interviews and was an underlying factor that describes the spirit with which participants entered into the study circle.

<u>Willingness to be vulnerable, be a learner regarding diversity issues.</u>

Along with the willingness to examine the self was another related characteristic that was evident in examining the interviews with the study circle participants. This related ability can be described as a willingness to be vulnerable and to put oneself in a position to be a learner regarding race and other diversity issues. This is an interesting insight because it has already been pointed out that these participants as a general group also saw themselves as educators. Although on the surface this may appear to be a contradiction, it is not uncommon for educators to also be avid learners.

Some participants gave indications throughout the telling of their life experiences that they were open to becoming learners with regard to diversity. Rose commented that, "I was so glad that we had that experience [of being a White family that moved to a predominantly Black neighborhood] because we made a lot of friends" (7). Sandi expressed her curiosity and willingness to be a learner when she reflected on a college experience with African American students protesting a housing situation at her college. She remembered being inquisitive and she "wondered why they were so angry" (9). Margaret admitted to being disturbed by her emotional reaction of fear toward some Muslims after September 11[th.] Although she seemed dismayed at her gut reaction of fear, this experience also fueled her drive to get to know herself better and to understand the experience of others who may have similar reactions or who may be on the receiving end of such reactions (8).

When discussing her career and her tendency to work with a diverse group of people, Monique commented that, "I pretty much am still interested in people and ….I

have a friend who's from the Dominican Republic. I just like different people cause you learn so much from being around just not somebody that looks like you and everybody's got different experiences (13). Anika reported that, " I just wanted to learn more and see what is available out there. If something is there, I don't want to miss it" (15). The indication from many participants was that their inquisitive nature about diversity issues was a factor that influenced their eventual attitude toward participating in the race study circle.

As indicated above, Keith, who took a job as a diversity professional was pointedly aware that, although he was taking the job as a type of educator, that in essence that also meant that he needed to also open himself up to be a learner.

> These issues that you have to confront as a diversity professional, ah, and relating to them….I can relate very easily to what it's like being African American cuz I've been that, I am that, and I always will be that. It's different when you're not something and you have to try to process it from a professional standpoint. And sometimes you have to be the one that's asking the dumb questions (4).

Keith very clearly considered his own potential for growth and capacity to learn as part of what it would mean to enter into his profession as well as subsequently become a participant in a study circle.

Daniel put it simply when he said, "each time I come to any of these meetings it is a learning experience for me" (5). Chris reflected that, "maybe in a way I wanted to be honest with myself…to find out…is there still something inside of me that is [racist]?" (11). Laura said that she asked herself, "how much more of myself [my racist beliefs]

can I take control of so that this doesn't have to get worse or can I stop it in some way so that if I take more control over myself, that I might extend that control?" (9). Lynn said, of the race study circles that, "sometimes, I mean if you're feeling you're gonna hear something that you don't want to hear, um, but I felt that would be good. That was the purpose and the reason for being there" (12). The common message throughout these statements is that the participants were open to looking at their own prejudices and learning how they might change their thinking in order to improve their own self-understanding.

Family messages of tolerance.

Most of the participants reported that they had received messages from their parents of tolerance for other racial and ethnic groups which may have planted early seeds that eventually may have influenced their decision to join a study circle. Some of the comments made by participants were family messages that said, "anybody who needs help, you help them" (7); and, "always try to see the best in people" (10). Keith recalled that his parents' message was, "there are good and bad people of all races; treat people respectfully…With my parents you said sir and ma'am, please and thank you" (4).

Chris volunteered for Meals on Wheels to a neighboring community that was largely African American, and he remembered that his father made a point to tell him, "it was one thing to drop off their meal, it's another thing to drop off their meal and give five minutes of communication. Sometimes that's a lot better than the meal" (11). Another subtle message in his family, as he reports it, was that his dad's father was bigoted, and that therefore his family had minimal contact with him. For him, that lack of contact

spoke volumes about his own parents' values and beliefs; that they did not choose to be in the presence of someone who was intolerance of other races.

Lynn commented that, "we were always taught to treat everybody the same. Treating people with respect was the message. Her parents were activists for equal rights, and participated in union rallies. At one of the rallies, her dad got his picture taken with Martin Luther King and she recalled that it was very meaningful to her father. These family stories stand out as important for her and illuminate the family message of advocating for racial and class equity.

Monique reported that her parents "always instilled that we have to accept people for who they are as individuals. They never tried to say that all White people are this or all Black people are that—that's pretty much who I am now " (13). The most important message that Mirta remembered from her parents was 'tolerance'. She commented that her parents had quite extraordinary values like honesty and integrity and that they were very hard working. He related that her father joined Navy when WWII broke out without discussing his decision beforehand with her mom. "He said 'it was the right thing do'" (14). He recalled that her mother handled this "with so much aplomb" (14). She described her mother as being ahead of her time. She did lots of volunteer work and made a point of modeling tolerance for her children. Hers was the mother who was annoyed with the neighbor for questioning her when Mirta had a Mexican girl at her birthday party. As also related earlier, she took note that her mother introduced her politely to the laundress who was Black and very poor. The message that was

communicated was that she mattered and that they were to demonstrate respect for everyone.

Melanie's described her parents as *extremely* accepting of everybody. She could not ever remember any sort of racial statement or put-down. Ann, likewise, never heard her parents bad-mouth or put anybody down because of social identity.

Approximating experiences

A life experience that was described by many White participants emerged as another theme. The experience of "otherness" or of having felt culturally or socially different at one time in a particular environment was another memory that was mentioned by participants. There was a varied array of experiences shared by White participants but for them, these were vivid memories that seemed to evoke self-reflection.

For example, Margaret recalled that being an American in Germany "was the first time I had any real inkling then of what maybe the Blacks had to go through here" (8). She remembered feeling as if she was being scrutinized and that with her every move she was being seen as a representative of the United States, as opposed to being able to be just herself. She drew the connection in her own mind that this feeling may be similar to how she had heard Black people describe their experiences in the United States. Laura, similarly, had a vivid recollection of visiting Pearl Harbor and being the only non-Asian person at the memorial site. Because the site evoked such strong emotion and stirred memories of intense conflict, this experience stood out for her as significant in building her awareness of perspective-taking, and what it feels like to be different. Laura

also related that being a woman in a male dominated industry placed her in a position to feel that 'differentness' on a daily basis.

Chris recalled being part of his family's church that split due to theological differences when he was young. The break left him in the minority, going to church at a different time than the others, with only a couple of other children, and alienated from other kids in his community. His memories of suddenly finding himself being treated like an outsider were vivid and painful. It is a feeling that he reportedly carries with him in his experiences as an educator and is part of what he brought with him to his experience as a participant in the study circle. He also reflected on walking in public places with wife and family where he is the only white (non-Indian) person in the group. This awareness of what it is like to feel different is figural for him and being aware of what his child might face is forefront in his mind.

Lynn sees some parallels between her Jewish experience and the Black experience in terms of group identity needs, meaning that she realizes the need to find belonging and ways of embracing one's ethnicity. Mirta's brother had very bad asthma as child into young adulthood. This prevented him and sometimes her from participating in many things that other children were able to do. She also had a daughter who was born with severe problems who only lived about a year and had to be institutionalized. In addition, now, in her older adulthood, she has a physical disability that is visually apparent. These experiences have highlighted for her the feelings that come with being seen as 'different' from the standard in society.

Ann went to China on business and recalls the feeling of being the only Caucasian in sight and her internal feelings of being different. However, she was quick to point out that she was treated well, as opposed to being ostracized and alienated. She does remember though that somehow the experience increased her awareness of her own whiteness and what it meant in the world. Jerry has had experience with mental illness and knows very clearly the pain that can be imposed through feeling stigmatized. In fact, I could tell in our interview that he was somewhat reluctant to disclose this information about himself until I had established myself as someone who would be trustworthy and non-judgmental about his illness. I was aware that he was initially more guarded than most of the participants and became more relaxed as the interview progressed. He recognized the stigmas about mental illness as an experience of being in the minority and having assumptions made about him and his behavior.

It is important to state that neither the participants nor I necessarily saw their experience with "otherness" as being parallel to the Black experience in the United States, as they and I understood that experience as unique. Rather, it is the idea of approximating experience that was suggested by Hogan and Netzer (1995) as a way in which empathy is developed (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413). Approximating experiences are described as the way in which people can draw upon their own or others' experiences to develop empathy with people of color and develop an antiracist awareness" (Hogan & Netzer, as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). It seems that the findings here lend support to the work of Hogan & Netzer (1995) who have suggested a link

between approximating experience and anti-racist attitudes (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413).

Another related theme that emerged during the interview process was family immigration status, which has some relationship to family history of being viewed as 'different'. Two participants said that they knew their great-grandparents were immigrants. Six of the participants mentioned that their grandparents had immigrated to the United States as young people, and for two individuals, both sets of grandparents were immigrants. One woman remembers specifically hearing that her grandparents from Italy experienced discrimination. For one participant, her father was an immigrant and her mother was first generation in the United States. Another participant is herself an immigrant. The significance of this immigration pattern is only speculative. Since immigration patterns were not the subject of this research, it is not clear if these immigration patterns are any different in the rest of the population. It could be that there is a higher level of empathy for being different in a culture that is developed through the experience of immigration. That empathic orientation may then be transmitted generationally through the teaching of values and acceptance. It may be that the realities of relatively recent family immigration are additional approximating experiences, as defined by Hogan and Netzer (1995). Only a few of the participants mentioned that they had heard stories about their grandparents being discriminated against, so further research in this area would be needed.

Some of the participants of color and also one White participant revealed that they had somewhat of a defiant attitude toward challenges to their capabilities. In other

words, a type of 'tell me I can't, and watch me do it,' kind of constitution. David described the influence of his parents and community by explaining that,

> there was always this sense of propelling forward….To me, life as a Black person
> meant fighting for your rights. That's what it was about and I had this funny
> feeling about people who were White. I wondered what they did with their lives
> because they, I worried about, gee, when we get all our rights, what are we going
> to do! (2).

He described the strategizing to overcome discrimination and the unwavering sense of hope that a good education would eventually lead to jobs and steady paychecks. His father's tenacity to achieve a college education while working in the steel mill at night exemplifies this family's answer to the challenges of racism. Ensuring that the next generation would be afforded a good education as an escape from the poverty of racism was as much an act of defiance as good forward planning.

Laura, who works in a male-dominated field, offered her internal thoughts about meeting the challenge of sexism on the job. She said, "don't tell me I can't do something [based on my social identity as a woman]" (10). She described her increased determination to meet such challenges, even, she suggested, if the end goal was not all that important to her. The mere challenge of a discriminatory situation typically just makes her more determined to achieve for the sake of defying the lack of fairness.

Alan, an African American school principle in a largely White school district shared that, "my mother would never have believed what position I hold now—principal of White kids—she didn't believe that white people would ever allow that because of

their hatred" (16). She expected White people to be unfair. From her experience, if you were perceived as 'uppity,' you could be killed. Alan said, in response to his mothers' prediction, "tell me that I can't do something and I will—that motivates me" (16). In further illustration of his point he commented that, "some people mistake my kindness for weakness but if I am pushed I can do what needs to be done" (16). He seemed to be living his life not only in defiance of his mother's limited vision of what he could become, but also in defiance of racism.

Daniel described his early life where discrimination against him was just a "given" or a daily reality. He cited many examples, but one in particular illustrates his defiance of imposed limitation. As described in an earlier section, after seeing only a part of an incident between he and a classmate his teacher told him, "you're nothing. You never will be anything. You're a nobody". He described how he went back after college graduation to see her and to show her the rewards of his academic success. Poignantly, the motto, "everybody is somebody" has become his life theme. He actually has "Everybody is Somebody" printed on his business cards, serving as a constant reminder that he proved his former teacher wrong. A testament to his tenacity and ability to achieve, he is now a retired school principal. This spirit of defiance and determination to achieve against the odds, is a defining characteristic of several of the study participants and was another pattern of behavior that characterized their experience with difference. Table 4 presents four themes and thematic content that were the result of analysis and interpretation of the interviews.

Table 5: Themes and content as interpreted by interviewer

Value Education	Willingness to self-examine	Willingness to be a learner	Family messages of tolerance	Approximating Experiences
Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:	Subthemes:
Strong message from parents	Able to admit prejudices	Asked themselves questions	Absence of derogatory remarks	(Whites) experienced feeling different
Means of upward mobility	Openness	Put themselves in environments to learn	Respect everyone	(Whites) Immigration history
Explicit diversity education significant	Ability to be self critical and to accept criticism from others	OK with being vulnerable	Stand up for those who are insulted	(mostly POC) Defiance used as success tool

Many participants were found to place a high value on education, which seemed to come

from strong messages from their parents and to be seen as a means toward upward

mobility. Most participants did not experience any particular formal education that was

relevant to race relations or the study of racism or diversity issues, however, of the few

that did, those experiences were transformational, particularly for those that grew up in

households that they considered prejudiced. Another theme was the participant's willingness to self-examine, to be able to admit the likelihood that they had their own prejudices, and to be open and self-critical about racism. Similarly, the participants were willing to see themselves as learners in the sphere of diversity competence. They were willing to ask themselves question, put themselves in environments to learn more and were willing to be vulnerable in order to learn more about themselves and others. Most of the family messages that the participants received were those of acceptance, respect, and to stand up for the rights of others. Most commented on the absence of derogatory remarks about the race in their home. Many of the White participants had some experience with feeling like an "other" or in some way different from the norm. There was also a pattern of relatively recent family immigration for the White participants. Some participants of color (and one White participant) reported using defiance as a tool to succeed despite their experience of difference.

Findings related to racial identity development theory

As explained in Chapter II, the stages of racial development for people of color and White people are different. The stages for each are reviewed below along with examples of comments made by participants that suggest evidence of having developed through particular stages. The stage descriptions and language used here are adapted from a handout compiled by Beverly Daniel Tatum using Helms (1990) and Cross' (1991) models of racial identity development theory.

Racial Identity Development Stages—People of Color.

The first stage is *Pre-encounter* defined by the individual's acceptance of the beliefs and

values of the dominant culture, including the idea that it is better to be White. The

individual may value the role models and life styles of the dominant group more than

their own. The individual may seek acceptance by Whites through assimilation and may

tend to minimize the significance of racism. The second stage is *Encounter* typically

precipitated by an event or several events that illuminate the personal impact of racism.

The individual may experience anger, confusion and alienation. The individual may

grapple with his or her own identity in relation to racism and may attempt to define

identity based on his or her internalized notion of stereotypes. Frequently this encounter

stage is reached in early adolescence. The third stage is called *Immersion/Emersion* and

is defined by the wish to immerse oneself with visible symbols of one's racial identity

and an active avoidance of symbols of White culture. There is a tendency to

categorically reject Whites and glorify one's own group. The individual seeks out

learning about his or her own culture and is focused on self and group identity. Once an

individual has worked through this stage, they emerge with a newly defined and affirmed

sense of self. The last stage, *Internalization*, is characterized by a sense of security in

one's own racial/ethnic identity, the ability to view one's own group objectively, the

willingness to establish meaningful relationships with Whites who are respectful of one's

racial identity, and also the willingness to build coalitions with members of other

oppressed groups.

<u>Stage analysis of participants of color.</u>

Examples of the participants' experiences that characterize particular stages are outlined below. The participants of color gave some specific indications through the telling of their life stories that they had progressed to the *Internalization* stage of the racial identity development process. For example, David remarked that he "was assimilating in majority culture but recognized the psychological truth that we had been taught to hate ourselves" (2). The recognition that Blacks have been taught to hate themselves is indicative of the *Encounter* stage where the individual begins to struggle with the realities of racism. Then he reportedly went through a "black is beautiful phase" (2). The 'Black is beautiful' phase is an indication of passage through the *Immersion/Emersion* stage when individuals become immersed in their racial culture and their own group is glorified. Daniel gave some other verbal indications that he had reached the *Internalization* stage. He said, "I love the complexity of being black," (2) which suggests a sense of security in one's identity. He also said, that he thinks about the theory of internalized oppression and thinks about the double complexity of a family member who can 'pass' (a light skinned Black person who is seen as White). He remembered family jokes about exposing them. "I think the general ethic was not to expose them but to…let them suffer in their world because I think that they were looked at in some way as traitors. Boy, that's a rich subject…" (2). Daniel seemed to be able to view his own racial group with some perspective and some realization of the complexity that is involved in the social aspects of racism. He concluded by joking,

I come down to, at the end of the day, we're all human and I should not look

down on White people, I could say, laughingly, as I thought as a kid, gee, their

lives must be not interesting and I don't know what they do with their time…(2)

His commentary and his commitment to participation on his church's race commission

and in both the study circle and this interview process reflected his arrival at the

Internalization, or highest, stage of racial identity development.

Evidence of Keith's passing through the *Encounter* stage was mentioned earlier

and included his learning of the segregated restaurant facilities and not getting invited to

a birthday party as a child. His experience with group identity was not as intense as

Daniel's but he knows that "he has 'dipped into' that clinging to who I am" (4). He

mentioned his own experience with being different in his school, how he learned to

develop an identity for himself and, how he came to think about others. He recalled,

I think the thing that probably informed that view on other people the most was

the fact that I was the "different one" in all my classes, but these people were

different to me, ya know, so I had to learn how to process what they were like and

what their lives were about and I think…I figured out that there are certain things

that are of intrinsic value to people, independent of what ethnicity you are.

People want to live in a nice house, be safe, have food to eat, and clothes to wear

and things like that. I think those were probably the biggest lessons from sort of

my spiritual life (4).

