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Introduction

In response to the rising tide of racial incidents on college campuses, the National Association for Ethnic Studies has elected to devote this special issue of *Explorations in Ethnic Studies* to this topic. Hundreds of institutions of all sizes have experienced these ugly and embarrassing incidents.

A number of basic issues and problems related to this topic warrant immediate intellectual scrutiny and decisive action. Although no single theory can explain the causes behind the dramatic resurgence of overt racism on college campuses, the scholars and administrators featured in this special issue offer a variety of scholarly observations, analyses, and recommendations. While speaking to the Pasadena, California, NAACP, John Brooks Slaughter, President of Occidental College, made the following observations:

During the past year, some 200 reported cases of racial confrontations have taken place at colleges and universities. Only the most optimistic person would believe that the total number of such incidents is close to that figure. These have taken many forms. They include clashes between African-American and Anglo students at Stanford, Berkeley and UCLA; confrontations between Jewish and African-American students at Maryland following the presence on that campus of controversial personalities such as Kwami Toure and Mordecai Levy; harassment of a black cadet at the Citadel in South Carolina, and countless other cases that have filled newspapers across the country. The alarming rise in racial violence on campuses and the equally alarming revitalization of the white supremacist movements exemplified by the Nazi-like behavior of Skinhead gangs has not escaped notice. In a similar vein, the election to the Louisiana State Legislature of David Duke, the former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, sends a signal that the gains of the 1960s and 1970s toward racial harmony are ended. Yes, racism and bigotry are back on campus with a vengeance. We can ask any of those black students who were chased and beaten at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, who were taunted with defamatory posters at Penn State and Stanford, who were subjected to racist jokes on the University of Michigan radio station or who were presented with a “mock slave auction” at the University of Wisconsin. Or we can ask the Jewish students who have had swastikas painted on their dormitory doors on campuses across the country from Harvard to Occidental. Or ask the Latino students at UCLA about their reaction to the film “Animal Attraction” which was produced by a UCLA graduate student with the support of many of his faculty members and which insensitively portrayed Mexican Americans in a very negative light. We cannot afford to be discouraged, although there is much that is discouraging. We cannot let acts of violence and brutality cause us to lose sight of the benefits to be gained by joining together to create harmony from the jangling discord around us. We cannot let our national policies be set by personalities like Jesse Helms while we stand by silently. We cannot let the goals of brotherhood and justice be torn asunder by those who believe that any race has an inalienable right to control the lives of another. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “We must work unceasingly to lift this
nation that we love to a higher destiny, to a new plateau of compassion, to a more noble expression of humaneness. We must use time creatively in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right."

In "The Monster in Our House: Racial Incidents on College Campuses," Farrell J. Webb explores the relationship between the institution and the new student body; he examines the motivation behind some of the recent racial attacks, and he examines the structural features of higher education that have allowed for growing racial and ethnic tension on college campuses. Phyllis G. Ray and Adolph Simmons, Jr., provide an exploratory analysis of black-white perceptions in the south vis-a-vis racism on college campuses. Monica L. Jackson explores the phenomenon of overt and subtle racism on campus as "status politics." She identifies the manifestations of "symbolic" and "competitive" racism on college campuses today and she provides recommendations for their eradication. Robin P. Clair and Michael J. McGoun compare the college students' views today on neighborhood integration to those reported by W.I. Gordon in a 1965 study. In the article "College Students' Attitudes on Neighborhood Integration: From the Classroom to the Community and Back Again," Clair and McGoun provide a unique pedagogical model that is designed to help college students achieve a greater degree of acceptance and sophistication in understanding racial integration of neighborhoods. The "learn by doing" approach which characterizes this model has significant potential in terms of using curricular activities as a means of attacking campus racism.

In the final article, "The University as a Pluralistic System: the Case of Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention," Albert Ramirez presents a conceptual model that can be used in analyzing the university system as it relates to the issue of minority recruitment and retention. A university cannot legitimately claim to be a "university" unless it has an ethnically diverse faculty. Many scholars and administrators believe that an ethnically diverse faculty neutralizes racism on the campus, and colleges and universities have launched aggressive programs to recruit and retain minority faculty.

The issues and problems related to racism on the campus are complex and difficult to diagnose and solve. There are many socio-economic, psychological, political, and philosophical variables which influence those who resort to abhorrent racial behavior. Nevertheless, these issues must be pursued with compassion and intellectual rigor. At the very least, this special issue of Explorations in Ethnic Studies will spearhead positive change in the total campus environment.