The indicators that Keith is in the *Internalization* stage have to do with his sense of security in his identity. When he spoke of contemplating his job as a diversity director he said,

> there was a certain level of, I don't think it was that I didn't feel I was capable of doing it, it was, 'I'm gonna have to confront some things as well as people being completely resistant to this, people who I probably know, going, "ya know, this diversity stuff is for the birds", or "I'm OK with Black people, what do you mean I'm not, ya know, I'm doin what I need to do. I treat them just like everybody else"'. I feared that I was gonna have to confront some ugly situations with people that I knew. And that was probably a much bigger trepidation for me than dealing with it at an individual level. (4)

Keith demonstrated confidence in his own ability to not only confront his own issues with diversity, but also those that he would lead. Knowing that he was going to have to confront some 'ugly' issues with friends was something that he had the self-assurance to assume. Keith spoke extensively about his rapport with people of other races, which points to his significant level of security in his own identity. He said,

> when I meet people who express some sort of genuine interest in learning more about what Black American culture is like, ya know, I will often say, to them look, if you need to ask me something…rather than feeling dumb and not asking, *ask me*. Because I'm not gonna, I might laugh at you, but I'm not gonna like, yell at you or beat you up or go around and say, "what an ignorant white person", ah, or immediately label you racist, uh…I think part of it is because of what I do for a

living, um, I think at other points people have felt more comfortable with asking

me those questions um, maybe because sort of the level of relationship I tend to

have at an individual level (4).

Keith spoke clearly about efforts he has made to have meaningful relationships with

people of other races. Keith's development to the Internalization stage can be traced

through his commentary and life experiences and demonstrates evidence that, indeed, he

has arrived at the highest stage of racial identity development.

Monique's development through the *Immersion/Emersion* stage was a meaningful

and rich experience that provides an excellent example of someone in that particular

developmental stage. She reflected that she was peripherally involved with the militant

movement and the Black panthers in high school. She noted that her parents didn't

approve of the militant approach so snuck over with friends one Saturday to the Black

Panther headquarters in Washington, D.C. and saw sandbags and saw police cars. Seeing

this evidence of 'serious business' she said that she panicked and went back home. In an

excellent example of the mindset of a person in the Immersion/Emersion stage, she

explained, "I was in search of connection with my own people" (13). This search only

intensified when she experienced the shock of going to Pittsburgh, PA for college from

Washington, D.C. and having seven White roommates. She recalled her desire to shut

out the White community to some extent because she was so immersed in it, having

moved from a predominantly Black area to a predominantly White region. Because of

what felt like an immersion into White culture she felt drawn to immerse herself in Black

culture. She was led to join a Black sorority, took Black Studies courses, and joined the

Black Student Association. She described herself as having been always in search of the

black community in Pittsburgh. In almost a sheepish tone she confided that she once

went to a Black Muslims mosque but rejected the ideology that was being preached.

When asked specifically what caused her to draw out of the *Immersion* stage she

said,

> I met so many nice people that didn't necessarily look like me. And I just always,
>
> even going back to when I was in the seventh grade, I kept thinking of the people
>
> that I connected with there and friendships that we had while I was there during
>
> that time period. And I've always been interested in people so, it just kinda like,
>
> was an natural progression for me to get involved with, like, the study circle and
>
> to let my guard down and not feel like the Black Panthers are the right way or I
>
> just have to hate White people, you know that really wasn't my mind-set and it
>
> really wasn't where I was from, you know, my background, my parents, they
>
> never preached that kind of talk to me anyway. It didn't happen in my
>
> family…just having ongoing experiences with different people made [for] a
>
> natural progression out of this stage. I went to Girl Scouts convention in
>
> Kentucky and the White scouts were just as helpful to us as anyone else…I guess
>
> I learned what my parents always said, about people treating you right based on
>
> who you are and how you treat them (13).

For Monique, her life experiences began to validate her parents' teachings. Her

recollection of how important it was to have contact with White people who she

considered respectful is supportive of Allport's (1954) contact theory discussed in

Chapter II, that suggests prejudice is reduced when contact is made with certain criteria

present. Evidence that Monique is currently in the Internalization stage was plentiful and

included not only her participation in a race study circle but also her volunteer work as a

race study circle facilitator.

Alan readily recalled that he "was part of the Black power movement in the 60s"

(16). Several of his comments about the current situation with race relations in

American suggested his ability to see his own race objectively, which is an indicator of

his passage into the Internalization stage. He said that he sees within the Black

community itself that people can be power hungry and want to tell others how to do their

job. He reported having seen some of his former students in prison, and regretfully

acknowledged that he can't save everybody. He mentioned that it was easy to be

disheartened when considering their talents. He acknowledged, however, that he knows

they lacked responsible adults who could guide them so they turned to street culture and

ruined their lives and created offspring that go through the same cycle. Alan offered his

sense of the nature of racial tensions. He said,

> there are some individuals who are not mature spiritually or emotionally who
>
> have these perceptions, these negative perceptions and they have intelligence but
>
> they don't understand about the dynamics of human relationships so they
>
> knowingly and unknowingly create these adversarial relationships that could be
>
> very detrimental to our country, especially at a time that we face right now" (16).

Further evidence of Alan's arrival at the *Internalization* stage was provided as he spoke

of his own use of Allport's contact theory (contact among races under certain conditions

decreases prejudice) that he termed is his "basis for his life as an educator" (16). His own experience as an African American principal in a predominantly White school district is sufficient evidence that he has been able to establish meaningful relationships with White people. He also spoke passionately about some White friends who for whom he has the utmost respect and love.

During their interview, a few other participants of color offered glimpses of advanced racial identity development. Alice recalled being faced with a remark that some in her group considered racist. She walked through her own reflections.

> First, you've got to stop and think where he's coming from, and then you can work with him and help him, but people get angry with him because you only go with what you know you can do, you haven't been educated or involved, so how do you know how else to act (1)?

Her thoughts demonstrated, first, a great deal of empathy, and second a mature racial identity formation. A Christian, she currently works with a Jewish Association on "building religious and racial harmony" (1). This work demonstrates an indication of her arrival at the Internalization stage in that she is demonstrating a willingness to collaborate with people in other oppressed groups.

Anika was verbally offered a job by an employer who had no doubts in his mind that she was well-qualified and had done extremely well in her interview process. Somehow, however, in the process of getting her hire approved, she was rejected. The employer admitted to her thereafter that the reason for her rejection was because the school district "was not ready for a foreign born" (15). When asked why she didn't sue

for reasons of discrimination she expressed her lack of desire for a job obtained under those circumstances. She was solid in her belief that, "if somebody's discriminatory, I don't want the job either because I don't want to be pressure on somebody's mind or not taking it positively" (15). Her way of thinking about the loss conveyed her solid sense of self-identity. In her mind, forcing someone to hire her would have been beneath her dignity and would not be a positive experience for her. This demonstrates her security in her own racial identity. She shared her spiritual belief that "if something was not good for me, I won't get it." (15). The only immigrant among the participants she said, "American people are so good, the best people you find is here…compared to other countries" (15). Anika, as well, demonstrates her willingness to establish meaningful relationships with Whites who are respectful of her identity. As a teacher in a largely White suburban school she has chosen to live and work mostly with Whites. Her sense of security in her racial identity and her interaction with White people suggest that she has advanced into the *Internalization* stage as well.

There is evidence provided above that all of the participants of color in this study have progressed to the *Internalization*, or most mature stage of racial identity development. In addition the mere fact that these individuals participated in the study circle and then subsequently volunteered for this research demonstrates their openness toward building meaningful relationships with Whites. The racial identity development of one person of color remains to be explored. Abraham's views and commentary will be explored in a case study format in the last section of this chapter.

Racial Identity Development Stages—White people.

White racial identity development is defined with two major orientations, *Abandonment of Racism* and *Defining a non-racist White identity*. Each of these major orientations is composed of three stages. The first stage of White racial identity development under the orientation of *Abandonment of racism* is called *Contact* wherein the person does not see themselves as having a race, but as just being 'normal'. There is a tendency not to see systemic racism or to acknowledge White skin privilege, but to only see 'individual acts of meanness' as constituting racism. The person at this stage perpetuates fear of people of color and believes in stereotypes.

The second stage is called *Disintegration* where a person may have a personal experience that increases their awareness of racism. Emotional responses at this stage are guilt, anger, withdrawal, denial, or depression. They may try to get others to abandon racist thinking. The third stage is *Reintegration* which represents the dominant group peer pressure to reintegrate into the mainstream culture by "not noticing" racism. Feelings of guilt and denial are transformed into fear and anger toward people of color or a ' blame the victim' mentality. The person at this stage will choose to avoid the issue of racism in order to adopt a non-racist identity.

The second orientation, *Defining a non-racist White identity*, begins with stage four, *Pseudo-independence*. The individual rejects White superiority and has an intellectual understanding of the inequities inherent in White privilege. This person may acknowledge personal responsibility for dismantling racism and may choose to distance from Whites who don't share the same attitudes. It is common for persons at this stage to

seek out people of color to help them better understand racism. In the fifth stage, *Immersion/Emersion*, the individual actively seeks to redefine whiteness. The individual does soul searching on what their white racial identity means in their social context. This person may seek support from other White people who are exploring the same questions. This individual may take pride in their anti-racist stance and may develop a positive White identity not based on superiority. In the final, *Autonomy*, stage an individual has a positive White racial identity, is actively anti-racist within their own sphere of influence, and their view of White racial identity is always emerging and continues to remain open to new information and self-examination. This person is able to work effectively in multi-racial settings.

Stage analysis of White participants.

Because of the larger volume of participants who are White, each participant will not be examined in-depth here in terms of their racial identity development. One example of a White participant's progression through the racial identity development stages is provided below. Thereafter, the later racial identity stages will be reviewed and selected commentary and life experiences of several of the White participants will be used to provide evidence of their advancement to later racial identity stages.

In a brief description of his life, it is possible to trace Jerry's racial identity development from early to later stages. Although not all stages are outlined, his progression to the higher stages is evident. He explained that while growing up he bought into his parents' view of Black people (*Contact* stage).   He shared that he was raised by parents who were (are) very prejudiced. His aunt uses 'the n word'. He

recalled that his grandmother hated Black people and was very vocal about her disdain. His parents continue to use derogatory language, make comments about Blacks being socially and morally, not adequate; and make derogatory remarks.

He reported that he was very prejudiced (*Contact* stage) until he went to college where he realized that mom and dad were wrong (pseudo-independence stage). He described the "liberal professors in sociology and economics" as instrumental in changing his worldview of social equity issues. Jerry's whole worldview changed in college, and he began to question everything, "my whole mind expanded and I realized I had to rethink a lot of things (*Immersion/Emersion* stage)". He made Black friends and he has also changed friends since his youth in order to find friends that hold similar values. Now he just wants to be around "good" people (*Immersion/Emersion* stage). He also had a mental health problem that led him to intense soul searching about what his life means and who he is inside (*Immersion/Emersion*). Since then, his Aunt and mother have made derogatory remarks that he confronted.

He was called a traitor for dating Black woman, but has continued to do so (*Autonomy* stage). He is affiliated with a peace and justice center, organizes a Rock against Racism event, and subsequently joined a race study circle. He currently does part time work for an agency that tests landlords for fair housing compliance (*Autonomy* stage). Although based on limited information, it is possible to trace Jerry's racial identity development and to see how such developmental growth can contribute to the likelihood that interracial dialogue might be an interesting idea.

Other participants, too, given some of their comments, were in the higher stages of racial identity development. Laurie's comments below demonstrate her passing through the (4th) *Pseudo-independence* Stage and entry into the (5th) *Immersion/Emersion* stage. "I joined the study circles, number one, just for myself, just to learn more about myself and hoping that I could understand myself better (Immersion/Emersion). "And also, I know that this is going to sound strange, but to hear, to try to understand, other White people. Why they think the way they do because I don't understand lots of times." In this statement she demonstrated an emotional separation or distance from other Whites and the decision, by joining the study circle, to actively seek out people of color and White people to gain understanding. These are indications of the *Pseudo-independence* stage. The questioning about how to define the self anew is an indicator of *Immersion/Emersion* stage thinking. Although as she is quoted, the stages are exemplified in reverse order of development, it seemed that her distancing from other Whites and her readiness for questioning were precursors to her participation in a study circle.

Other participants made comments and shared life experiences that suggested that they had advanced into the (6th) *Autonomy* stage of racial identity development. Shelly indicated that she is "trying to be done with White guilt" (19) and that she is healing, which is an indicator of internalized positive white racial identity, a characteristic of the *Autonomy* stage.

Many White participants are actively anti-racist within their own sphere of influence, which is another characteristic of the *Autonomy* stage. Margaret serves on her

state human rights commission; Sandi consults in urban communities with many people of color; Laura works for fair housing, helping to integrate a community; Jerry volunteers for equity in housing practices; Melanie does multicultural committee work and is raising a bi-racial child; Shelly is an anti-racism educator; Mirta reports that she confronts prejudice statements of friend; and Rose purposefully moved to inner city and worked in community relations.

The development of a racial identity that is not static, that continues to be open to new information and ongoing self-examination is another indicator of arrival at the Autonomy stage or White racial identity development. Several participants mentioned throughout the course of our interviews that they are actively working on racism in their own lives as a part of their personal growth. On the issue of growing awareness of white privilege, Lynn said, "I was just inundated more and more and I can see my life as a progression, seeing the things that happened to make me a little bit more aware of myself and my privilege" (12). Chris said, since becoming more aware of White privilege, "I see it all the time. I question it " (11). As quoted earlier in the chapter, he mentioned, "I think one of the reasons that I joined the study circle was because I wanted to be open and honest with myself. I didn't want to shy away from anything and say I'm afraid to learn something about myself and make me say, 'Boy, I haven't been that understanding' or 'I need to change'" (11). These comments are characteristic of people who are in the Autonomy stage of racial identity development. In fact, the willingness to self-examine and the willingness to be a learner regarding issues of diversity, both themes that were identified earlier in this chapter, are indicators that characterize a sense of racial identity

that continues to evolve and develop with newly acquired insights. Comments such as this one by Sandi typified the participants' desire to look at their own racial identity and views of racism. "I started to question my own bias as well…I want to correct…the misconceptions that have been established in my brain" (9).

The final indicator of stage progression to *Autonomy* is the ability to work effectively in multiracial settings. As a reason for participating in the study circle, Sandi mentioned, "I really enjoy being with people of African American descent or other races, Asian-Americans, so, I thought I wanted to explore that a little better and hear how they are feeling" (9). Rose worked toward better community relations in her multiracial neighborhood. Lynn taught school in Harlem and Shelly worked at a social service agency that works with a mixed race population. Several participants are members of multicultural committees and commissions. In addition, three participants have significant relationships that are interracial. Lastly, all of the White participants, by their participation in the study circle demonstrated some ability to work in a multiracial setting. There is broad evidence, therefore, to support the idea that, in general, the White participants in this study demonstrated a progression to the most advanced stages of the racial identity development model.

Final thematic comments

Virtually all of the participants knew that they were interested in pursuing the race study circle almost immediately after hearing about them. Some mentioned working on schedule conflicts and having to cancel out of an earlier scheduled study circle, but not one person described an inward struggle about whether or not to participate. My

interpretation of this common ground is that each of them seem to have a clearly defined

sense of their values and purpose. For each of them, then, the decision to join a race

study circle was effortless and a natural extension of their already-formed sense of social

and moral consciousness. There did not seem to be much awareness that what they were

doing was unusual or noteworthy. A few of the participants did acknowledge some mild

anxiety or uncertainty about what to expect when they joined a study circle, but they did

not mention fear that was strong enough to act as a deterrent to participation. It is

possible that the life experiences and characteristics of the participants, which are listed

in this chapter, acted as a preparation for their roles in the study circles and prevented the

development of more acute anxiety.

It was implied in the interviews that the participants believe in the importance of

dialogue to racial healing. For a few, this importance was made explicit. Abraham said,

me personally? I'm happy to get involved. This is the important thing. I have to

deal with this, this issue every day of my life. I just don't, can't just walk past it

and say this isn't important today, because this is important in my life every

day….[later he continued], I have to speak because I'm sittin' here watching

what's going on. I'm sittin' in the catbird seat. I'm livin' close right next door to

it…I'm constantly in this minefield of hostility. I live this life, so I have to learn

how to respect and get along (6).

Alan said,

I believe that in a place like America where we have this mixture of all types of

people, I believe our greatest strength is our diversity. I believe our greatest

challenge is creating a means through which to receive the benefit of the best

from all of our diverse populations. And it has to begin with a dialogue and

hopefully a dialogue that leads to a shared experiences where participants are

striving to achieve a realistic goal that's going to uplift a society and create a

more cohesive group of people who can look beyond color and culture and

ethnicity and social and socio-economic status and find the people who are there.

It breaks my heart when I encounter people who have that ice-cold center, who

are about one-upmanship rather than being about this (16).

Both participants who explicitly mentioned racial dialogue as critical are African

American men. It is my observation that all of the participants took their participation in

the race study circle seriously and felt that it was a valid, meaningful experience in their

efforts to address racism. In addition, they displayed diligence, patience, and flexibility

throughout the process of setting up and conducting interviews with me. This too, I

interpret as a sign of their belief that such dialogue and study of interracial interaction is

worthwhile and deserving of attention.

Factors proposed in Chapter II

Several factors based on the review of literature in Chapter Two were selected for

exploration in this research, based on their plausibility as precipitating factors to

interracial dialogue or diversity competence. The likelihood that such factors may relate

to the research question was established through review of current related discourses and

the interpretation and compilation of the existing literature. Emotional intelligence, including empathy in particular, moral development, racial identity development, and life experiences in general were also considered as possible relevant factors to the decision to participate the interracial dialogue. As reviewed below, each of these factors seemed to have some relevance to participation in the race study circle. Additional factors, or factors that were specific subsets of those already listed, emerged through conversation with the participants. This process of discovery was a clear product of the participatory design of this methodology and allowed for the participants to directly shape and guide the results reported herein. Findings related specifically to the above focus areas of inquiry are recapped below in order to provide a direct reference to their organization in Chapter III.