—James H. Williams
Guest Editor
The Monster In Our House: Racial Incidents on College Campuses

Farrell J. Webb

The Growth of Racial/Ethnic Incidents

Reports of racial incidents on college campuses have risen dramatically in the past four years. Data from recent surveys indicate that minority students, specifically blacks, will experience some form of discrimination during their academic careers.\(^1\) Recent data from other studies reveal that racial and ethnic violence has occurred on at least 70 U.S. college campuses.\(^2\) Efforts to assert one racial/ethnic group over another have often created social conflicts. These social disagreements may take several forms, usually imitating behavior outside of school: shouting discriminatory remarks or becoming physically aggressive or violent.

The belief that it is legitimate to make distinctions between and among groups based on the perceived status of particular groups is both overtly and covertly supported by the structures of our major social institutions, including higher education, yet a number of investigations have revealed that institutional social differentiation can be reduced through education.\(^3\) It is difficult for minority students to understand why the very institution that they must turn to for support is the same one that blocks their progress.

Educational institutions have tried to reduce these philosophical inconsistencies by establishing ethnic studies programs.\(^4\) These new curricula were designed to make students more sensitive to the needs of others--both majority and non-majority students.\(^5\) But why is it that despite the number of years ethnic studies and academic sensitivity programs have been included in college curriculums there has been an increase in racially motivated violent instances on college campuses during the latter half of the 1980s?\(^6\)

These issues will be examined by (1) exploring the relationship between
the institution and the new student body; (2) examining the motivations behind some of the recent attacks; and (3) examining the structural features of higher education that have allowed for the growing racial and ethnic tension on college campuses.

There are three major reasons why these racial/ethnic incidents are continuing. First, there is a low priority given to resolving racist actions by university administrators in the hope that issues will resolve themselves. This is very similar to the same type of treatment given to gender-related issues such as "date rape," an issue once believed not to be important. Secondly, student conservatism is much greater today than it was ten years ago, allowing for attitudes of racial/ethnic discrimination to grow. Finally, racially and ethnically motivated actions are not considered important unless they rise to national prominence, and at that point it is already too late to undo the damage. By keeping an incident "in our house" universities are allowed to continue their *laissez-faire* policies. The present structure of higher education by covertly promoting inequality through lack of enforcement and public response gives *carte blanche* to students to practice racial and ethnic elitism.

The issues surrounding the new attacks on minority students are more complex than just the presence of minority students or the alleged differences among students' abilities. These differences are covertly reinforced by the values and curricula of higher education institutions. The perpetuation of the white male canon is one example of how educational values create problems for racial and ethnic minority students by disenfranchising them.

More devastating than the student attacks and the recent shift in student attitudes is the action taken by administrators and policy makers toward the recent upswing of overt racial and ethnic discrimination. For example, a trustee at one fairly large Southern institution recently made slanderous and uncomplimentary statements about black students. Although he eventually apologized, the university had sought to keep his remarks out of the public domain.

On one hand, the general response of university administrators has been to establish programs designed to increase minority enrollment. These programs, while appearing beneficial on the surface, do nothing about addressing the issues that gave rise to the racial and ethnic hostility that proceeded them. Thus, an addition of more minority students does not reduce the racial/ethnic discrimination experienced by these students; rather, it exacerbates the problem.

On the other hand, the university's non-responsiveness has indirectly fed racially/ethnically motivated incidents on college campuses. This is ironic especially when one considers that colleges and universities are preparing for the diverse student populations of the future. Farrell and Jones in their report on racial incidents in higher education concluded that inaction breeds environmental racism--racial discrimination within the university and its surroundings. For example, support institutions
such as campus bars, restaurants, and social organizations may not be supportive of minority students or of the university’s commitment toward non-discrimination. Because university administrators seldom have the time or opportunity to monitor these support institutions in any direct manner, the inaction has allowed these sub-institutions to establish their own policies, some of which are overtly discriminatory toward racial and ethnic minority students.¹³

**Studying the Problem**

The methodology used in this investigation is content analysis. Reports of racial/ethnic incidents on college campuses during a four-year period were analyzed (1986-1989). Only those reports covered in national level media were extracted (for example *The New York Times, Newsweek,* or *The Chronicle of Higher Education*).

Each reported incident was broken up into its component parts. For example, a racial/ethnic incident that involved name-calling and then violence was counted as two separate instances. The most current college catalog for each school mentioned in the incident was checked to determine if there was an ethnic studies program, course(s) on ethnic studies, required course on ethnic studies, or any related course such as minority group relations. Data for each institution was then placed into two categories: (1) has no ethnic studies or related courses; (2) has ethnic studies, related courses, or ethnic studies major.

The names of the institutions involved are withheld since the purpose of this paper is to expose a problem that is growing on all campuses not just those examined for this study. Furthermore, it is pointless to identify the institutions since it will not alter that which has already occurred.

**Results**

The data revealed that student conservatism and the lack of concern by policy makers led to an increase in racial/ethnic incidents. The number of documented racial incidents on college campuses rose from 4 major incidents in 1986, compared to 27 in 1987, and several already widely-known incidents in the first two months of 1989. If this trend were to continue there could be at least 50 racially motivated incidents by the end of 1989. To date, blacks accounted for 76 percent of all major acts of racial/ethnic aggression on college campuses.¹⁴ Hispanics followed with 11 percent and Asians with 5 percent.
Two more important features about the recent racially/ethnically motivated incidents were (1) where they took place, and (2) what types of incidents were reported. Twenty-one percent of all the incidents involved some type of overt discrimination. Despite being against the law, racial/ethnic discrimination continues to exist on some college campuses. Racist remarks and other inappropriate vocalizations accounted for 23 percent of all incidents. The data suggested that almost one-half of all incidents on campuses involved some direct communication or action toward its victims. Clearly, if such things as cross-burning and racially motivated beatings were included, then over 62 percent of all incidents involved direct contact.

Another important aspect of racial/ethnic events on college campuses was geographic location. Although the South traditionally has been associated with overt discrimination, it was the Northeastern part of the country that had the highest number of racial/ethnic incidents. It was not exactly clear from the data why racially/ethnically motivated incidents should be so prevalent in the Northeast; however, the geographic isolation of some of the schools in this region could account for the difference. With the exception of the two cross-burnings, all other acts of physical aggression and violence took place on campuses in the Northeast and Midwest. In fact, at some of the larger and more famous northeastern schools racial and ethnically motivated actions involved severe beatings and strong racist literature.
The presence of ethnic studies on campus had some impact on the frequency of racial/ethnic outbreaks. Of the schools where racial incidents were reported, 53 percent had no ethnic studies program or related courses. However, 47 percent of all the schools had some form of ethnic studies; in most cases this consisted of a course or some sort of disjointed ethnic studies program. Another difference in the presence of racial incidents appeared when controlling for institution type. Public institutions accounted for 60 percent of all racial/ethnic incidents during the last three years, while private institutions accounted for 40 percent. The differences between the racial incidents and ethnic studies programs controlling for institution type was significant ($\chi^2 = 7.84$, df=1, $p<0.05$). In other words, one was more likely to experience a racially/ethnically motivated act of aggression in a public rather than private institution whether the private school had an ethnic studies curriculum or not.

In general, ethnic studies were more prevalent in public institutions than in private institutions, yet the more severe racial/ethnic instances occurred on public institution campuses. There were more acts of aggression and more overt acts on public school campuses than on the private school campuses where the issues usually centered on affirmative action, anti-apartheid, and cultural insensitivity. Another interesting parallel was that all instances of racial/ethnic isolation took place at private schools while all racist/ethnic humor was expressed by students in public universities and colleges.

Campus Racism: The Social Mirror

The existence of racial/ethnic violence on college campuses is indicative of other social problems. Each year the types and level of severity of racial/ethnic incidents continue to grow. And every year the incidents become more life threatening. Why racial/ethnic motivated violence continues points toward the growing conservatism in America. The general attitude toward less government has led to less accountability and less responsibility. This is very similar to other periods in our history where social atrocities such as slavery, the internment of the Japanese, the holocaust, and discrimination against boat people were allowed without strong public reaction. Although most people were aware of these social atrocities, the actions were largely ignored because they did not
directly affect majority citizens. The reawakening of racism is now following the same pattern.

Some of the issues that give rise to racism are directly linked to the social problems facing this nation. For example, drug epidemics, failing infrastructures, homelessness, unreliable local economies, and severe shortages of employment opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities, and an ever increasing minority dependency ratio all are now daily realities. Majority and minority students are well aware of the difficulties facing them. In many cases students bring with them their resentments, built up outside of higher education, and then reinforced within the institutions of higher education. As a result, colleges and universities begin to reflect the social ills of society.

It has long been believed that racial/ethnic violence and hatred could be reduced through higher education. Unfortunately, it now seems that higher education has become a breeding ground for racial/ethnic differences as well. The type of student, more than the institution type, is more the issue; however, higher education is not blameless. In fact, the failure of most institutions to adequately address racial and ethnic incidents, no matter what type of student, is symptomatic of institutional problems.