Emotional Intelligence

There was some indication, based on existing literature, that emotional intelligence factors such as empathy may be related to the likelihood that an individual will engage interracially. As reviewed in Chapter II, Hoffman (1993) suggested that empathy, or specifically, empathic distress, is a factor that promotes prosocial behavior. Typically, however, empathy affect is biased in favor of familiar people, meaning that empathy is easier toward someone with whom we are familiar. This may indicate that more highly developed senses of empathy would account for empathic responses to people who are perceived as different or at least unknown to oneself. A person with a high degree of empathy was defined by the EQ-i , an emotional intelligence assessment, as someone "who is aware of and can appreciate the feelings of others. They are

sensitive to others' feelings and can understand why they feel the way they feel" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 50).

One of the indicators that suggests that the participants in this study have a high level of empathy is the approximating experiences that were common among the participants. Approximating experiences are defined by Hogan and approximating experience that was suggested by Hogan and Netzer (1995) as a way in which empathy is developed (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413). Approximating experiences are described as the way in which people can draw upon their own or others' experiences to develop empathy with people of color and develop an antiracist awareness" (Hogan & Netzer, as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). It seems that the findings here lend support to the work of Hogan & Netzer (1995) who have suggested a link between approximating experience and anti-racist attitudes (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413).

Another way in which empathy was evident in the participants' character was their 'prosocial' behavior as noted by Hoffman (1993). This directly relates to the high level of social interest discovered among the participants in this study. Their commitment to greater humanity is an expression of empathic regard for the human condition in its broadest sense. The impetus to take action toward the betterment of others' lives generally must come from an understanding of the circumstances of the 'other'.

A specific example of empathic behavior is relevant here. Anika, who was, she thought, mistaken for someone of Middle Eastern descent (she is Indian), related her experience of being on the receiving end of a threatening interaction. She was in her

vehicle when a man in a truck almost hit her. He then opened his door and started to come at her when she reacted by pulling away. She was stymied by the man's actions and at the same time, what stood out for her was that she felt empathy for others who may have experienced this type of harassment to a greater degree.

Clearly, this is an example of the degree of empathy cultivated by the participants in this study. Reflecting back on her own experience with a racial threat, her thought process goes to the experience of others and how she can better understand their experience. The participants' possession of empathic regard as a character trait is implied given their behavior toward others and their level of contribution toward the betterment of the lives of others.

Moral development

The themes that emerged as part of the Level 3 in-depth discussions with the participants are relevant to moral development and offered a window into understanding their level of moral development. When asked specifically about moral development and their spiritual consciousness participants emphasized the importance of social context that would be a significant factor in determining their behavior. Many saw their own sense of morality as being something that went beyond what social or religious law would dictate. Concern for the greater good, or at least for doing no harm was consistently mentioned by participants regardless of any religious affiliation. The participants' seemed proficient at viewing situations as a piece of the bigger picture, being able to view circumstances from a global as opposed to a narrow perspective. They tended to see human experiences as universal. Finally, the theme of social interest became evident throughout the interview

process. Participants not only verbalized their intention and feeling of responsibility toward society, but also cited actions that they were taking that exemplified their commitment to the betterment of society as they see it. They also tended to contribute toward the greater good versus just their own social identity group. According to commonly used models of moral development, (Kohlberg, Gilligan), there is evidence to suggest that these participants have developed their moral consciousness to an advanced level. The section on Level 3 themes and Table 4 review these connections in more detail.

Racial identity development

The idea that level of racial identity development may have some link to participation in the race study circles appears to have been confirmed through analysis of the participants' comments related to their racial identity. The reader is referred to the earlier section in this chapter that provides detail of those findings.

Life experiences

Some of the common life experiences that were discovered may be significant contributors to decisions to participate in the race study circles. Experiences with racism for people of color, observing racial injustices for Whites, having close contact with people from other races, receiving family messages that advocated acceptance of others, and having approximating experiences were some of the occurrences that seemed relevant to participation in the race study circle.

Case Studies

Believing that complete transcripts of any of the participant's interviews could

lead to the possible identification of participants, full transcripts of interviews are not

included in this report of findings in order to safeguard the anonymity of the participants.

Instead, excerpts taken from the transcribed interviews of two of the participants are

included here in order to provide another way of viewing the data. Through these

excerpts the reader may observe how the interviews flowed and may be able to get

additional insights into the character of a few of the participants through these rich

examples.

<u>Monique (13)</u>

Monique: I was always trying to go out and search for things that I could do to help

people so, even now, I still do that and I interact with a lot of different people from the

experiences, like I do volunteer work with the Caring Place now, its a lot of different

people that you deal with but the whole common thread is that loss. People have lost

somebody that they love and care for and so I guess I pretty much am interested in

people. ….I have a friend who's from the Dominican Republic. I just like different

people cause you learn so much from being around just not somebody that looks like you,

and everybody's got different experiences. So I just try to do service projects and service

work. You connect with different people that way….That is basically my nature, as a

helping person. I got a lot of, like maybe from my mother cuz that's the type of person

she is, helping people, neighbors, doing things for other people and I think I saw that in

her. And my dad also, really, because he was a member of a lodge, the print hall masons

and they did a lot of service projects, and I guess it was a learned thing. I guess I did see it from them and didn't realize it. I guess that's really where it came from.

Interviewer (Becky): Do you feel any sort of sense of responsibility with that, in terms of, do you feel that it is your responsibility?

Monique: Mmhmm. I do. I feel I've been given a gift and I've been able to achieve because I've been blessed and so I always feel, like, OK just because, I have been I can't forget about those who haven't. So, and that was another thing that prompted me to get involved with the study circle because I felt like um, people need to know about how to deal with other people and what people's experiences are and have been and like to give them a better understanding of why people may have acted a certain way towards them or said a certain thing towards them, because I just feel like we're responsible for each other. And so I just take that upon myself. I have to do my part. And so being involved with the race study circle was another way of me to do my part.

Becky: So how do you prevent yourself from going to the place that we alluded to earlier where sometimes Black people feel like, I can't believe I've gotta educate more White people, like, why is it my responsibility to keep telling white people my experience and it kinda gets ad nauseum after awhile…how do you prevent yourself from getting there?

Monique: I just feel like I'm doing a service. In helping somebody to understand somebody else. Um, Kinda like being a guide. A tour guide and just being a help.

Becky: So I don't hear from you at all that it feels like an imposition on you.

Monique: Oh no!

Becky: I'm hearing more that it feels like what you can give.

Monique: Right. Exactly. And that's how I feel about it. I never felt like, oh, here we go again…if I can give somebody some information, I'm more than willing to if I know. I'm willing to share. And that's what the race study circle is about, is sharing. Because if you're not willing to share something about yourself, your experience, why sit up there? I think of your sharing and everybody's getting something out of the whole thing because people are learning about me and I'm in turn learning about people.

Becky: How do you judge something moral or immoral?

Monique: I think I would look in terms of how if effects somebody else…another person or a group of people, if it's immoral of course it's a negative situation then I'd say hurtful, something that if this person or this group of people had it done to them, they would not like it. So that's immoral. Moral is terms of, if you're doing good. If you're being positive, you're trying to help somebody. That would be something that would be moral to me, I guess

Becky: So you're kindof using….greater humanity as the measuring stick. Is it good for the people?

Monique-The whole, exactly and not is it good for some, but not for others. And like I said, would you want it done to you. And if you wouldn't then, that's not a good thing for everybody because everybody needs to be able to achieve from it.

My interpretation of this excerpt is that this participant has a significant degree of social interest, evidenced by her commitment to helping others. She is a Masters' level counselor by training and has dedicated her life's work to serving others. Her thoughts about morality imply Kohlberg stage 6 thinking as she specifically referenced the greater good and treating others as she would like to be treated. She expressed an understanding and competency around the skill of empathy when she commented that "people need to know about how to deal with other people and what people's experiences are and have been and like to give them a better understanding of why people may have acted a certain way towards them or said a certain thing towards them" (15). She demonstrated a security in her own racial identity and a willingness to engage with people of different races in meaningful relationships, both of which indicate her advanced stage of racial identity development. Each of these factors seemed relevant to her decision to join the race study circle.

<u>Abraham (6)</u>

Abraham: I'm not no choir boy. Like I said, in order to know the situation you had to go on the other side, to see what was going on. You know, I went to the other side and I seen what was going on and that gave me the understanding to know that.

Becky: What role did education play in your life?

(Abraham has a high school education).

Abraham: My parents, they didn't have no jobs, no education, they didn't have no money, but they gave me what they had. I've had all kinds of jobs, janitors, and everything, I've done it all, and I said the worst thing that could happen is I end up cleaning toilet seats, so if I've done that already it's not no big deal. …What you do don't make you. A lot of people think that what you drive or what you have or what you drive makes you.   It's what's inside that makes you. It's where you come from that makes you. Its as you see life and how you deal with life. You just have to realize that we're all in this together, there's just no way to get around it.

Abraham: Survival was greater than education on an everyday basis. So the best format would be, be dependable, be hard working and be consistent…. This is what you need to survive.

Abraham: My mother was in the church all her life. God was her anchor. If it wasn't for God and knowing there is God and knowing that the White man doesn't control God. He controls the jobs and the money but he has no control over God. If it wasn't for God being in my life and my mother's life I would not be the person that I am today.

Becky: What made you decided to participate in the race study circle?

Abraham: Me personally, I'm happy to get involved. This is the important thing. I have to deal with this, this issue every day of my life. I just don't, can't just walk past it and say this isn't important today, because this is important in my life every day….I have to speak because I'm sittin' here watching what's going on. I'm sittin' in the catbird seat. I'm livin' close right next door to it, I mean, when you see me getting out of my car and looking, cause last time I had a car out here somebody puts a tire on the front of my car and there's skids, but you can't say nothing to 'em and you see, I'm constantly in this minefield of hostility. I live this life, so I have learn how to respect and get along or try to sometimes play like you don't see some things that, you know what I mean, because it's important in order for you to survive. Where am I gonna' go? That's the way I look at it"…Later, talks about seeing kids in his neighborhood doing wrong and he knows that if he says something, he will face retribution. His house will be broken into. "They hate everybody, they hate themselves."

Abraham: There's a better life than what they're trying to live. There's a better life than

what they're living and there's a better life than what they're trying to portray you as

being. You see, 'cuz a lot of the time they're stamping their minds to where they just

hate you, they just hate you, because they hate you for your jobs, they you for their

livelihood, they hate you for the way you live, they hate you for how they act, they hate

you for their not getting a check. They hate you for, for everything. You're the blame

you're the cause you're the root cause of why I don't have anything. But they're not

putting on the fact that there's a cause of them not getting up and going to look for a job,

they're not putting it on the cause of turning cable off and, and, and HBO and go try to do

something for yourself. They're not putting it on the cause that nobody owes you nuthin.

They're not putting it on that cause. They still caught up in this mandate of believing that,

"well we're slaves and we're supposed to get… nobody owes you nuthin'. Nobody,

Nobody owes you anything. Whatever happened back then happened. You're not a

slave. You ain't spent one day on a slave plantation. How do you feel like you are owed

something from the past. You are not owed anything.

Abraham: "Movies on TV glorify criminal life and going to the penitentiary".

He tells the story of a visiting nurse coming to his neighborhood to care for his mother

and tells that a neighbor kid hit the cell phone out of her husband's hand while he was

waiting in their car (the kid thought they were undercover cops). The visiting nurse and

her husband got scared and they never came back. It fulfilled the prophecy or the fear of

coming into the Black neighborhood. He confronted the kid's mother and she got an

attitude.

Abraham: If this man would have killed him you would have heard, 'let's all get up and

march, they're killing our kids'. And I said no, because you're wrong. You see that's the

matter. Your kids are out there doing wrong, you're benefiting from it, but then again,

you want someone to sit there and cover for it just 'cuz you're Black. Just 'cuz you're

Black don't make it right. We have to look at it like that. W e have to be honest with

ourselves in order for us to get honest. It's not about a color anymore, it's about reality.

If we're not goin' to deal with the reality of whatever's going on then we're all gonna'

die". .

Abraham: That's the only way I can honestly look at it. We're all in this together. And

to try to say to folks, this is a black issue or a white issue, I'm past that. We're all in this

together. If we're not going to live together, we're all die and that's it."

Abraham: I look at it like we're all on the Titanic. What's the difference? We're all

going to go down together. You can try to think we're not, but we're all on the same ship

together. There's no getting away from it. There's no getting around it. I don't care what

you own, or who you think you might know. There's too many people in this world who

have the right to live and you can't just say, hey XYZ can't live because AB & C wants

to. You just can't do that. If you want to have racial discrimination against something I

think we need to say, next thing that comes from outer space we can all be racist against that. But other than that, it's the bottom line, we better take care of all mankind.

Abraham: I can't stop it and they're gonna' do what they're gonna' do anyway. If they're gonna' go to bomb Iraq, well, they're gonna' do this. There is nothing that I can say that's gonna' stop them. They're gonna' do whatever they wanna' do. They wanna' steal, kill, there's nothing I can do. All I can do is just try to believe and to know that God's alive in my life and I'm the best man that I can possibly be. That I wouldn't hurt you, that I wouldn't break into your house, or that I wouldn't kill somebody, that I wouldn't, because that's not how I'm made, never been how I'm made."

Abraham: It's sad because, what Whites don't realize is that, in the end, they're gonna' put you in jail with blacks, they're gonna' put you in nursing homes with blacks. All your life they taught you to stay away from them but when you get to where you can't defend yourself, they're gonna' shove you like in Green Meadows housing. White people are poor, they're gonna' shuffle you all together cause the spur can't grow no more…..
So what they're gonna' do is when you're poor, they're just gonna' lump you all together… You're just a White nigger... You're ain't got nothing, you don't have no job. Your not the White folks on television that you think you are when you find out that 'hey they're treating me like they're treating them now why are they don't this to me.' Well, they've already deemed that your life is no more than their life they will start saying , why are you doing this to me? We've been dealing with this all our lives…. All of a

sudden we have a heroin epidemic. Heroin's been around for a long time in Black

neighborhoods. Now all of sudden because it's out here in Allison Park and Mount

Lebanon [predominantly White suburbs], your kids are dying, "oh there's a drug

epidemic! There's a problem! People have been dying from heroin for a long time.

Now that your kids are dying from it.

Abraham: When Black people move in Whites say, there goes the neighborhood. 'well

quite naturally, there goes the neighborhood. Cause first of all you can't have ownership

without having a job. Anything that you have you have to be able to upkeep. So how are

you going to hit the numbers and buy a house and expect to take care of it? You have no

way to buy lawn seed and go out to Home Depot and buy fancy rocks, 'cuz all that takes

money and a consistent job.

 Abraham: We're at a point now, we're at a stage in our society now where it's like

musical chairs. We're starting to move the chairs and there's starting to be less and

less….when you got to that one chair you started fighting over it, cuz you had to, cuz

there's no other chair left…that's classism…you know, that's why I said, you know,

we're gonna' have to open up and what do I care about a guy in Tibet eating a snicker

bar? You know what I'm saying? He should be able to drive a Mercury, what do I care?

Give the guy here a decent job so he can make a burger to sell to the guy in Tibet so he

can have a snicker bar and he's gotta live just like he's gotta live. … There's enough

resources, enough things in this whole world for us all to live together….It just seems

like they're saying that only person's life that means anything is a white person's life. And that's dangerous.

Abraham: How are you gonna have a… European union and you don't include everybody. How are you make a new monetary system and don't put everybody in the pile. How you gonna have, in the 21st century, still have a third world country. What is this, another planet?…It doesn't make any sense. You're taking resources from different places, so how come their not getting the goods from the resources. You know, monetary debts and this and that, I mean it just, It's just a lot of undercover rotten stuff. And there's only a handful of people benefiting. That's what makes it so bad, because they're thinking that when they turn off the lights, everything's gonna be alright and they're wake up and their gonna watch the bombing of Bahgdad on HTV. It aint' gonna be like that cuz there's one thing my father taught me, 'never bet against a man who has nothing to lose". Because just like those suicide bombers, you've got millions of people here who are sympathetic with the Muslims. With the Iraqi's with the Turkish and I mean they're everywhere and they're living in poverty. How are you going to defend against a person who don't mind dying? You hate me so much that you'd kill yourself to kill me?" My plea is that man we need to figure this out so everyone can live. You know what I mean. Cuz there not gonna be no John Wayne at the OK corral and there's just two standing. It's not gonna be like that cuz you're going to unravel everything. Everybody's gonna lose. Nobody's going to trust nobody. That's scary. That is real scary.

My interview with Abraham is worth further examination in relation to the three themes in Level 3. It is noteworthy because although Abraham has a limited formal education (only through high school) as opposed to most of the other participants, yet his sense of social responsibility, moral consciousness, and vision of the bigger picture are extremely well-developed. He expressed attentiveness to global understanding and seeing the broader view. Even when his property was destroyed and his mother's health care was compromised, his way of making sense of his experience seemed to entail an bigger picture perspective. His moral and spiritual consciousness seemed to emanate an understanding of all of humankind as interdependent. His fears and warnings of danger, in fact, were about the hazards of political and national actions that, in his view, ignore that ultimate truth.

He also provided clear markers of his progression through racial identity development stages. He was part of the Black Power movement and turned to street life as a way of immersing himself in, what he perceived at the time, was Black American culture. He very clearly articulated his rejection of that type of life and demonstrated his ability to be objective about his own race. He was also very committed to taking part in the race study circle and had to rearrange his work schedule in order to meet me for his interview. Both of these efforts portray his willingness to work with people of other races who are respectful of his identity.