Conclusion

The issue of race and ethnic relations remains as complex in the 1990s as it was in the 1940s. There are no magical solutions to the social ills that have given rise to the inequalities supported by prejudice and discrimination. As such, it is not possible to expect a rapid solution, but it is possible to regain social control. The role of education in ameliorating social problems and reducing social prejudices is well known. As educators concerned with ethnic studies, we must act to reduce negative responses to racial and ethnic minorities.

First, we must establish well organized, fully integrated ethnic studies programs. These programs can do a great deal to reduce the racial and ethnic problems in our society. However, as long as ethnic studies are marginalized within higher education, and as long as the programs continue to follow traditional canons, focusing exclusively on the folklore, literature, philosophy, and history of the racial and ethnic minorities in this country without introducing modern empirical data, issues of ethnic studies will fail in its mission. This is not to say that traditional areas are not important; however, these areas should be addressed in conjunction with some of the current problems faced by the racial and ethnic minorities in today’s world.

Clearly a progressive program (one centered in an Ethnic Studies department) must be added to the curriculum of all college campuses. Programs modeled after those at Bowling Green University or the University of California, Santa Barbara, might prove to be beneficial.

If the program is to work, it must be more broad based than the
traditional ethnic studies found in most universities today. The program
must be progressive, and it must attack the issues of racial and ethnic
discrimination directly. Ethnic studies curriculum must be revised to
address how the differences among the groups can be addressed for a
more meaningful and peaceful coexistence for all.

Second, faculty, staff, and students must voice their objections to the
oppressive racial/ethnic atmosphere on college campuses. This means
becoming unpopular when necessary, and in some cases putting one's
career on the line. Only through continued efforts to battle racism can we
hope to eliminate the harmful effects of prejudice and discrimination.

Notes

Undergraduate Survey of Black Undergraduate Students Attending
Predominantly White State Supported Universities (Ann Arbor, MI:

2G.D. Jaynes and R.M. Williams, Jr., A Common Destiny: Blacks and

3G.D. Jaynes and R.M. Williams, Jr., A Common Destiny: Blacks and
American Society (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1989);
R. Farley and W.A. Allen, The Color Line and the Quality of Life in
America (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987); W.J. Wilson, The
Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, The Underclass, and Public
Policy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); J. Mincer,
Schooling, Experience, and Earnings (New York: Columbia University
Press, 1974).

4See the Chronicle of Higher Education, February 15, 1989 edition for a
complete discussion on the advancements in ethnic studies curriculum.

5R.L. Perry and S.M. Pauly, “Crossroads to the 21st Century: The
Evolution of Ethnic Studies at Bowling Green State University,”

6O.L. Scott, “Ethnic Studies Past and Present: Towards Shaping the


See the *Chronicle of Higher Education* for calendar years 1988 and 1989 for ongoing discussions of this issue.

See Farrell and Jones, *Recent Racial Incidents*, for a brief historical discussion of racism in Southern universities.

UCLA Public Affairs, “Enrollment of Ethnic Minorities in University of California is Growing.” *UCLA Today* 10, 1 (July 17-August 20, 1989); See also the United States Department of Education, *Fall Enrollment in Colleges and Universities*, and *Office of Civil Rights Compliance Reports* (1987), both of which address the increasing number of ethnic minorities in higher education.

Farrell and Jones, *Recent Racial Incidents*.


This data is consistent with the findings reported in the survey by Allen and his colleagues in 1984.

Racism on Campus: An Exploratory Analysis of Black-White Perceptions in the South

Phyllis G. Ray and Adolph Simmons, Jr.

Racism has been a persistent problem in American society. Sociologists refer to racism as unfair treatment of an individual or a group solely on the basis of race. It may be covert or overt, and it may be expressed on an individual level when a person consciously or unconsciously discriminates against another person. Racism may also be expressed on an institutional level, when rules, policies and practices of organizations and/or institutions discriminate against an individual or a group.

Racists believe that their race is superior to others and that there is no such thing as racial equality. They assume that their color, culture, mental, and physical capabilities are superior to other races. Racists have prejudiced beliefs and discriminate against other racial and ethnic groups. These beliefs are justified because of their racist perceptions. Racists are insecure and afraid of their own uncertainties. As a result, racism is usually a product of ignorance rather than genuine hatred.

Racism is a fact of life in American society. It is learned through the socialization process at an early age, and throughout life its pervasiveness is reinforced by individuals, organizations and institutions.