Overall, Abraham is a rich example of participants in the race study circles. His commentary suggests that he is advanced in terms of his moral and racial identity

development, and has a high degree of social interest and understanding. All of these

factors seemed to contribute to his propensity to participate in the race study circle.

Summary

Chapter IV presented the findings of interviews with twenty participants in interracial

dialogue on race. The purpose of these interviews was to investigate what can be learned

about factors that contribute to the self-selection of participants in interracial dialogue on

race relations. Themes and patterns of response were organized in levels that correspond

with the depth of the participants' responses. In other words, level 1 presented themes

that were surface-level responses that immediately emerged when the participants were

asked the protocol question. Level 2 presented themes that emerged throughout

conversation about the participants' life experiences, and level 3 presented patterns that

became evident as the participants revealed deeper values and life principles that were at

the root of their decision to participate in the interracial dialogue. Following the three

layers of response provided by participants is an additional discussion of themes that

became evident throughout the analysis and interpretation process. Findings related to

racial identity development theory were explored and findings pertaining to other factors

proposed as potentially relevant in Chapter II were reviewed. Two case studies were

presented that offer a more in-depth view of two individuals who are rich examples of

participants in interracial dialogue. Chapter V reviews the implications of these findings

and extrapolates from the data suppositions that may be useful to educators.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review

This inquiry introduced the racial obsession-avoidance paradox as a way of characterizing the state of racial tensions in the United States. Chapter I provided an overview of the socio-cultural context of race relations in the United States, illustrating the historical evolution of obsession about race and systematic attempts to avoid frank and open discussions of racism. Chapter II provided supporting arguments and detailed examples of both the historical and current state of race relations in the United States through the use of popular and professional literature review. Chapter III provided a discussion of methodological orientation and explained the use of participatory approaches in data collection as appropriate to enhancing knowledge about what factors propelled particular individuals to engage in interracial dialogue on race.

Chapter IV reviewed the research protocol and discussed the iterative process of data collection and analysis that were key to this inquiry. The study findings described the participants and the factors that were found to contribute to their participation in the study circles on race. The analysis and interpretation of the findings suggested common themes and provided interpretation within the socio-cultural context framed in Chapter II. The purpose of Chapter V is to describe the implications of the findings that have been documented in Chapter IV, to provide conclusions, and to recommend avenues for further study of this and related subjects.

The issue of generalization

In qualitative research, with case studies in particular, where the data is not generalizable in any scientific way, the issue becomes "What can one do with qualitative findings?" (Patton, 2002, p. 581).   Studies that use small, information-rich samples, as in this inquiry, are context specific and cannot be generalized without careful attention to the context, in the same way that carefully controlled experiments cannot be generalized to real life occurrences due to the artificial manipulation of all variables.

> Guba and Lincoln (1981) emphasized appreciation of and attention to context as a natural limit to naturalistic generalizations. They ask, 'What can generalization be except an assertion that is context free? [Yet] it is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior that is not heavily mediated by the context in which it occurs' (p. 62). (Patton, 2002, p. 583-84).

In determining appropriate usefulness for naturalistic findings, it is recommended that "degree of congruence" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 124) be considered. In other words, it should be assessed to what extent the potential population is similar in setting, time, place, circumstances, or other idiosyncrasy to the study sample.

According to Patton (2002), Cronbach and Associates (1980) proposed an alternative way of thinking about the use of data gathered through qualitative research.

> They were…concerned about entirely idiosyncratic case studies that yield little of use beyond the case study setting. They were also skeptical that highly specific empirical findings would be meaningful under new conditions. They suggested

instead that designs balance depth and breadth, realism and control so as to permit

reasonable 'extrapolation' (pp. 231-35). Unlike the usual meaning of the term

generalization, an extrapolation clearly connotes that one has gone beyond the

narrow confines of the data to think about other applications of the findings.

Extrapolations are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to

other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions. Extrapolations are

logical, thoughtful, case derived, and problem oriented rather than statistical and

probabilistic. Extrapolations can be particularly useful when based on

information-rich samples and designs, that is, studies that produce relevant

information carefully targeted to specific concerns about both the present and the

future (p. 584).

Extrapolation, then, is a means of suggesting usefulness for data in populations, other

than the particular one studied, through the use of critical judgment and careful

consideration of context. The implications and recommendations derived from this

study, then, attempt to locate this pragmatic middle ground between particularity and

generalizability in order to provide realistic and thoughtful considerations for educators,

practitioners, and researchers.

<div align="center">Review of findings by topic area</div>

The goal of this research was to examine those individuals who participated in

intentional interracial dialogue on race in order to discover what factors contributed to

their participation. A review of those findings follows.

Review-emotional intelligence

There were two areas that that emerged in the analysis of the data that relate to the construct of emotional intelligence as defined by Goleman (1998). There were several themes that suggested that the participants had particularly well-developed empathy skills. Since empathy is a feeling or way of being, one's level of empathy must be measured through behavior. First of all, many participants mentioned having had experiences where they felt defined as the 'other' or different in an environment. These approximating experiences are ways in which empathy skills are developed.

Another theme discovered among the participants was their moral consciousness that was other-oriented. It focused on doing no harm to others and doing to others as they would have done to themselves. Their statements about morality frequently referred to the greater good. Perhaps most central to empathy skills were their statements that reflected their view of humanity as being one, interdependent, more the same than different.

Another indicator of empathy skills is social interest and feeling responsible for the welfare of others in the society. As reviewed in Chapter IV, these participants not only demonstrated social interest toward their own identity group, but to people who were significantly different in terms of social group.

Review- moral development

The findings related to moral consciousness were descriptive of participants regardless of their affiliation with a religious institution. There were come common ways of thinking about morality that emerged from discussions with the participants. Many

saw their own sense of morality as being something that went beyond what social or

religious law would dictate. Those who were affiliated religiously, and those who were

not, consistently mentioned their concern for the greater good. They advocated at least

doing no harm and treating others as they would like to be treated. Another theme that is

related to moral consciousness was the participants' empathic orientation. They had the

ability to view problems with an eye toward the bigger picture, being able to see from a

global as opposed to a narrow perspective. They tended to see human feelings as

universal. Finally, the theme of social interest became evident throughout the interview

process. Social interest, or responsibility to others in society, can be interpreted as

orientation and behavior that is an outgrowth of moral principles that humanize and

empathize with greater humanity. Participants not only verbalized their intention and

feeling of responsibility toward others, but also cited actions that they were taking that

exemplified their commitment to the betterment of society as they see it. They also

tended to contribute toward the greater good versus just their own social identity group.

Links between these three themes moral consciousness, empathy, and social interest are

explored in detail later in this chapter.

Review-racial identity development

There are strong indications from the findings that both the people of color and

the White participants have advanced to the highest stages of racial identity. Participants

of color made statements that indicated their sense of security in their racial identity, their

ability to be objective about their and other racial groups, their willingness to have

meaningful relationships with Whites who respect their identity, and their desire to work

in collaboration with other oppressed groups. These characteristics are indicative of development to the *Internalization* stage of racial identity for people of color. White participants made comments that revealed their positive white racial identity, their work toward abandonment of racism in their sphere of influence, their willingness to seek personal growth opportunities regarding race, and their ability to work in a multicultural setting. All of these are indicators of development to the *Autonomy* stage of White racial identity. These findings suggest that there may be some relationship between racial identity development and propensity to engage in interracial dialogue on race. Links between moral development, empathy and racial identity formation will be explored later in this chapter.

<u>Review-life experience</u>

There were some life experiences that many of the participants had in common. All of the participants of color had direct experience as the victims of racism. The White people had one-on-one, or significant relationships with people of another race and often observed the effects of racism. Another pattern among the White participants was that many of them had approximating experiences, which are experiences of being different in an environment or 'othered' in some way.

Another significant life experience for most of the participants was that the value of education was instilled in them throughout their lives by strong family messages, which were validated by their own experiences. In addition, they often received messages from their families of acceptance and tolerance of other races. Many of the participants mentioned role models who demonstrated positive regard for others and who

were activists in social justice causes. The few participants who reported family

messages that promoted prejudice had significant educational experiences that changed

the course of their lives with regard to their careers and moral and racial identity

development.

The fact that the younger participants were exposed to more experiences with race

or diversity, as part of the formal or informal curriculum, may indicate more recent

acknowledgements of diversity issues in the field of education. It is noteworthy that both

of the individuals who had formal educational experiences dealing with race and racism

(the woman who took Black Studies courses and the woman who majored in

anthropology) have not only completed the race study circle, but completed extra training

and became facilitators of study circles themselves.

Relationship among the findings

The findings reviewed above are organized by topic area in a way that is

consistent with their introduction in Chapter II as possible areas of exploration for this

study, and in Chapter IV where the findings related to each topic area were reported.

Further analysis of the findings suggests interconnectedness between the topic areas, a

connection that emerged through interpretation of the themes and patterns and study of

their implications. The exploration of these connections is critical and offers additional

support for the extrapolations that I make in this chapter. The next section, therefore,

explores the theoretical links between life experience, empathy, self-examination and

openness to learning, moral development, social interest, and racial identity development.

Practical implications for educators are offered which are extrapolated from the real life stories of the participants and informed by the supporting theoretical constructs and their interrelationship.

The importance of experience

One of the basic themes that emerged from the participants' stories was that life experiences were significant. For people of color there were experiences with racism and with White people who made positive connections, and for Whites, there were one-on-one interactions and relationships with people of color as well as experiences with witnessing racism. The value of experience is a principle heralded by learning theorists as an essential quality to effective learning (Driscoll, 1994; Kolb, 1974; Torbert, 1972; Walter & Marks, 1981; Zorga, 1997). Zorga stated that, "experts doing research on learning in adulthood have established that such learning is mostly based on life experience and is not acquired through formal education" (p. 147). Kolb's learning theory was based principally on concrete experience and then reflection on that experience. His paradigm is in fact entitled "experiential leaning model" in order to, in his words, "emphasize the important role that experience plays in the learning process" (Kolb, Rubin, & McIntyre, 1974, p. 27). Zorga offers a simple summary of this role by indicating that, "experience serves as learning material" (1997, p. 150).

For the participants in the present study, cross-cultural aspect of their experience, or cross-cultural contact, was a significant part of the life stories that they shared. Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) discuss cross-cultural contact as an important tool in multicultural training. They cite two studies (Merta, Stringham, & Ponterotto, 1988;

Mio, 1989) that suggest that participants in training viewed guest speakers from different

cultural groups as "the most important course component in helping them achieve their

desired changes" (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, p. 43). Allport's (1954) contact theory suggests

that cross-cultural contact that meets some conditions, such as equal status in the contact

situation and cooperative interdependence among group members, is hypothesized to

reduce interracial prejudice (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001, p. 43; Marcus-Newhall &

Heindl, 1998, p. 815).

Purposeful, personal contact in cross-cultural settings also makes evident the

concept of the idiographic experience—that one's experience typically is as a collective

member of many cultural groups and that exclusive focus on only one dimension of a

person's identity misses the complexity of real life (Ridley, 1994, p. 129). The idea that

each person has a unique and individual frame of reference is a reminder that acquiring

normative information about a particular cultural group and applying it unilaterally to all

persons who are perceived to be members of that group results in misinterpretation and

oversimplification of the complexity of identity (Ridley, 1994, p. 129). Cross-cultural

exposure allows a personal glimpse of people who are different and promotes the idea of

the idiographic experience—that people are more than just a representative of their social

group—and universalizes the human experience. For example, Mirta spoke of inviting a

Mexican girl to her birthday party and being questioned by a neighbor. For the neighbor,

the girl was 'a Mexican' yet for Mirta, this was a girl, a friend, and someone who

possessed other qualities that she liked in a friend. The cross-cultural contact had

humanized the girl in Mirta's eyes. In this way, as well, cross-cultural contact can break

down the thinking that promotes stereotypes (e.g., it is difficult to maintain a belief that all Black men are violent when you know a Black man that is peaceable).

For the White people in this study, cross-cultural contact also brought them face-to-face with racism. Many of the participants witnessed the effects of racial discrimination on people they knew. Thus, cross-cultural contact took racism from an abstract to a real experience, which, as has been established is critical to learning.

Another pattern that emerged among the participants was exposure to role models, defined as others who the participants saw as working toward the elimination of racism or other social justice causes. For some this was the influence of someone in their own racial group, or even their own family whose principles and actions they witnessed and wanted to emulate in some way. For one African American man, the person that he mentioned was a White woman who worked in his school when he was a young. Mrs. Columbo, he said, treated all of the children with such respect and love, regardless of our race or background. He cites her as one of the reasons that he eventually became open to having meaningful relationships with White people. In other words, her influence assisted the development of his racial identity. Role models, whether same race or cross-race, are another life experience that the participants cited as important to their eventual participation in the race study circle.

Experience is commonly viewed as the fundamental or raw material upon which one can *reflect*--this process of having experience and then reflecting upon it is the catalyst for change and growth. Appropriately, another theme among the participants was the willingness to self-examine, in other words, to be self-reflective.

From experience to self-reflection

Concrete experience and then reflection on that experience is of critical value to learning. Schon (1997) carefully analyzed the act of reflection in his book on the subject. He explained the cognitive process by which reflective thought creates new understanding.

The practitioner experiences a surprise [unexpected reaction] that leads her to rethink her knowing-in-action in ways that go beyond available rules, facts, theories, and operations. She responds to the unexpected or anomalous by restructuring some of her strategies of action, theories of phenomena, or ways of framing the problem; and she invents on-the-spot experiments to put her new understandings to the test. She behaves more like a researcher trying to model an expert system than like the 'expert' whose behavior is modeled (pp. 35-36).

Schon suggested a continual, cyclical process whereby introduction of material that does not fit in one's current system of understanding stimulates adjustment. This is a constructivist process that Schon called "remaking" (p. 36) because people are continually engaged in reframing their perspectives based on environmental feedback. Schon explained that "when practitioners respond to the indeterminate zones of practice by holding a reflective conversation with the materials of their situations, they remake a part of their practice world and thereby reveal the usually tacit processes of worldmaking that underlie all of their practice" (p. 36). Schon's worldmaking is a process that occurs when reflective experiences reveal one's previously unconscious assumptions and prompt shifts in those assumptions or in other words, shifts in one's worldview.

Interestingly, this worldmaking process is a cognitive way of working through cognitive dissonance. Reviewed in Chapter II as a factor that may discourage interracial dialogue on race, cognitive dissonance refers to the same dilemma of processing new information that doesn't fit into one's prior understanding or framework for knowing. Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, suggests that humans experience a distressing mental state when they are confronted with ideas or situations that do not fit with their belief system. Festinger suggested that when a situation evokes cognitive dissonance, a person typically attempts to reduce it by discounting the information or seeking new information that supports their original beliefs. "We tend to filter out information that does not affirm or align with our view of the world" (Glauser, 1999, p. 64). In many instances a person will merely take steps to avoid situations and information that are likely to increase their cognitive dissonance. For many, discussing racism is an experience that generates a great deal of cognitive dissonance (McFalls, & Cobb-Roberts, 2001; Tatum, 1997). Avoidance of racial dialogue, then, can be viewed as one way in which people try to avoid the experience of cognitive dissonance. Anticipating that they may hear information that challenges their beliefs, many people will choose to avoid the encounter, altogether. Schon's (1997) process of worldmaking seems to ask the individual to slow down and be intentional about digesting new information, as opposed to succumbing to a more typical reactionary process when faced with cognitive dissonance. Self-reflection, the willingness to examine the self, it seems then, is a valuable tool to facilitate interracial dialogue.

Multicultural literature emphasizes reflection as a vital tool to increase awareness and sensitivity. Ridley, Mendoza, Kanitz, Angermeier, & Zenk's (1994) concept of culturally specific information process systems parallels Schon's worldview. Ridley et al. argue that people from similar cultures develop similar systems to process information (p. 129). These schema or automatic processes are disturbed when we encounter someone from a different culture (Ridley et al., p.129). If a person is culturally sensitive, they are then able to adjust their schema. Cultural sensitivity then, is a "special kind of perceptual schemata" according to Ridley et al. that is receptive to multiple modes or types of input (p. 130). In other words, self-reflective persons, by training their levels of awareness, can, in effect, actively develop cognitive processing functions that work to eliminate prejudice (Ridley, et al., 130).

Encouraging reflexivity and making meaning within the social context are ideas that have been adopted by constructivists as integral to facilitating learning about the self and others. "Nurturing reflexivity", says Driscoll (1994), "is a learning condition that constructivists assert is essential to the acquisition of goals such as reasoning, understanding multiple perspectives, and committing to a particular position for beliefs that can be articulated and defended" (p. 371). Reflection promulgates self-awareness. It is a technique used to accentuate awareness of the self and the process of meaning making.

<u>From self-reflection to empathy</u>

Empathy is defined as "awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns" (Goleman, 1998, p. 27). Goleman cited a 1997 study published by Levenson and Ruef in the book, <u>Empathic Accuracy,</u> edited by William Ickes, that suggested that, "the key to knowing others' emotional terrain is an intimate familiarity with our own" (p. 135). This finding asserted that, "the prerequisite for empathy is self-awareness" (p. 136). In other words, in order to accurately project what another person might feel, it would be necessary to understand one's own visceral responses and emotional reactions.