Covert Racism on College Campuses

Although overt racism is rare, black students routinely encounter covert, individual racism. There are numerous incidents of covert racism accorded black students at predominantly white institutions. First, white academic advisors discourage black students from taking difficult courses, or allow them to overload with more courses than they can handle. Second, white students often avoid black students in classrooms, lecture halls and/or study groups. Third, blacks are left out of student networks such as sharing of notes, course syllabi, or old exams. Finally,
professors, fearing a racist label, may hesitate to advise black students to drop courses when they have problems that may cause them to fail.

Black students also experience institutional racism on predominantly white college campuses. This includes standardized tests on which blacks tend to score lower than whites and which are weighed heavily in the admission process, rising costs of college tuition, a decline in the amount of student aid, and other financial cutbacks. Unfortunately, decreases in financial aid under the Reagan administration neglected the fact that many blacks are in need of financial aid for about 60% of their college costs.\(^5\)

Previous studies have examined racial attitudes on white campuses. Many white students believe they are living in a racially equal society and resent that blacks and other minorities are given special treatment, and therefore resent a minority group being singled out for cultural programs or special activities.\(^6\) Some white students also feel that they are being victimized by efforts intended to correct past discrimination and that minorities enjoy unfair advantages.\(^7\)

Over 80% of all blacks enrolled in college attend predominantly white institutions.\(^8\) On these campuses, racism often prevents blacks from developing a sense of belonging.\(^9\) They experience culture shock and little socialization with white students. Most are generally isolated from mainstream campus activities.\(^10\)

In addition, some black students on predominantly white college campuses lack African American cultural knowledge. Many are struggling with their identities and have a very limited awareness of the black struggles in the past, which allowed them to have access to the major institutions today.\(^11\)

Faculty support and assistance are scarce for black students at predominantly white institutions. For example, these schools do not provide enough black role models. And some black students have trouble locating the few black faculty on campus because of their low numbers. Unfortunately, some black students go through college with little or no mentoring, because many white professors are unaware of and insensitive to their needs.\(^12\)

Student support services for blacks and other minorities are often lacking at predominantly white institutions. Indeed, support services are important in assisting and supervising all students in achieving academically. As such, white students have an advantage over black students which becomes evident in the classrooms, job market, and their opportunities for upward social mobility.\(^13\)

Racism may also cause unnecessary psychological stress for blacks, which may lead to apathy and frustration, which may then lead to academic failure. This impacts upon and causes high attrition rates, although many black students have above average GPAs. Moreover, some blacks develop negative self-concepts and attitudes, which may
lead to a lack of academic persistence, and finally to dismissal or withdrawal from school.\textsuperscript{14}

Hence, symbolic interactionists assert that individuals develop their self-concepts and identities from interacting with others around them. Therefore, when minorities are constantly treated as inferior, this treatment is likely to affect them. Scholars believe that the way minorities are perceived and treated on a campus has a direct effect on their self-concepts and academic performances.\textsuperscript{15}

The present study draws heavily from Herbert Blumer's quasi-microlevel analysis of race relations in the South. His neglected work on the significance of the "color line" has stifled the use of the sociological imagination in studying racism. The color line, according to Blumer, "comes into play when members of the two races meet each other not on an individual basis but as a representative of their respective groups."\textsuperscript{16}

It seems apparent that Blumer recognized the effects of stereotypes on the interaction between members of different racial groups. Moreover, Blumer observed that the color line helps establish "intimate and private circles, represented by social sets, cliques, private clubs, friendship sets, family circles, courtship, and marriage."\textsuperscript{17} These observations provided the background for conceptualizing the problems encountered by black students at predominantly white colleges and universities in the South.

In addition, an individual's definition of the situation may shape his or her character. Since people respond to both the objective features of a situation and to the meanings that situations have for them, false perceptions can be created that become real in their consequences.\textsuperscript{18} This self-fulfilling prophecy can be extremely devastating for minorities, particularly for blacks, since their race is often perceived as a negative stigma. Some whites may perceive and expect them to lack the ability to perform in rewarding and meaningful positions.\textsuperscript{19}

It is important to note that an individual's definition of the situation varies by racial group membership. Therefore, based on the aforementioned theoretical perspective, the objective of this study is to assess black and white students' perceptions of racism on their college campus. This assessment focuses mainly on their perceptions of individual and institutional racism, based on their definitions of the situations.

**Methods and Data**

This study was conducted at a major university in the South. The population consisted of 113 black and white Resident Hall Assistants who attended a weekend retreat workshop on "Racial Awareness" in August, 1988. This population was ideal because these individuals have to deal with racial problems in their residence halls. Many of them were aware of racial problems that went unnoticed by the university's administrators.

A questionnaire was administered to the respondents at the end of the workshop. The instrument assessed their perceptions of racism and race
relations on their campus, as well as their definitions of the situations. The items selected for this study assessed their perceptions of issues relating to black faculty and administrators, white professors, administrators and advisors, student networks, and racial discrimination. Response categories for each item included in the analysis were 1=agree and 2=disagree.

Findings

Of the 113 respondents, 78% were white and 22% were black. The results indicated that 40% of whites and 76% of blacks disagreed with the statement that people in authority on campus respond vigorously to negative incidents of racism.

The results show that 64% of whites and 48% of blacks agreed that teaching techniques used by most instructors appealed to students with different cultural backgrounds. It is interesting to note that blacks were almost evenly divided in their assessment of this statement with 48% agreeing and 52% disagreeing. Only 23% of blacks and 32% of whites agreed with the statement that, “It is clear to most on campus what racial discrimination is.” However, the majority of both blacks (68%) and whites (77%) disagreed with the statement.

The results show that 57% of whites and 84% of blacks disagreed with the statement that, “There is a sufficient number of black faculty on campus.” Likewise, 68% of white and 100% of blacks disagreed with the statement that, “There is a sufficient number of black administrators on campus.” These findings indicate that black students perceived the number of black faculty and administrators to be low on their campus. It also points out that white students may not be as sensitive or as conscious of that fact, and therefore define the situation differently.

In response to the statement, “On campus, there are things going on that contribute to good racial interactions,” 51% of whites and 80% of blacks agreed. This finding indicates that whites were almost evenly divided on their perceptions of this item, whereas there was more concordance among blacks.

The findings show that 49% of whites and 72% of blacks agreed that white academic advisors discourage black students from taking difficult courses. This finding could be due to the fact that whites are not knowledgeable about what advisors tell blacks.

In response to the statement that black students are left out of student networks such as sharing of classnotes, course outlines, and/or old exams, 73% of whites and 60% of blacks agreed. This finding may be due to the fact that white students are more knowledgeable about this situation since it concerns how some white students discriminate against some black students.

Finally, the results of the analysis show that 57% of whites and 72% of blacks agreed that white professors, fearing a racist label, hesitate to advise blacks to drop courses when they have problems that may cause
them to fail. These findings suggest that about two-thirds of the black students, and more than half of the white students perceive that white professors are unaware of or insensitive to some of the needs of black students.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that black students perceive racism on their college campus. These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies of blacks on predominantly white campuses.

What are the causes of campus racism? Many scholars believe that educational institutions have neglected to educate all students on all aspects of U.S. history. Consequently, many white students come to college ignorant of racial barriers and the need for programs to rectify the problems of the past. Based on their definitions of the situations, they then resent the programs and become angry. In addition, there is a change in the social climate which encourages white students to openly act out their racial hostilities.

Racial incidents on campuses are, in part, a manifestation of some white males' fears about losing their elite status. For example, over 90% of the reported acts of racial violence or harassment has been at the hands of young, white males. Many whites are afraid that blacks and other minorities are taking something away from them, and may one day gain too much power and therefore pose a threat to their privileged status.

What can be done about campus racism? First, colleges and universities should acknowledge that campus racism exists and administrators should take a strong opposition to all forms of discrimination. They should make a commitment to educating students on racial diversity as well as in math, English, and science. Ethnic Studies programs should be created or present ones enhanced, and all students should be required to take a race relations course upon entering the institution.

The Vice President for Student Affairs should have an Office for Minority Affairs that will directly support minority students and their organizations and that will serve as a means for obtaining their input. This office could also develop strategies for better recruitment of minorities, sponsor race relations seminars to discuss racial questions openly, design programs to modify alienation of minorities, conduct surveys of students' attitudes about race, and sponsor conferences to heighten cross-cultural awareness.

Black faculty and administrators need to become more visible and serve as positive role models for black students. At the beginning of the year, black freshman should have the opportunity to meet black faculty, administrators, and student leaders on campus. Also, parents should be encouraged to involve themselves in events for black students and to meet black faculty and administrators.

More interaction among blacks and whites should be encouraged. In addition, residence hall staff, white professors, and other staff should be
trained in racial awareness, racial sensitivity, and cultural diversity. Only with a concerted cooperative effort of all levels of administration and faculty can campuses become both culturally diverse and sensitive to that diversity.