Interestingly, the participants' willingness to examine their own ways of thinking, believing and acting, or self-reflection as discussed above, seems to have a direct link to empathy development. This openness to introspection and desire to understand the self better contributes to empathy development and could relate to why the participants seemed to have high empathy skills. The idea that the participants have high levels of empathy is supported by the explanation of four developmental levels of empathy proposed by Hoffman (1993). The first stage is *global empathy*, which is common in infants who have personal empathic distress responses (e.g., sucking a thumb) when witnessing someone else in distress. The second stage is *egocentric empathy* when a child feels empathic distress but assumes that the other person has the same internal responses as he or she does. The third stage is *empathy for another's feelings* when the individual becomes aware of a full range of emotions and that other's feelings may differ from their own. The last and most advanced stage is *empathy for another's life condition,* which Hoffman described as empathy for another's experience beyond the

immediate situation, including empathy for an entire group. Hoffman (1993) explained that,

> the child becomes aware that others feel pleasure and pain, not only in the immediate situation but also in their larger life experience. Consequently…the empathic response may be intensified when he or she realizes that the others' distress is not transitory but chronic. Thus, the child's empathically aroused affect may now be combined with a mental representation of another person's general level of distress or deprivation. Furthermore, as the child acquires the ability to form social concepts, his or her empathic distress may be combined with a mental representation of the plight of an entire group or class of people (e.g., the poor, oppressed, outcast, or retarded) (p. 162).

Clearly, according to Hoffman's description of advanced levels of empathy, the participants in this inquiry have demonstrated high levels of empathy through their understanding of and outreach to social groups other than their own.

Therefore, it is reasonable to think that increasing empathic skills would be one way to promote interracial dialogue on race. In support of this connection, Goleman (1998) cited 'leveraging diversity' as one of the competencies affiliated with empathy, along with understanding others, developing others, service orientation, and political awareness (p. 27).

Another way in which empathy was evident in the participants' character was their 'prosocial' behavior as noted by Hoffman (1993). This directly relates to the high level of social interest discovered among the participants in this study. Their

commitment to greater humanity is an expression of empathic regard for the human condition in its broadest sense. The impetus to take action toward the betterment of others' lives generally must come from an understanding of the circumstances of the 'other'.

<u>From empathy to social interest and moral development</u>

As cited in Chapter II, Hoffman (1993) suggested that prosocial behavior is promoted by empathy, or specifically, empathic distress. "A lot of research supports empathic distress as a motive for prosocial behavior" (Hoffman, p. 157). Prosocial behavior, or social interest, was another theme that emerged as a common orientation among the participants in this study. Social interest is a concept that was integral to the philosophy of Alfred Adler. Alfred Adler, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century psychologist, used the term *Gemeinschaftsgefuhl* to describe man's "social coping attitude" regarding the human condition of being " embedded in a larger whole" of humanity (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, p. 127). The translator's note in Adler's (1927) work explained that,

> the word 'Gemeinschaftsgefuhl' for which no adequate English equivalent exists, has been rendered as 'social feeling' throughout the book. 'Gemeinschaftsgefuhl' however connotes the sense of human solidarity, the connectedness of man to man in a cosmic relationship. Wherever the brief phrase 'social feeling' has been used therefore, the wider connotation of a 'sense of fellowship in the human community' should be borne in mind" (p. 32).

To offer deeper understanding of the richness of the German word, Ansbacher and

Ansbacher (1956) offered this litany of attempts to capture its full meaning in English.

> The following terms have been used as English equivalents: social feeling,
>
> community feeling, fellow feeling, sense of solidarity, communal intuition,
>
> community interest, social sense and social interest. The last seems most
>
> adequate generally, and it is also the one which Adler came to prefer (p. 134).

Adler believed that this concept of "how individuals interact with the others sharing 'this

crust of earth' (Adler, 1958, p. 6) is paramount" (Corsini & Wedding, 1995, p. 52). A

critical difference between Bar-On's (1997) definition of social responsibility as concern

directed toward "one's social group," is that Adler's *Gemeinschaftsgefuhl* seems to

connote a much more global concern for humanity, including, but not limited to one's

own social group.

Adler believed strongly that social interest was not only important to the health of

the individual, but crucial to the survival of the human species (Adler, 1964). He said

that, "naturally the person who possesses the most social feeling is nearest the

comprehension of …future harmony" (p. 280). And further that, "all our bodily and

mental functions are rightly, normally, and healthily developed in so far as they are

imbued with sufficient social feeling and are fitted for cooperation" (Adler, 1964, p. 283).

Fittingly, Adler specifically referred to racial and religious hate as antithetical and

detrimental to the spirit of social interest. He explained that,

> suicide, crime; bad treatment of old people, cripples, or beggars; *prejudices and*
>
> *unjust dealing with persons*, employees, *races, and religious communities* [italics

added]; the maltreatment of the feeble and of children; marital quarrels, and any

kind of attempt to give women an inferior position… put an early end to the

development into a fellow being…A real fellow creature must see it his task to

co-operate for the amelioration of this wrong state of things for the good of the

community; and further that he must not expect this amelioration to be brought

about by some mythical tendency to evolve, or through the efforts of other people.

Attempts even when made with the best intentions, to attain a higher development

through the intensifying of one of these evils, by war or by the death penalty, or

by *racial and religious hate* [italics added], will invariably lead to a lowering of

the social feeling in the next generation, and along with that an essential

worsening of the other evils. It is interesting, too, to note that such hates and

persecutions almost always cause a vulgarizing of life, comradeship, and love-

relationships—a fact in which one can clearly see the depreciation of social

feeling" (Adler, 1964, p. 281-282).

It is noteworthy that Adler's definition of social interest and Bar-On's definition of social

responsibility have clear parallels. However, Bar-On's definition of social responsibility

emphasizes identification and positive actions toward one's own social group. If social

group can be assumed to mean a social identity group composed of people "like me" in

some socially identifiable way such as race, socio-economic status, religion, gender, or

even neighborhood, Adler's definition specifically encompassed a wider view of

humanity. He saw social interest as feeling for the collective and whole of humanity and

does not explicitly define it as interest in one's social group.   I would argue that the

individuals in this study have gone beyond their own social group to work for the benefit

of other social groups as well. I interpret their actions as, in general, working towards the

benefit of the greater good, including, but not limited to their own social group. In fact,

joining the race study circle is a pointed illustration of concern beyond one's own social

group.

Hoffman (1993) concluded that degree of empathy skill may also make

significant contributions to moral judgment and decision-making (p. 178). Synthesizing

the works of Gilligan (1982), Kohlberg (1975), and Perry (1970), Barrett (1995) defined

moral or ethical development as "the process by which an individual makes value

judgments concerning right and wrong and his or her sense of responsibility to

him/herself and others" (p. 13). Hoffman (1993) provided two principles of Western

moral behavior. First the principle of benevolence, "which states that a moral act is one

that takes into account the happiness or well-being of all people likely to be affected by

it" (p. 166). Second, the principle of justice or fairness, which state that society's

resources should be allocated according to a standard equally applicable to all" (p. 166).

Hoffman explained,

> How does empathy relate to caring and justice principles? The link between
>
> empathy and the caring principle is obvious and direct, because any or all of the
>
> empathic affects…may include a feeling of concern for victims and a disposition
>
> to act on their behalf, and the principle of caring operates in the same direction"
>
> (p. 166).

Although the relation of empathy to the justice principles is less direct, Hoffman lists the balancing of need, equality and equity of resources without bias toward one's own share as the connection to empathy.

Kohlberg's structures of moral judgment or moral reasoning are descriptive of an individual's reasoning about a moral decision not about the content, or the disposition of the final choice that is made (Kohlberg, 1978). In other words, the rationale for describing an individual's stage orientation is made on the basis of *why* a decision is made and the considerations that he or she uses, not on *what* an individual decides.

At Stage 1 life is valued in terms of the power or possessions of the person involved; at Stage 2, for its usefulness in satisfying the needs of the individual in question or others; at Stage 3, in terms of the individual's relations with others and their valuation of him; at Stage 4, in terms of social or religious law. Only at Stage 5 and 6 is each life seen as inherently worthwhile, aside from other considerations…At Stage 6, personally chosen moral principles are also principles of justice, the principles any member of a society would choose for that society if he did not know what his position was to be in the society and in which he might be the least advantaged…. Truly moral or just resolutions of conflicts require principles which are, or can be, universalizable" (Kohlberg, 1978, p. 39-41).

According to Kohlberg, as an individual develops morally their focus is less on the self and eventually more on the greater good. "At Stage 6 people make decisions based on universal principles of justice, liberty, and equality, even if these violate laws or social norms" (Gump, Baker, & Roll, 2000, p. 68).

These ideas proposed by Hoffman (1993) and Kohlberg (1978) that advanced level of moral development reflects a sense of responsibility to others is worth examining in light of the findings that suggest this group of participants has a high degree of social interest, or responsibility to others. These moral principles seek to illuminate the needs of the larger society and are reminiscent of Adler's principle of social interest. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the high degree of social interest that, in general, characterizes the participants in this study, may indicate a higher stage of moral reasoning. For many of the participants, the sense of obligation or responsibility was a value that under girded their thinking about their role in addressing racism. In most cases it was one that emerged after in-depth discussion in the interview process. In many cases their commitment to giving back to society was significant in their decision to join the race study circle.

Toward racial identity development

The tasks associated with development of racial identity are also interconnected to the themes of experience, self-reflection, empathy, and moral development. For White people, the first major process, the abandonment of racism, requires contact with people of color and "to the extent that such [contact] can be avoided…one can avoid resolving White racial identity issues" (Helms, 1990, p. 54). For people of color, contact with Whites who are respectful of their racial identity is important in order to achieve development to the final, *Internalization* stage. Therefore, life experiences that involve contact with people from other racial groups would act as a stimulus to racial identity development. Exposure to role models is also a catalyst for racial identity development.

Helms spoke of reading biographies and participating in consciousness-raising groups in order to expose themselves to others who have made "similar identity journeys" (p. 62). Helms also asserted that, "self-examination…is an important component of the process of defining a positive White identity" (p. 55). It is reasonable to think that any exploration of one's own identity would require a significant degree of self-examination. Both empathy and developing a moral consciousness are relevant to the tasks of establishing meaningful relationships with members of other racial groups, working in a multicultural environment and continuing one's personal journey with identity.

Teaching and counseling implications

The following implications for educators and counselors/psychologists are extrapolated from the data collected from individual interviews with people who reflected on the factors that propelled them to participate in interracial dialogue. Since the factors that are considered here to contribute to interracial dialogue on race are consistent with those that are thought to reduce prejudice, these extrapolations may too, then, also be considered as prejudice reduction strategies. The themes that emerged from the analysis of the data consist of a set of factors that are interrelated and that have theoretical underpinnings in education generally, in multicultural education, and in the counseling/ psychology fields.

Contributing factors

Based on the information gathered through this inquiry, these implications are offered to educators and helping professionals who would like to facilitate the propensity

for interracial dialogue. Among these points of discussion, there is consistency with prejudice reduction techniques and strategies to increase levels of diversity competence.

Education

The value of education to dialogue on race and racism cannot be overstated. The absence of formal educational experiences on race, racism, oppression, or diversity issues in general is a gaping hole in primary and secondary educational institutions. The lack of preparation to discuss such subjects that teachers possess, as described in Chapter II is a marked disservice to students and a serious challenge to teacher and counselor educators. There is clear evidence that diversity competence is crucial to the future success of individuals in the workplace. The avoidance and/or reluctance with which these topics are treated in educational institutions serves as an example of America's race obsession-avoidance paradox and as an example of the ways in which systemic racism is perpetuated.

Only one of the participants in this study had a somewhat, formal educational experience with racism and oppression at the secondary level of education. Although apparently not part of the formal curriculum of the school, Shelly's teacher was willing to broach and discuss such issues, venturing outside of the confines of the textbook. The lasting effects of the diversity competence of this one teacher were transformational to Shelly's college major, career, life, and personal relationships. Monique had several classes at the college level in the Black Studies department and Jerry spoke of a college course that addressed issues of oppression, power, perspective-taking, and 'objectivity' as transformational for him. To both Shelly and Jerry, these significant educational

experiences were effective enough to counter family messages of prejudice. All other participants in this study had some sort of contact with people of other races that was coupled with messages from family about acceptance of others. For those who had prejudicial messages at home, educational experiences were strikingly significant and had dramatic impact on their lives, livelihoods, and worldview. All of the individuals in this study mentioned early curiosity about race, a nature inquisitiveness upon which educational institutions could capitalize. The opportunity that educational institutions have to facilitate the elimination of racism and the development of diversity competence is boundless.

<u>Life experiences and reflection</u>

Significant cross-cultural or interracial contact is useful to encouraging interracial interaction. Cross-cultural contact is a key to prejudice reduction and interracial dialogue. In situations where individuals are not naturally having close contact with other people of races different from their own, such contact may be facilitated through inviting guest speakers as well as by asking students to engage in self-created cross-cultural experiences. Face-to-face direct contact is, not coincidentally, also a way of developing empathy, which will be discussed in the section on empathy below.

Educators can facilitate additional concrete experience like provocative, simulated exercises that recreate cultures or environments where participants 'get a glimpse' of life in an 'out-group' or marginalized group. Asking people to share how racism has affected their lives and to discuss examples of the ways in which they have seen racism manifested are other ways of creating experiences for participants. Reading the life

stories and viewing films of those in oppressed groups and also stories of those who work for social justice, although not direct experience, can serve as vicarious learning opportunities and can be 'real experience' for participants. There is also initial experimental support for the idea that reading can be used as a tool in multicultural training. In a recent study examining the effectiveness of techniques to improve intergroup relations, there is indication that reading about discrimination reduces bias (Finlay & Stephan, 2000). Certainly it could be argued that reading is another tool that encourages the process of self-reflection.

Schon (1997) suggested that 'worldmaking', through self-reflection, was a way of digesting new information that does not match old frameworks. It seems that there is value, then, in teaching the theory of cognitive dissonance as it relates to racism and diversity education. Individuals who are made aware of the human tendency to discount new information that otherwise seeks to change one's worldview may be more likely to observe the tendency in themselves and others and to, as Schon suggests, slow it down for further analysis and consideration. Discussions of the human tendency to reject new information, especially as sensitive and emotionally charged as issues involving race in America, allow individuals to air and work through their discomfort and encourage the process of self-reflection.

It is critical, indeed, that all such experiences are followed by opportunities for reflection like journaling, oral presentation, discussion, reaction papers and portfolio creation. Experience, when occurring naturally in someone's life or whether part of a designed educational experience, is the raw material and stimulus for personal growth.

These types of experiences provide "snapshots" of the everyday lives and experiences of people in marginalized groups, which may help to increase awareness and decrease bias (Finlay & Stephan, 2000). The personal growth is only fully realized if self-reflection is integrated as part of the experience. For those who work with younger people, it is worth noting that encouraging self-reflection at very young ages may develop a habit and comfort level which can accelerate personal growth.

Techniques like asking students to write reaction papers or journal entries, and having frequent student discussion, dyads, and small group activities are examples of how self-reflection and social meaning-making are operationalized within the curriculum. These activities create opportunities for meaningful, interactive experience and then for students to reflect on that experience and to have an awareness of the process of creating meaning for themselves. Reflection promulgates self-awareness. It is a technique used to accentuate awareness of the self and the process of meaning-making.

Empathy development

Approximating experiences were suggested by Hogan and Netzer (1995) as a way in which empathy is developed (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413). Approximating experiences are described as "the way in which people can draw upon their own or others' experiences to develop empathy with people of color and develop an antiracist awareness" (Hogan & Netzer, as cited in O'Brien, p. 413). The findings from this study lend support to the work of Hogan & Netzer (1995) who have suggested a link between approximating experience and anti-racist attitudes (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 413). As mentioned above, educators can facilitate approximating experiences, where such

experiences do not naturally exist. Workshops that simulate the experience of marginalized groups, and suggesting that individuals immerse themselves in another culture are ways to approximate approximating experiences.

Interaction with role models is another facilitator of empathy. Hoffman (1993) suggested that, "[exposure]… to models who act altruistically and express their sympathetic feelings would contribute to… [others'] acting empathically (p. 170). The findings in this study certainly bear out Hoffman's assertion. Educators can easily invite guest speakers and share media about those who are 'other focused' and who are able to share their feelings about their work.

Recalling Hoffman's (1993) assertion that empathy is easier toward those who are familiar and similar to us, techniques that would mitigate this difference would allow individuals to advance to higher levels of empathy. One way in which she suggested that this might be done is through face-to-face cultural contact, a suggestion already mentioned above as useful for additional benefits. Hoffman said, "there is a need for a moral education curriculum that stresses the common humanity all people share. This would include efforts to raise people's levels of empathy for people who are not members of one's own group, such as direct face-to-face cultural contact" (p. 174). This may also be a key to developing individuals from social responsibility, which is orientation toward benefiting one's own social group, to social interest, which is a helping and empathic orientation toward greater humanity, outside of one's own social group.

Another technique that can be used to facilitate development of empathy is emotional stimulus. Palmer (1998) stated that, "intellect works in concert with feeling so

if I hope to open any students' minds, I must open their emotions as well" (1998, p. 63).

Provocative experiential exercises are designed to stimulate students to be consciously

aware of their sense of self and their relationship to others who are different from them.

Some exercises may evoke discomfort, shame, anger, and frustration. The decision to

orchestrate such exploration of emotion is a deliberate attempt to prompt reflection and

self-awareness. Nelson and Neufeldt (1998) stated,

For reflection to occur, there must be a problem, a dilemma—something about

which the learner feels confusion or dissonance and intends to search for a solution. The

problem should revolve around an issue of consequence, one that is important to good

practice. Reflection occurs in a context of the learner's capacity to tolerate the ambiguity

of not knowing and an educational setting in which the learner has space to struggle with

ideas as well as the safety to experience not knowing as acceptable (Nelson & Neufeldt,

1998, p. 81-82).