Notes


13 Ibid.


17 Blumer, 335.


For more than twenty years has provided a stimulating forum for discussion of the oral and written literatures of Africa.

Symbolic and Competitive Racism on Campus

Monica L. Jackson

After a short hiatus, overt racism is on the rise again. Increases in reported racially motivated crime and violence have been noted all over the country. In the wider U.S. society, identifiable racial incidents have been estimated to have increased 55 percent from 1986 to 1987. According to the Community Relations Service (CRS), African Americans comprised two-thirds of the victims in the cases reported in 1987. Although this racial violence has taken various forms ranging from name-calling, vandalism, and cross-burning to actual physical assaults that result in casualties and death, these have not been isolated incidents but have their basis in the racism that underlines U.S. institutions. This resurgence is due, in no small part, to the increasing level of conservatism that has swept the country, making racial intolerance and conflict the order of the day.

The college campus has followed suit by becoming a microcosmic haven for society’s racial tensions and incidents. Despite the image of the university setting as one of tolerance, liberalism, and equality, a marked rise in the level of inter-racial tension on college campuses across the country has been evidenced by the dramatic increase in interracial conflict and violence. As Shelby Steele relates, “On our campuses, such concentrated micro-societies, all that remains unresolved between blacks and whites, all the old wounds and shame that have never been addressed” are played out.

This analysis explores the phenomenon of overt and subtle racism on campus as “status politics.” This is the process by which the dominant (“positively privileged”) status group seeks to protect and maintain disproportionate prestige and power while the other (“negatively privileged”) status group seeks to encroach upon this dominance in order to raise its level of power and resources. The racial attitudes that underlie this process are hypothesized to be “symbolic” and “competitive” racism.
Symbolic racism is a general conservative ideological orientation which inadvertently promotes discrimination while competitive racism is perceived direct competition between the races over scarce economic resources. This paper will identify the manifestations of both of these types of racism on college campuses today and provide recommendations for their eradication.

In 1989, U.S. college campuses are the last place that one would expect to see outright racism and bigotry. These “seats of higher learning” and “mind expansion” should, according to the findings of many studies, be correlated with lower levels of racism and intolerance. This interracial conflict and violence is also antithetical to the whole spirit behind the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education desegregation decision of 1954 that was based on the belief that interracial education would lead to ever increasing racial harmony and understanding. Despite these factors, more than thirty racial incidents serious enough to be reported to the police have occurred on American college campuses in the past three years, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

On the campus, the most blatant interracial confrontations have ranged from racial slurs in the school media and vandalism to actual physical attacks. Some of the more recent interracial incidents on U.S. college campuses have included:

October 27, 1986 - University of Massachusetts: A group of white students attacked several African American students after a baseball game. An African American student was beaten unconscious and several others were injured.

March 1987 - Columbia University: Eight African American students were beaten by white students.

Spring 1987 - University of Michigan: Derogatory racial jokes told over campus radio station and flyer with derogatory references to African American women placed under the door of a meeting of African American females.


These episodes of interracial violence and conflict on today’s college campuses have varied in form and degree. They have spanned a continuum of violence in the broader sense of the word (“unjust or callous use of force or power, as in violating another’s rights, [or] sensibilities,” according to Webster’s 21st Century Dictionary). These incidents have also occurred through all U.S. regions, varied in level of organization pre-meditation, included perpetrators and victims of all class back-
grounds and been with and without immediate precipitants. They have, for example, not merely happened in the South where racism is allegedly most intense, or at universities with predominantly lower class students who, theoretically, would be more apt to see African Americans as competitors. They have been perpetrated by both individuals and groups against both individuals and groups. They have shown organized origins at one time and place and been completely spontaneous at others. Some of these racial incidents have been precipitated by identifiable events or catalysts while others have seemingly “come out of the blue.” Despite the seeming variability of these incidents, they are all overt expressions of the same things—competitive and symbolic racism.

Not all displays of racism on college campuses are overt and extreme. Continuing our use of the broader definition of violence, African American and other students must contend with racist violence from the university itself. Many theorists and practitioners have noted the institutional racism inherent in the educational system itself as well as more subtle forms of racism that are especially prevalent on majority white campuses. Niara Sudarkasa, President of Lincoln University, expressed the fact that:

Glaring inequalities remain between the opportunities they offer black students as compared to those available to white students. The differential treatment and experience of black students at predominantly white institutions is reflected in their limited participation in extracurricular activities other than sports, the dearth of leadership roles they have available to them, the limited range of academic concentrations they are encouraged and helped to pursue, the relative absence of mentoring by the faculty, ...and their limited overall success....