Simulation exercises can be constructed to be emotionally stimulating and

conflict-inducing in order to be a catalyst for students' personal growth. The intentional

arousal of emotion is designed to be a mechanism for change and may even be

threatening to some students. Simulation exercises are meant to encourage students to

feel and deal with prejudice and therefore to learn about how dominant groups collude to

reinforce those prejudices. With learning, as with therapy, change and growth can be

stimulated through conflict or personal crisis (Steenbarger, 1991, p. 290). Palmer (1998)

indicated that,

if we embrace the promise of diversity, of creative conflict, … we still face one

final fear--the fear that a live encounter with otherness will challenge or even

compel us to change our lives. Otherness, taken seriously, always invites

transformation, calling us not only to new facts and theories and values but also to

new ways of living our lives—and that is the most daunting threat of all (p. 38).

Purposeful, emotional stimuli is not a textbook experience that a student can easily keep

at an emotional distance; it is meant to be a "hands-on" journey. The course is designed

to engage the student emotionally and therein become a catalyst for growth. For

example, a student might reflect, as an able-bodied person, when I see life from the

vantage point of a wheelchair, I begin to understand why it's such a big deal if ramps

aren't well located and marked, or if a building entrance is not accessible. I see how

different the world looks and how my priorities shift; I see how others treat me and how

easy it would be to despair and to 'drop out'. I can begin to understand the special needs

and concerns that differentiate members of this group. I also observe that it takes me

only an hour to get angry, frustrated and tired. These familiar emotions let me relate to

the humanness of the members of this group and discover how 'like me' they truly are.

Among the themes that Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992) discovered in their

investigation of counselor professional development was that, "extensive experience with

suffering produces heightened tolerance and acceptance of human variability" (p. 514).

This finding lends support to the idea that empathy can be developed through witnessing

and experiencing human pain and difficulty. Simulation experiences attempt to give

individuals a limited "snapshot" of the sometimes painful and challenging experience of

oppression. These activities have the intention of allowing individuals to get a "feel" for the daily experience of people who are in a non-dominant group and of increasing students' awareness of others' worldview. This type of exercise can also be effective in addressing one of the dilemmas that exist when studying the "other". It is easy to

> paint the members of another society as either 'just like us' or as 'not at all like us'. … The challenge is to avoid portraying the lives of others as so emotionally different as to be incomprehensible and bizarre or as so emotionally unremarkable as to be indistinguishable in their motivational underpinnings from those [in the dominant culture] (Lutz, 1988, p. 11).

To help students to understand the "other" who is different culturally in a way that is both "humanizing and valid" (Lutz, p. 11) is a challenge for diversity educators. When accomplished, however, its impact can be life-changing. The power of both cross-cultural contact (and affirmation of Allport's contact theory) is poignantly portrayed by a volunteer from Ground Zero the first few days after the September 11, 2001 tragedy in New York City. Joseph Bradley was a crane operator who volunteered his time beginning on September 11th and continued through December without missing a day.

> It was the middle of the night [on September 11th]. That's when the Salvation Army kids appeared in their sneakers with their pink hair and their belly buttons showing and bandannas tied around their faces. One was a little girl pushing a shopping cart full of eyewash through the muck. They came with water and cold towels and took my boots off and put dry socks on my feet. And we kept going all night on the 12th and the morning of the 13th and we were relieved in the

afternoon….It was the little girl with the pink hair that became my hero that night…When I got to Houston Street, a bunch more of these kids, all pierced and tattooed with multicolored hair, had made a little makeshift stage. And they started to cheer as we came out, and that was it for me. I never identified with those people before, but I started crying and I cried for four blocks…I never knew anything about Episcopalians or Presbyterians, or gays, or people with nuts and bolts through their checks, or those Broadway people, but now I know them all. We're not the heroes. They are the heroes. They've cried and prayed out loud for me. I never thought I'd have a family like this one. (Cowart, 2002, p. 38).

Joseph Bradley's experience was to have close contact with people of other cultures who were working for a united cause, which apparently allowed him to see them as 'like him', human, and as valuable members of society. He also saw others around him as role models. Real life experiences are obviously the best fodder for such personal growth through reflection. However, exercises that ask students to 'walk in another's moccasins,' however briefly, look to link these two seemingly dichotomous ideas that we, as humans, are the same, yet different.

Implications for counselors and counselor educators

In their major contribution to The Counseling Psychologist, entitled, *Racism, mental health and mental health practice*, Thompson and Neville (1999), urged mental health educators and practitioners to "critically [evaluate] the role of racism and other

forms of injustice and dehumanization in mental health conceptualization and treatment" (p. 158).

Thompson and Neville (1999) made clear that in addressing racism in the mental health context that it not be "construed as an aspect of case conceptualization or treatment that can be examined in isolation of other relevant biological, psychological, and social factors, but rather as a component to be enfolded into the larger whole" (p. 158). Thompson and Neville emphasized the relevance of racism in the therapeutic encounter. They cited the work of racism scholars who argued that,

> racism consists of two interlocking dimensions: (a) an institutional mechanism of domination and (b) a corresponding ideological belief that justifies the oppression of people whose physical features and cultural patterns differ from those of the politically and socially dominant racial group—Whites (Cha-Jua, 1996). This latter component is particularly important to counseling psychologists because it concerns itself with individual and collective attitudes that potentially can be targeted in therapy contexts (163).

The psychological effects of racism not only on people of color, but on those who perpetuate it, are integral to self identity and relationship with others in the culture, the very subject of the therapeutic encounter. Counselors and psychologists who are not prepared to address race and racism competently in a therapeutic session are ethically remiss.

The counseling profession itself has made recent acknowledgements of the need to address diversity issues in general. In the Winter 2002 edition of the Association for

Counselor Education and Supervision newsletter, President, Alan Goldberg wrote about

three issues where "lack of sufficient progress" has been made. The first issue was,

"prizing diversity. One theme that permeated the Convention from the opening session to

the closing programs was the need to widen the circle of multicultural understanding and

to be more proactive with regard to our pedagogy in the area of multiculturalism" (Miller,

2002, p. 1-2). The inclusion of content areas related to race, racism, the dynamics of

oppression and privilege, and the systemic issues of cultural power are ways to 'be more

proactive with regard to our pedagogy' and are topics that need to be included in order to

'widen the circle of multicultural understanding'.

In Chapter II, I discussed the importance for counselors and for their clients of

addressing race and racism. I asserted that race is critical in the therapeutic relationship

but cannot be addressed with competence unless first explored by the counselor. The

discussion for Chapter II is worth repeating here for the sake of continuity of thought.

Multicultural competencies as defined by the American Counseling Association

include "understanding yourself as a racial/cultural being and the potential impact it

might have in the therapeutic relationship" (Sue, et al., 1998, p. 125). Tomlinson-

Clarke and Wang (1999) added further detail about the need for counselors to address

race specifically.

> [A] need exists for educators developing training programs to incorporate racial-
>
> cultural self-exploration as a goal in providing counselors with experiences to
>
> prepare for a variety of interactions with clients representing varying aspects of
>
> human diversity (Carter, 1995; Pinderhughes, 1989; Sue & Sue, 1990).

Clarifying one's own racial and cultural identities, and developing a sense of

comfort and self-acceptance, are necessary prerequisites to developing the

abilities to relate respectfully to people from differing racial and cultural groups

and to function effectively within culturally diverse groups (Banks, 1997; Carter,

1995) (p. 159).

Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang specifically suggest attention to individual or personal

development with regard to race that is needed in order to become a competent counselor.

Courses that address only multiculturalism and fail to address the power dynamics and

systemic issues of oppression *do not* adequately prepare counselors for their

responsibilities in the therapeutic session.

The implications for educators earlier in this chapter are written so as to be also

applicable and useful to counselor educators charged with the task of education about

racism. Some additional thoughts for counselors specifically are worth note.

Goleman (1998) argued that empathy skills are critical for success in the work

place. He asserted that, "the most effective and empathic counselors are best able to

"tune in to their body's own signals for emotion—an essential for any job where empathy

matters, from teaching to sales and management" (p. 136). This only reaffirms that self-

examination and reflection are critical to the counseling role. Ridley (1995) offered

specific reflection techniques that can be of use to counselors with regard to cultural

sensitivity.

Counselors can, through a process that Ridley and associates (1994) term "active

selective attention," (p. 132) learn to be culturally sensitive through the practice of

reflection. This is a process that "goes against the grain of ordinary perception and requires focused energy and skill to be maintained" (Ridley, 1995, p. 132). Self-processing or reflection is the vital skill that must be well-developed in order to maintain such a focus (Ridley, p. 133).

This technique has links to Schon's (1997) explanation of 'worldmaking' cited earlier in this chapter that calls for intensive reflection. Counseling professionals concur that self-reflection and self-identification for counselors is critical to their role. Locke and Faubert (1999) noted that, "enhancing self-definition is the essence of culturally competent counseling" (p. 44).

> Freire's critical, mutual pedagogy provides concrete methods for implementing conscientizacao, the development or awakening of critical awareness, a primary goal of counseling (Freire, 1993). Freire's processes of awareness raising, encouragement to action, and vigorous reflection are essential to the preparation of culturally competent counselors (p. 44).

To a significant degree, study of diversity not only aids the counselor in working with particular clients, but facilitates counselor capacity for purposeful reflection by asking him/her to "step outside their framework of 'being' so as to identify the concepts that govern [their] thoughts and feelings" (Irving & Williams, 1995, p. 108). Irving and Williams espouse that,

> it is almost impossible to judge and evaluate our assumptions from within our own personal knowledge frameworks, since these assumptions are held to be consistent with the totality of our feelings and take on the status of self-evident

truths. If the goal of reflective practice is to be achieved, the practitioner needs to

gain access to these implicit [frameworks], which will necessarily entail stepping

outside the framework of 'being' (p. 108).

This is the essence of developing empathy--striving to understand the worldview of

another. And that is, essentially, the role of a counselor.

Limitations of the study

As there is no existing body of published literature on the subject of the

propensity toward interracial dialogue, educators, researchers, and students who consider

the implications discussed here must do so with caution. The implications extrapolated

from the research findings and from analysis of the themes found are not conclusive, but

are a starting point for further investigation. It is certain that this study did not

encompass all of the factors that might be relevant to the decision to engage in interracial

dialogue and therefore, does not completely capture the depth or breadth of the research

question.

The participants in this study live within a limited geographical area. They were

also selected because they are a particular, purposeful sample of individuals who were

rich examples of those that would participate in interracial dialogue on race. There may

be some environmental circumstances or characteristics particular to this group that may

not exist in other populations. For all of these reasons, the results of this inquiry are not

necessarily generalizable to other populations. The extrapolated findings therefore are to

be used with this awareness and with respect to context and to similarity in population and setting.

Additionally, there were individuals who participated in the interracial dialogues who did not choose to participate in this study for a wide range of reasons. They are not represented in the results of this study and their missing perspectives represent another limitation.

Generation of hypotheses

Unlike quantitative studies that function to test a hypothesis, qualitative inquiries are designed to generate hypotheses. Due to the breadth of this study and the range of topics and themes that were included in and emerged from the interview process, there are multiple hypotheses that could reasonably be proposed and then tested as a result of this study. A few such hypotheses are listed here to offer some summary to this work and to suggest areas for further research. One set of hypotheses might formally propose that any number of factors discussed here appear to facilitate dialogue on race. For instance, some hypotheses may state that interracial dialogue on race is facilitated by a) contact with other races; b) approximating experiences; c) highly developed empathy skills; d) high levels of social interest; e) advanced stages of moral development; f) advanced stages of racial identity development; or g) educational experiences related to race or racism. An alternative proposition may be that a combination of these factors may be significant in reducing prejudice or encouraging interracial dialogue. Another hypothesis could be that simulated approximating experiences are (or are not) as effective as naturally-occurring approximating experiences in facilitating interracial interaction or

prejudice reduction. It could be proposed that those who are exposed to approximating

experiences due to their membership in an oppressed social group, aside from race, are

more likely to engage in interracial dialogue on race (e.g., women or gays and lesbians,

or persons who are disabled). Another hypothesis could be constructed regarding the

apparent parallels between participants in interracial dialogue on race and anti-racists, a

connection that was made in Chapter I, briefly discussed in Chapter II, and that is

revisited and summarized here.

Participants in interracial dialogue and anti-racists

My conceptual assumption that people who participate in interracial dialogue could be

considered anti-racist was discussed in Chapter I. Review of the literature on the

characteristics of anti-racists was reviewed in Chapter II. The assumption that people

who engage in interracial dialogue display a substantial degree of racial tolerance,

diversity competence, and a relatively low degree of racial prejudice, as evidenced by

their demonstrated interest in race relations and voluntary participation in cross-racial

interaction seems to have been supported by the findings here. O'Brien's (1999)

definition of an anti-racist is someone who "actively works against racism in her or his

daily life" (p. 412). In addition, this conceptual assumption was borne out through the

parallels between the themes that emerged through this study and the literature on anti-

racist characteristics that informed this inquiry. In relation to White anti-racists, O'Brien

specifically discussed approximating experiences as avenues toward empathy

development, taking responsibility for racism through self-examination, willingness to

take risks (even lose friends), and giving significant thought to their own racial identity.

All of these characteristics of anti-racists detailed by O'Brien have parallels in the themes that were discovered in this study, such as high levels of empathy, willingness to self-examine, willingness to be vulnerable, and advanced stages of racial identity. Additionally, characteristics of those individuals described by D'Andrea and Daniels (1999) as operating from a principled activistic disposition regarding racism displayed behaviors and held convictions that were anti-racist according to O'Brien's definition. Similarities also exist then in the comparison of D'Andrea and Daniel's group with the participants in interracial dialogue in this study, such as a high degree of empathy toward oppressed groups, and a sense of morality and spirituality that perceived human emotion as universal.

These connections therefore act as support to the conceptual assumption that those who would participate in interracial dialogue may be considered anti-racist. It was my impression that all of the people who participated in this study conceived of themselves as anti-racists. Implied in each of the interviews that I conducted was the idea that participation in the study circle was just a part of their anti-racism efforts.

This view of interracial dialogue as an anti-racism effort has further implications for the usefulness of this study. O'Brien (1999) clarified that many White people who see themselves as anti-racists retain racial prejudices, contribute to the perpetuation of racism, and, in fact, "stand back and passively observe when racism goes on in their midst. These are people who have learned the socially desirable or so-called politically correct responses to…surveys but do little or nothing to interrogate their own racism and

that of those around them" (p. 412). It is with this population of people that interracial

dialogue has the potential to be used as a tool for prejudice reduction. Because of the

pervasiveness of the cultural reluctance described throughout this study and due to a

myriad of other factors, people who see themselves as anti-racist may not perceive that

they encounter opportunities to take action on racism. Planned interracial dialogues, such

as the study circles used by the YWCA, could be positioned by educational and religious

institutions, or by workplaces as forums for those who identify as anti-racists to have an

outlet for their views and to take action on their beliefs. Structured interracial dialogue

has the potential to function as a step for individuals toward the journey of becoming

anti-racist in behavior as well as intention. Because of the parallel characteristics

between participants in interracial dialogue and anti-racists, this study contributes to and

supports existing literature on anti-racists, their characterization, how they are defined,

and how they develop. Hypotheses that explore this relationship further through the

collection of empirical data would contribute to the discovery of knowledge around this

connection.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

The exploration of this topic was purposefully broad in scope and, therefore,

could not examine details or provide as much depth as many of the sub-topics and themes

may warrant. There are several areas of relevance to the research question that may

prove worthy of deeper investigation.

The fact that there were so many clear links among the themes that emerged in

this investigation was intriguing and may suggest ideas for the construction of a model

that would clarify these interrelationships. Individually, any one of the themes that became apparent through this inquiry would be worthy of deeper scrutiny for its connection to race relations in general. For instance, a more in-depth investigation of the role of empathy in both interracial dialogue and the broader question of diversity competence is recommended. There is also more to be said about cross-cultural contact and empathy being used as tools to reduce *intergroup anxiety* (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, 1999), a concept discussed in Chapter II, which have been unexplored as an implication here. In addition, as discussed earlier, there seems to be only a limited amount of empirical information on the qualities and characteristics of anti-racists. In that the participants in this study would be considered anti-racists, this dissertation may contribute to that body of knowledge. However, more in depth study in future research is recommended.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

To conclude this work, the essential issue becomes, *What does this work contribute to the discourse on interracial dialogue*? Further, *What can be extrapolated from this work that is useful and practical to educators and business leaders. What can be done to get us to sit down and talk about race and what are the benefits of doing so?*

First and foremost, this inquiry presents substantial support for the importance and significance of interracial dialogue on race. As a starting point, this study is a distillation of the scholarship on the value of interracial dialogue and its centrality to racial healing in the United States. This work can be viewed as contributing to the

professional and public discourses on race relations and as a mechanism for increased awareness of the role of interracial dialogue.

This inquiry also introduced the *race obsession-avoidance paradox* as a model for understanding the paralysis that grips the United States in a metaphorical stalemate with regard to race relations. The findings of this study offer avenues for exploration and elaboration on ways to begin to unfreeze the paralysis. Primarily, the articulation and discussion of the obsession-avoidance paradox may succeed in bringing the problem to the collective consciousness, and particularly to the professional and public discourses on race relations. Further, as this study has illuminated the critical nature of interracial dialogue on race it has then highlighted the need to address the national paralysis in order for the benefits of increased dialogue to be realized. The *race obsession-avoidance paradox* is a paradigm that is supported by the existing literature on race relations but has not heretofore been expressly defined in the literature on race. It is offered here as a new and valid lens through which race relations in the United States can be considered.

Above and beyond breaking the silence that has characterized interracial dialogue on race, this inquiry specifically explored the nuances of that silence in order to better understand the problems that promulgate the paralysis. The examination of cognitive dissonance and of intergroup anxiety that block interracial interaction offer specific constructs which can be used to analyze the silence and therefore also offer ways of opening up avenues for increased dialogue. The discussion of Schon's (1987) worldmaking or intense self-reflection offers a model for processing cognitive dissonance, which was presented one of the cognitive obstacles to interracial dialogue.

Ridley et al. (1994) also emphasized intentional self-reflection as a method to reduce prejudice.

Cognitive dissonance and intergroup anxiety theories can be used in and of themselves as teaching tools, as awareness of their existence has been known to alleviate defensiveness and resistance to learning about race and racism. Glauser (1999) said that, "race is a difficult topic that people struggle to talk about with one another. Sometimes it is difficult to find the right words to communicate thoughts and feelings about race because people are worried that their words might offend or that they might appear narrow" (p. 64). The acknowledgement that it is a 'normal' impulse to struggle with processing new information and to be anxious around strangers can normalize the discomfort experienced by many individuals when racism is discussed and can lead to more willingness to engage in dialogue.

> Croteau (1999) writes that 'those of us who recognized racism in the world and wanted to abandon it all shared a similar struggle with shame, guilt, wanting to be seen as nonracist, fear of "screwing up," and defensiveness about being told we have acted in a racist manner' (p. 31) (as cited in Glauser, 1999, p. 64).

Finding ways of discussing and validating these types of emotional experiences for White people is a powerful process that promotes dialogue. Yalom (1995) said that, "disconfirmation of a [person's] feelings of uniqueness is a powerful source of relief. After hearing other members disclose concerns similar to their own, [individuals] report feeling more in touch with the world and describe the process as a 'welcome to the human race' experience" (p. 6). It is notable, given this, that in this study, participants

seemed to possess an understanding of human emotion as universal and seemed to have a sense of compassion toward the human race. To introduce a discussion of common discomforts around the topic of racism, to reduce the embarrassment and the alienation that fear and shame breed, allows the awkward silence to be broken. Illumination of the universality of such experiences can lead to deeper understanding of the self and others and can lubricant discussion of race and racism. In these ways, this dissertation offers the building blocks for specific strategies that can be used by educators, trainers, and business leaders to dismantle such obstacles to interracial dialogue on race.

Another significant application of this dissertation may be made in the business world as corporations struggle to redefine their philosophies and priorities. With renewed attention to integrity and business ethics in the wake of high profile corporate scandals, business leaders and trainers may be interested in developing training that emphasizes key skills that simultaneously maximize profits as well as moral consciousness. Governmental entities that are increasingly charged with oversight of change efforts toward better business practices may take note of the findings suggested here, that employee competency and productivity are enhanced by the acquisition of the particular set of skills that seem to facilitate interracial dialogue. Namely intentional self-reflection on cross-cultural experience, empathy development, racial identity development and moral development are all factors that contribute to willingness to participate in interracial dialogue and they simultaneously develop work competencies that are considered by the business world to be superior. In other words, extrapolations from this data would indicate that *anti-racism is economically advantageous*.

Inc. magazine recently ran a story on the Inn at Little Washington, considered America's poshest inn. "The Washington, Virginia hotel and restaurant has won nearly every honor in its field. Most recently, Zagat's 2003 hotel survey ranking the inn's 100-seat dining room as America's best" (p. 36). The Inn's secret to success according to its founder and chef is to

> measure the customer's mood. People, O'Connell believes, aren't impressed by what you know or what you can offer until they see that you care. And you can't possible care in any meaningful way unless you have some insight into what people are feeling and why. Enter the 'mood rating.' When a new party arrives in the dining room, the captain assigns it a number that assesses the guests' apparent state of mind (from 1 to 10, with 7 or below indicating displeasure or unhappiness). The mood rating is typed into a computer, written on the dinner order, and placed on a spool in the kitchen where the entire staff can see and react accordingly. Whatever the circumstances, O'Connell's goal is crystal clear: 'No one should leave here below a 9' (Raz, 2003, p. 36).

The word from the world of work is that understanding others is important. It is important because it is not only an admirable quality, but because it is profitable. Value of the same type of empathy skills is highlighted in the latest business models of success. The following language was used when interviewing top salespeople at successful companies: "listening… develop trust… focus on relationships… responsiveness… understand the problems of the customer… find out what their vision is… focus on the customer" (Penttila, 2003, p. 58-61). In the world of retail marketing, Goodgold (2003)

highlighted the power of name brand development in her article on successful retailers. She suggested that, "the ultimate goal of branding is to create an emotional relationship with your customers" (p. 64). Emotional relationship with a customer can only be created by intuiting that customers needs, desires, and emotions—in other words, *empathizing* with the customer.

Goleman (1997) also elaborated on emotional intelligence skills that are well-developed in successful business leaders. The congruence between Goleman's model and the findings of this study are clear. The first skill that he defined as important to success is self-awareness, a competency that is facilitated by self-reflection, one of the themes that may facilitate interracial dialogue on race. In addition, Goleman listed empathy as another major set of skills that includes, "understanding others…developing others…service orientation… leveraging diversity…[and] political awareness" (p. 27). The themes of both highly developed empathy and social interest that emerged through this study are paralleled in Goleman's description of successful business leaders. It is noteworthy also that Goleman connected 'leveraging diversity' to these skills.

The findings from this study could be proposed as a model for not only the facilitation of interracial dialogue, but, in doing so, to simultaneously increase competence and the development of potential for success in employees. Basically, these findings suggest that efforts to facilitate interracial dialogue would simultaneously increase diversity competence and workplace competence in general.

Similarly in the world of education, it seems useful in these concluding comments to reflect back to the discussion in Chapter II that most training programs are inadequate

when it comes to addressing race and racism, particularly because most educators are not prepared themselves to facilitate interaction on racism. Tomlinson-Clarke and Wang (1999) noted that, "unfortunately, little research and few related multicultural training models exist that focus specifically on the importance of exploring one's own race, issues of racism, and racial identity development among White and visible racial-ethnic minority counselors" (p. 159).

The results of this study suggest that this gap in educational focus, where it exists, is delinquent because it fails to prepare educators and therapists to be competent professionals. Self-reflection and exploration of racial identity issues are exactly what educators need to be prepared to facilitate in order to encourage interracial skills. This inquiry provides fundamental principles that can be used in order to construct training that adequately prepares professionals for such critical work. Again, discussion of the *race obsession-avoidance paradox* allows learners to see that their feelings of incompetence regarding racial dialogue are not solely products of their own failings as much as products of their cultural experience. This understanding serves to break down the barriers to interaction. Yalom (1995) said that, "the most common secret is a deep conviction of inadequacy—a feeling that one is basically incompetent, that one glides through life on a sleek intellectual bluff" (p. 7). Feelings of incompetence regarding interracial dialogue on race amount to a culture-wide inferiority complex that Americans choose to avoid rather than confront. As Yalom suggested, to have those feelings acknowledged, shared, and validated may serve to break down the resistance to dealing with them.

Finally, the most fundamental contribution of this dissertation is to provide a method by which White people and people of color can, together, 'sit at the table'. The naming and exposure of the *race obsession-avoidance paradox* that has essentially stifled conversation can be viewed as an act of liberation. If interracial dialogue on race is to occur and racial healing is to take place, methods such as those themes explored here help all parties get to the summit. The factors that contribute to the propensity for meaningful dialogue among races are essentially tools of empowerment that create a road-map to racial healing.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This dissertation asked the question, "what can be learned about factors that contribute to the self-selection of participants in interracial dialogue on race relations?" This main inquiry was set in the socio-cultural context of race relations in the United States. Chapter I asserted that the race obsession-avoidance paradox accurately describes both historical and current race relations. Chapter II reviewed public and professional discourses on the manifestations or modern racism and the factors, therefore,that may encourage or discourage interracial dialogue on race. Chapter III described the methodology used in this study as a participatory, naturalistic epistemologically oriented case study. It is also hermeneutic, in that it attached meaning to the phenomenon that it examined.

The findings were reviewed in Chapter IV and themes and patterns that emerged during data collection were presented and interpreted. Factors such as empathy, contact with people of different races, role models, tendency to self-reflect, advanced levels of

racial identity development and moral development among others were found to be contributing factors to interracial dialogue for the participants in this study. Chapter V presented implications for educators and counselors/psychologists that were extrapolated from the emergent themes and theoretical constructs that supported the findings. Limitations of the study were discussed and recommendations were made for future inquiry in this area. Suggestions for possible hypotheses generated from this work were offered and conclusions that highlight how this inquiry contributes to the public and professional discourses on race relations were explored.

References

Abate, F.R. (1997). The Oxford desk dictionary and thesaurus. (American edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

Aboud, F. E. & Fenwick, V. (1999). Exploring and evaluating school-based interventions to reduce prejudice. Journal of Social Issues, 55 (4), 767-786.

Adler, A. (1927). Understanding human nature. (W.B. Wolfe, Trans.). New York: Greenberg Corporation.

Adler, A. (1964). Social interest: A challenge to mankind. (J. Linton & R. Vaughan, Trans.). New York: Capricorn Books.

Akom, A.A. (2000). The house that race built: Some observations on the use of the word nigga, popular culture, and urban adolescent behavior. In L. Weis & M. Fine (eds.) Construction sites: Excavating race, class, and gender among urban youth. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ansbacher, H.L, & Ansbacher, R.R. (1956). (Eds. & annotations). The individual psychology of Alfred Adler: A systematic presentation in selections from his writings. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Arredondo, P. (1999). Multicultural counseling competencies as tools to address oppression and racism. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 102-108.

Bacon, T., Schwartz, J. & Rothfarb, S. (1991). Perceptions of racial interactions in the school: The racial climate survey (Report No. UD 028 828). Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 348 456).

Bain, B. (2000). Walking while Black: The Bill of Rights for Black men. The Village Voice, 45 (17), p. 43-45.

Bar-On, R. (1997). *EQ-i User's Manual*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems.

Barrett, K. A. (1995). An examination of the relationship between moral development and modern prejudice (Doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International-A, 57/06, 2331.

Beebe, J. (1995). The principles of rapid appraisal. The Participation Forum Workshop Notes, 1. The United States Agency for International Development.

Bell, D. (1994). Risks, rewards, and reaffirmation. In Confronting authority: Reflections of an ardent protester. (pp. 145-165). Boston: Beacon Press.

Bernard, J. M. , & Goodyear, R. K. (1998). Fundamentals of clinical supervision. (2nd ed.) . Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bigler, R. S. (1999). The use of multicultural curricula and materials to counter racism in children. Journal of Social Issues, 55 (4), 687-705.

Blauner, B. (1999). Talking past each other: Black and White languages of race. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence (pp. 30-40). (2nd ed.) Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Bowser, B. P. & Hunt, R G. (1996). Impacts of racism on White Americans. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Briggs, H. E. (2001). Cultural diversity: A latter day Trojan horse. Psychology and Education, 38 (1), 3-11.

Briggs, H.E. & Paulson, R.I. (1996). Racism. In M.A. Mattaini and B.A. Thyer (Eds.) Finding solutions to social problems: Behavioral strategies for change. (pp. 147-177). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

The Business Women's Network. (2002). (3rd ed.). Women and Diversity, WOW! Facts 2002. Washington, D.C.: The Business Women's Network.

Campbell, J. & Salagrama, V. (2000, June). New approaches to participation in fisheries research. Discussion document commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations & Support Unit for Fisheries and Aquatic Research.

Canadian International Development Agency. (1997). Guide to gender-sensitive indicators. Hull, Quebec: Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Cargan, L. & Ballantine, J.H. (1994). Sociological footprints: Introductory readings in sociology. (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Carnevale, A.P. (1991). America and the new economy. Washington, DC: American Society for Training and Development and U.S. Department of Labor; Employment and Training Administration.

Carnevale, A.P., Gainer, L.J., Meltzer, A.S. (1988). Workplace basics: The skills employers want. Washington, DC: The American Society for Training and Development and U.S. Department of Labor; Employment and Training Administration.

Carnevale, A.P., Porro, J.D. (1994). Quality education: School reform for the new American economy. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education; Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Carnevale, A.P., & Stone, S.C. (1995). Diversity and the new economy. In A.P. Stone and S.C. Carnevale The American mosaic: An in-depth report on the future of diversity at work (pp. 47-62). New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Cheatham, H.E. (1999). Where do we go from here? Some observations and recommendations for multicultural educators. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training (pp. 171-179).   Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Ciarrochi, J., Forgas, J. P, & Mayer, J. D. (2001). Emotional intelligence in everyday life: A scientific inquiry. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis, Psychology Press.

Clauss, C.S. (1999). Degrees of distance: The relationship between White racial identity and social distance phenomena in American society (Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1999). Dissertation Abstracts International- DAI-B 60/01, 409, (University Microfilms No. 9916865)

Cohen, M.N. (1998). Transforming the culture of intolerance. In Culture of Intolerance: Chauvinism, class, and racism in the United States (pp. 293-312). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Constantine, M.G. (1999). Racism's impact on counselors' professional and personal lives: A response to the personal narratives on racism. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 68-72.

Constantine, M. G., & Gainor, K. A. (2001). Emotional intelligence and empathy: Their relation to multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness. Professional School Counseling, 5 (2), 131-137.

Constantine, M.G., & Ladany, N. (2000). Self-report multicultural counseling competency scales: Their relation to social desirability attitudes and multicultural case conceptualization ability. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 47 (2), 155-164.

Consumer Reports. (1995). How is your doctor treating you?, February, 60, 81-88.

Correspondents of The New York Times. (2001). How race is lived in America. Henry Holt and Company: New York.

Corsini, R.J. & Wedding, D. (Eds.). (1995). Current Psychotherapies (5th ed.). Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc.

Cose, E. (1994). The rage of a privileged class. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Cowart, C.V. (2002,Fall). Voices from Ground Zero. Spirituality & Health, 5 (3), 36-45).

Creating a violence-free company culture. (1995). Nation's Business, 83, February, 22

Croteau, J. M. (1999). One struggle through individualism: Toward an antiracist White racial identity. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 30-32.

Dalton, H. L. (1995). Racial healing: Confronting the fear between Blacks & Whites. New York: Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing Group.

D'Andrea, M. & Daniels, J. (1991). Exploring the different levels of multicultural counseling training in counselor education. Journal of Counseling and Development, 70, 78-85.

D'Andrea M. & Daniels, J. (1999a). Building on our knowledge of racism, mental health, and mental health practice. The Counseling Psychologist, 27 (2), 224-238.

D'Andrea, M. & Daniels, J. (1999b). Exploring the psychology of white racism through naturalistic inquiry. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 93-101.

D'Andrea M. & Daniels, J. (1999c). Understanding the different psychological dispositions of White racism: A comprehensive model for counselor educators and practitioners. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training (pp. 59-87).   Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

D'Andrea, M. & Daniels, J., & Heck, R. (1991). Evaluating the impact of multicultural counseling training. Journal of Counseling and Development, 70, 143-150.

Daniel, G. R. (2002). More than black?: Multiracial identity and the new racial order. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

DeMott, B. (1997) Put on a happy face. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America. (pp. 96-103). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Diaz-Lazaro, C. M. & Cohen, B.B. (2001). Cross-cultural contact in counseling training. Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 29, 41-56.

Dilenschneider, R.L., (February, 27, 1996). Social IQ and MBAs: Recognizing the importance of communication. Fordham University's Graduate School of Business, New York: Vital speeches of the day.

Driscoll, M. P. (1994). Constructivism. In M. P. Driscoll, <u>Psychology of learning for instruction</u>. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

D'Souza, D. (1999). Rethinking racism. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) <u>Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence</u> (2nd ed.) (pp. 429-435). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Duan, C. & Roehlke, H. (2001). A descriptive "snapshot" of cross-racial supervision in university counseling center internships. <u>Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29</u>, 131-146.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1901). The Freedmen's Bureau. <u>*Atlantic Monthly,* 87</u>, 354-365.

Episcopal Divinity Church Occasional Papers (1998, May). <u>Modern racism: New melody for the same old tunes </u>(No. 2). Cambridge, MA: Batts, V.

Farkas, S., Johnson, J., Duffett, A. & Collins, K. (2002). <u>Aggravating circumstances: A status report on rudeness in America</u>. NY: Public Agenda.

Feagin, J. R. (2000). The continuing significance of race: Antiblack discrimination in public places. In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfeld, R. Castaneda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, X. Zuniga. (eds.) <u>Readings for diversity and social justice</u>. (pp. 83-93). New York: Routledge.

Feagin, J.R., & Vera, H. (1995). White racism: The basics. New York: Routledge.

Ferrante, J. & Brown, P. (1999). Classifying people by race. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence. (2nd ed.). (pp. 14-23). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Festinger, Leon. (1957). Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Finlay, K. A. , & Stephan, W. G. (2000). Improving intergroup relations: The effects of empathy on racial attitudes. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30 (8), 1720-1737.

Flavin-McDonald, C., McCoy, M.L. (1997). Facing the challenge of racism and race relations: Democratic dialogue and action for stronger communities. Pomfret, CT: Topsfield Foundation, Inc.

Forbes, J. D. (1997). The use of racial and ethnic terms in America: Management by manipulation. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America. (pp. 2-19). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Gallagher, C.A. (1997). White reconstruction in the university. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America (pp. 104-117). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Gardner, J. (2003, June 5). Prospective firefighters get peek at life at station house. Erie Times-News, p A1.

Gill, C. (2003, summer). Created Equal? Pitt Magazine, 14-18.

Glauser, A.S. (1999). Legacies of racism. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 62-67.

The Globalist. (2002). Washington, D.C.: TransAtlantic Futures, Inc..

Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ. New York: Bantam Books.

Goleman, D. (1998). Working with emotional intelligence. New York: Bantam Books.

Goodgold, E. (2003, September). Talking shop. Entrepreneur, 62-66.

Goodman, D.J. (2000). Promoting diversity and social justice: Educating people from privileged groups. Sage.

Griffin, E. (1997). Cognitive dissonance theory of Leon Festinger. In E. Griffin, A first look at communication theory. (3rd ed.). (pp. 209-221). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Grossarth-Maticek, R. G., Eysenck, H. J., & Vetter, H. (1989). The causes and cures of prejudice: An empirical study of the frustration-aggression hypothesis. Personality and Individual Differences, 10 (5), 547-558.

Gump, L.S., Baker, R.C., & Roll, S. (2000). The moral justification scale: Reliability and validity of a new measure of care and justice orientations. Adolescence, 35 (137), 67-76.

Guralnik, D.B. & Friend, J.H. (1962). Webster's new world dictionary of the American language. (College edition). Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company.

Guttman, M. (1995). Serving customers and the staff. U.S. News & World Report, 119, (November 27), 75.

Hacker, A. (1995). Two Nations: Black and White, separate, hostile, and unequal. New York: Ballantine Books.

Haney Lopez, I. F. (1996). White by law: The legal construction of race. New York: New York University Press.

Healey, J. F. (1997). Race, ethnicity, and gender in the United States: Inequality, group conflict, and power. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Helms, J.E. (1990). Black and White racial identity: Theory, research, and practice. New York: Greenwood Press.

Helms, J.E. (1994). How multiculturalism obscures racial factors in the therapy process: Comment on Ridley et al. (1994), Sodowsky et al. (1994), Ottavi et al. (1994), and Thompson, et al. (1994). Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41 (2), 162-165.

Helms, J.E., Malone, L.T.S., Henze, K., Satiani, A., Perry, J., & Warren, A. (2003). First annual diversity challenge: "How to survive teaching courses on race and culture". Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 31, 3-11.

Hightower, E. (1997). Psychological characteristics of subtle and blatant racists as compared to tolerant individuals. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 53 (4), 369-374.

Hird, J. S., Cavalieri, C. E., Dulko, J. P., Felice, A.A.D., & Ho, T.A. (2001). Visions and realities: Supervisee perspectives of multicultural supervision. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29, 114-129.

Hodgkinson, H. (1997). What should we call people?: Race, class, and the census for 2000. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America. (pp.30-38).   Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Hoffman, M. L. (1993). Empathy, social cognition, and moral education. In A. Garrod (ed.). Approaches to moral development: New research and emerging themes. (pp. 157-179). New York: Teachers College Press.

Houser, M. (2002, July 22). Zappala may review jury racial imbalance: Whites more likely to be impaneled. Pittsburgh Tribune Review, pp. A1, A5.

Hudson, J. B., & Hines-Hudson, B. M. (1999). A study of the contemporary racial attitudes of Whites and African-Americans. The Western Journal of Black Studies, 23 (1), 22-34.

Irving, J. A. , & Williams, D. I. (1995). Critical thinking and reflective practice in counselling. British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 23 (1), 107-114.

Jensen, D. (2000, October). Crimes of punishment. The Sun, 4-13.

Johnson, P.C. (1999). Reflections on critical White(ness) studies. In T. K. Nakayama & J.N. Martin Whiteness: The communication of social identity. (pp. 1-9). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Kane, E. (1997). Participatory rural appraisal for educational research: Helping to see the 'invisible'. Irish Journal of Anthropology, 2, 69-85.

Kiselica, M. S. (ed.). (1999). Reducing prejudice: The role of the empathic-confrontive instructor. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during

multicultural training (pp. 137-154). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling

Association.

Kitano, H. H. L. (1997). Race Relations. (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New

Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Kivel, P. (1996). Uprooting racism: How White people can work for racial

justice. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers.

Kohlberg, L. (1978). The cognitive –developmental approach to moral education.

In P. Scharf (ed.) Readings in moral education. (pp. 36-51). Minneapolis, MN: Winston

Press.

Kolb, D. A., Rubin, I. M., & McIntyre, J.M. (1974). Organizational psychology:

A book of readings (2nd ed.) . Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Kolb, D. A., Rubin, I. M., & McIntyre, J.M. (1974). Organizational psychology:

A book of readings (2nd ed.) . Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M.A. (2000). Focus groups: A practical guide for

applied research. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

LaFromboise, T.D., Coleman, H.L.K., & Hernandez, A. (1991). Development

and factor structure of the cross-cultural counseling inventory-revised. Professional

psychology: Research and practice, 22 (5), 380-388.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA:

Sage Publishing.

Locke, D. C. & Faubert, M. (1999). Innovative pedagogy for critical

consciousness in counselor education. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and

racism during multicultural training (pp. 43-59). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Locke D. C. & Kiselica, M. S. (1999). Pedogogy of possibilities: Teaching about racism in multicultural counseling courses. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 80-86.

Lutz, C. A. (1988). Unnatural emotions: Everyday sentiments on a Micronesian atoll and their challenge to Western theory. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Manese, J. E., Wu, J. T., & Nepomuceno, C. A. (2001). The effect of training on multicultural counseling competencies: An exploratory study over a ten-year period. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29, 31-40.

Marcus-Newhall, A., & Heindl, T. R. (1998). Coping with interracial stress in ethnically diverse classrooms: How important are Allport's contact conditions? Journal of Social Issues, 54 (4), 813-830.

Martin, J.N., Krizek, R.L, Nakayama, T.L, Bradford, L. (1999). What do White people want to be called?: A study of self-labels for White Americans. In T. K. Nakayama & J.N. Martin Whiteness: The communication of social identity. (pp. 27-50). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

McFalls, E.L., & Cobb-Roberts, D. (2001). Reducing resistance to diversity through cognitive dissonance instruction: Implications for teacher education. Journal of Teacher Education, 52 (2), 164-172.

McRae, M. B. , & Johnson, S. D. (1991). Toward training for competence in multicultural counselor education. Journal of Counseling & Development, 70, 131-135.

Meacham, J. (2000) The new face of race. In <u>Newsweek</u> Special Report, Redefining race in America (September 18), 38-51.

Merriam, S. B. (2001). <u>Qualitative research and case study applications in education</u>. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Midgette, T. E. & Meggert, S. S. (1991). Multicultural counseling instruction: A challenge for faculties in the 21st century<u>. Journal of Counseling and Development, 70,</u> 136-141.

Miller, G. (Ed.). (2002, Winter). <u>ACES Spectrum</u>. (Available from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, 113 Walnut Court, Columbia, SC 29212).

Mio, J. S. (1989). Experiential involvement as an adjunct to teaching cultural sensitivity. <u>Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 17</u>, 38-46.

Mobley, M. & Cheatham, H. (1999). R.A.C.E.---Racial Affirmation and Counselor Education. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) <u>Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training</u>. (pp. 89-105). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Morelli, P. T. & Spencer, M.S. (2000). Use and support of multicultural and antiracist education: Research-informed interdisciplinary social work practice. <u>Social Work, 45 </u>(2), 166-175.

<u>Nation's Business</u>. (1995). Creating a violence-free company culture. February, 83, 22.

Nelson, M. L., & Neufeldt, S. A. (1998). The pedagogy of counseling: A critical examination <u>Counselor Education and Supervision, 38,</u> (2), 70-88.

Neubeck, K. J., & Cazenave, N. A. (2001). Welfare racism: Playing the race card against America's poor. New York: Routledge.

Neville, H. A., & Mobley, M. (2001). Social identities in contexts: An ecological model of multicultural counseling psychology processes. The Counseling Psychologist, 29 (4), 471-486.

Nicholson, P.Y. (1999). Who do we think we are?: Race and nation in the modern world. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Nies, J. (1996). Native American history: A chronology of a cultures' vast achievements and their links to world events. New York: Ballantine Books.

O'Brien, E. (1999). Privileged polemics: White anti-racist activists. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence. (2nd ed.) (pp. 411-425). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Ottavi, T.M., Pope-Davis, D.B., & Dings, J.G. (1994). Relationship between White racial identity attitudes and self-reported multicultural counseling competencies. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41 (2), 149-154.

Owens, T. K. (1998). Effects of fear and bias perceptions on interracial cooperation in young males. (Doctoral dissertation, Hofstra University, 1998). Dissertation Abstracts International, AAT 9833544.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). The Courage to Teach. San-Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

The Participation Forum Workshop Notes, 14. The United States Agency for International Development.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pederson, P.B. (1991). Introduction to the special issue on multiculturalism as a fourth force in counseling. Journal of Counseling and Development, 70, 4.

Pederson, P.B. (1999). Confronting racism through increased awareness, knowledge, and skill as a culture-centered primary prevention strategy. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Penrice, D. (1995). The changing organization: Why do managers derail? Harvard Business Review, 73 (May/June), 10-11.

Penttila, C. (2003, August). The art of the sale. Entrepreneur, 58-61.

Performance monitoring and evaluation tips. (1996). Center for Development Information and Evaluation. The United States Agency for International Development.

Pettigrew, T.F. (1996). Preface. (pp. ix-xii). In B. P. Bowser & R.G. Hunt. Impacts of racism on White Americans. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Pettigrew, T.F. (2003). A legal view of the most inflammatory word in American race relations. American Journal of Psychology, 116 (1), 163-165.

Phillip, M.C. (1995). Yesterday once more: African-Americans wonder if new era heralds return of Jim Crow era. Black Issues in Higher Education, 12 (11), 10-14.

Pincus, F. L. (1999a). From individual to structural discrimination. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) <u>Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence</u>. (pp. 120-124). (2nd ed.) Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Pincus, F.L. (1999b). The case for affirmative action. In F.L. Pincus & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.) <u>Race and ethnic conflict: Contending views on prejudice, discrimination, and ethnoviolence</u>. (2nd ed.) (pp. 205-221). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Pine, G.J., Hilliard III, A.G. (1990). Rx for racism: Imperatives for America's schools. <u>Phi Delta Kappan,</u> (April), 593-600.

Planning Job Choices, 2001. (2000). Employers rate new-hire skills. <u>Job Outlook, 2000,</u> National Association of Colleges and Employers, 20-21.

Pomice, E. (1995). Curing the dysfunctional manager. <u>Working Woman, 20,</u> February, 18-20.

Ponterotto, J. G. (1991). The nature of prejudice revisited: Implications of counseling intervention. <u>Journal of Counseling & Development, 70</u>, 216-224.

Powell, T. (1992). <u>The persistence of racism in America</u>. New York: University Press of America.

The Race Question. (1996, April 14,). <u>Pittsburgh Post Gazette</u>, p. 24.

Ramsey, M. (1999). How to create a climate for cultural diversity appreciation within the classroom. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) <u>Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training</u>. (pp. 25-42). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Raz, T. (2003, July). A recipe for perfection. <u>Inc.</u>, 36-38.

Reynolds, A.L. (1999). Challenging our profession, challenging ourselves: Further reflections on multicultural counseling and training. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training (pp. 181-198). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Ridley, C.R. (1995). Overcoming unintentional racism in counseling and therapy: A practitioner's guide to intentional intervention. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Ridley, C. R. , Mendoza, D. W. , Kanitz, B. E. , Angermeier, L. , & Zenk, R. (1994). Cultural sensitivity in multicultural counseling: A perceptual schema model. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41, 125-136.

Robinson, R. (2000). The debt: What America owes to blacks. New York: Penguin Books.

Robinson, T.L. (1999). The intersections of dominant discourses across race, gender, and other identities. Journal of Counseling & Development, 77 (1), 73-79.

Ropers, R.H. & Pence, D.J. (1995). American prejudice: With liberty and justice for some. New York: Plenum Press.

Rosenthal, H. (1993). Encyclopedia of counseling. Levittown, PA: Accelerated Development.

Rothschild, T. (2003). "Talking Race" in the college classroom: The role of social structures and social factors in race pedagogy. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 31, 31-38.

Rubin, L. B. (1994). Families on the fault line: America's working class speaks about the family, the economy, race, and ethnicity. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Rutstein, P. (1997). RACISM: Unraveling the fear. The Global Classroom: Washington, DC.

Salzman, M. & D'Andrea, M. (2001). Assessing the impact of a prejudice prevention project. Journal of Counseling & Development, 79, 341-346.

Schackner, B. (2002, December 5). "Shocked and horrified": Black professor at University of Pittsburgh finds noose on desk in lecture room. Pittsburgh Post Gazette, pp. D1-2.

Schon, D.A. (1987). Educating the reflective practitioner. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schwarz, B. (1997). The diversity myth: America's leading export. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America (pp. 50-60). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Scott, O. (1997). Introduction. In O. Scott (ed.) Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and possibilities in multicultural America (pp. v-xi). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Seidman, I. (1998). Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences. (2nd ed.). New York: Teacher's College Press.

Shipler, D.K. (1997). A country of strangers: Blacks and Whites in America. NY: Vintage Books.

Skerry, P. (2000). Counting on the census?: Race, group identity, and the evasion of politics. Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution.

Skovholt, T. M. , & Ronnestad, M. H. (1992). Themes in therapist and counselor development. Journal of Counseling & Development, 70, 505-515.

Slavin, R. E. & Cooper, R. (1999). Improving intergroup relations: Lessons learned form cooperative learning programs. Journal of Social Issues, 55 (4), 647-663.

Socha, T. J. & Diggs, R. C. (ed.) (1999). Communication, race and family: Exploring communication in Black, White and Biracial families. Mahwah, NJ.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Steele, C.M. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance. American Psychologist, 52 (6), 613-629.

Steenbarger, B. N. (1991). All the world is not a stage: Emerging contextualist themes in counseling and development. Journal of Counseling & Development, 70, 288-296.

Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (1985). Intergroup anxiety. Journal of Social Issues, 41 (3), 157-175.

Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (2001). Improving intergroup relations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Sternberg, J. A. (1997). Can we talk about race? The racial discourse of activists in a racially 'integrated' neighborhood. Doctoral dissertation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1996). Dissertation Abstracts International, 57, (11-B): 7238. (University Microfilms No. AAM9711137).

Sue, D. W. (1991). A model for cultural diversity training. <u>Journal of Counseling</u> <u>& Development, 70</u>, 99-105.

Sue, D.W., Carter, R.T., Casas, J. M., Fouad, N.A., Ivey, A.E., Jensen, M., LaFromboise, T., Manese, J.E., Ponterotto, J. G., Vazquez-Nutall, E. (1998). <u>Multicultural counseling competencies: Individual and organizational development</u>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Sweetser, A.T. (1995). What is rapid appraisal? <u>The Participation Forum</u> <u>Workshop Notes, 1</u>. The United States Agency for International Development.

Tatum, B.D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development theory in the classroom. <u>Harvard Educational Review, 62</u> (4), 1-24.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). <u>Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria</u>? New York: Basic Books.

Taylor, J. (1992). <u>Paved with good intentions: The failure of race relations in</u> <u>contemporary America</u>. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc.

Terkel, S. (1992). <u>RACE; How Blacks and Whites think and feel about the</u> <u>American obsession.</u> New York: Anchor Books.

Thomas, D.A. & Ely, R.J. (1996). Making differences matter: A new paradigm for managing diversity. <u>Harvard Business Review</u>, Sept./Oct.

Thompson, C. (2000). White men and the denial of racism. In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfeld, R. Castaneda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, X. Zuniga. (eds.) <u>Readings for</u> <u>diversity and social justice</u>. (pp. 104-109). New York: Routledge.

Thompson, C. E., & Carter, R. T. (1997). Racial identity theory: Applications to individual, group and organizational interventions. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Thompson, C.E. & Neville, H.A. (1999). Racism, mental health, and mental health practice. The Counseling Psychologist, 27 (2), 155-223.

Tocqueville, Alexis de (1963). Democracy in America. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Tomlinson-Clarke, S., & Wang, V.O. (1999). A paradigm for racial-cultural training in the development of counselor cultural competencies. In M. S. Kiselica (ed.) Confronting prejudice and racism during multicultural training (pp. 155-167). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Torbert, W. R. (1972). Learning from experience: Toward consciousness. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tuch, S. A., Sigelman, L., & MacDonald, J. A. (1999). The polls-trends: Race relations and American youth, 1976-1995. Public Opinion Quarterly, 63, 109-148.

Van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Von Daehne, N. (1994). Hiring top performers. Success, 41 (May), 34-35.

Walter, G. A., & Marks, S. E. (1981). Experiential learning and change: Theory design and practice. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Wilkinson, D.Y. (1997). Gender and social inequality: The prevailing

significance of race. In O. Scott (ed.) <u>Lines, borders and connections: Challenges and</u>

<u>possibilities in multicultural America</u> (pp. 166-173). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt

Publishing.

Wittig, M. A., & Grant-Thompson, S. (1998). The utility of Allport's conditions

of inter-group contact for predicting perceptions of improved racial attitudes and beliefs.

<u>Journal of Social Issues, 54 </u>(4), 795-812.

Worthington, R. L., Mobley, M., Franks, R. P., & Tan, J. A. (2000). Multicultural

counseling competencies: Verbal content, counselor attributions, and social desirability.

<u>Journal of Counseling Psychology, 47</u> (4), 460-468.

Yalom, I.D. (1995). <u>The theory and practice of group psychotherapy</u>. (4th ed.).

New York: Perseus Books Group.

YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh, Center for Race Relations and Anti-Racism

Training. (2002). <u>History of the YWCA's involvement with anti-racism efforts</u>.

[Brochure]. Pittsburgh, PA: Author.

Zeichner, K. M., Grant, C., Gay, G., Gillette, M., Valli, L., & Villegas, A.M.

(1998). A research informed vision of good practice in multicultural teacher education:

Design principles. <u>Theory into Practice, 37</u> (2), 163-171.

Zorga, S. (1997). Supervision process seen as a process of experiential learning.

<u>The Clinical Supervisor, 16</u> (1), 145-161.

Appendix A

Letter of invitation to participate

Appendix B

Informed consent forms

Appendix C

Sample demographic information sheet