Many explanations for the upsurge of racism and racially-motivated conflict and violence have been proposed. They range from proposing hypersensitivity on the part of African Americans to the prevalence of a kind of “politics of difference” where African Americans segregate and assert themselves, thereby exacerbating racial separatism and conflict on campus. One theorist went so far as to propose that white college students “end up in the paradoxical position of being hostile to blacks as a way of defending their own racial innocence.” This study rejects these narrow and myopic assessments of the problems. It proposes that, on a macro level, this phenomenon of racism on campus is part and parcel of the larger socio-political and economic system in which they arise.

In essence, very distinct messages about race relations, both subtle and overt, are sent to students long before they arrive at the university. Once these deep-seated attitudes and feelings are activated by some perceived affront or threat, they become manifest through these racial incidents. The ultimate source of this racial strife, therefore, is ramified in nature. It is a product of the racist notions and the “colonial mentality” internalized by whites and African Americans by the very racism inherent in the U.S. institutions. When this is combined with the competitive atmosphere of the college campus, a virtual “pressure
"cooker" is created. In actuality, these incidents of interracial violence and strife are the acting out of both symbolic and competitive racism.

Theorists and students of race relations have long noticed a shift from the more crude racist ideas of African Americans as biologically inferior to a more subtle, elusive type. Some have termed this type "symbolic racism." It is often difficult to discern the racist component of this mode of thought in that it is a derivative of a general "traditional American" ideological perspective that does not directly speak to the issue of race. While it very often does not have racial intents, it has very racial results. Joseph Gusfield equates this phenomenon with a desire to maintain and protect the status quo. For some, however, this status quo style of life is actually one of cultural, political and economic dominance and therefore has distinct racial implications.

Subsequently, symbolic racism is characterized by a stratification ideology which maintains that there is "equality of opportunity" and dismisses the notion of structural limitation to the mobility of any group of people, thus eliminating the credibility, legitimacy and necessity of programs to ameliorate the discrimination "problems" or for African Americans to protest against their inequities. In previous studies, whites characterized by high levels of symbolic racism were found to live and work in areas with a low percentage of blacks and, therefore, had less direct contact with African Americans. They were also characterized by higher incomes and occupational level as well as lower levels of status inconsistency. McConahay and Hough found symbolic racism to be highly correlated with conservative political ideologies and traditional religiosity and values.

Consistent with this definition of symbolic racism, many white students on predominantly white campuses have accepted the belief that African American students are not qualified and are only there as a result of affirmative action and quota systems. To this effect, an African American student at the University of Michigan relates, "It’s generally assumed by all the white students that you are...a product of affirmative action." A white Dartmouth college student argued, "Dartmouth College ought to be a meritocracy... We cannot admit people at Dartmouth who are lower and less academically qualified than other students." This a historic view in one way dates its holders by showing their ignorance of the civil rights struggles that took place to attain equal access to education in a legal sense. It also lacks a certain knowledge about the persistence of institutionalized racism in U.S. society. For any university to be a “meritocracy” when the rest of society is steeped with racial differentials is to inadvertently promote racism. In effect, it is symbolic racism.

Symbolic racism also takes other forms. The disproportionately low representation of African American students and faculty at these predominantly white institutions implies their inability to perform in such environments. Low expectations of African American students by
their professors completes this notion and often results in a self-fulfilling prophecy. Further, ethnocentric curricula and textbooks exclude the valid representation and presentation of African American (and other ethnic) history and culture from mainstream education. This exclusion results in an educational system that actually promotes white supremacy. Moreover, segregation on the social level on campus mirrors the realities of the larger society. For the most part, African Americans and whites are members of separate organizations, networks, and social circles. As in society at large, these separate institutions have differential access to resources and legitimation. African American students are excluded from the mainstream activities which very often dominantly reflect Euro-American culture. The acceptance and defense of these racially biased aspects of the university status quo is actually symbolic racism in a nutshell.

The perception of racism and prejudice as a function of competition between the races has a long history in American sociology as well. W.I. Thomas used this perspective in 1904 to distinguish the different Northern and Southern forms of racism and, in 1932, Robert E. Park posited competition as vital in his four stage racial assimilation process. Blumer defined race prejudice as “a function of the positional arrangements of the racial groups in which the dominant group is concerned with its position vis-a-vis the subordinate group.” 15 From this perspective, competitive racism is seen as a defensive reaction to tangible threats which challenge the sense of group status or position in the social realm.

The perception of a direct conflict of material interests felt by whites towards blacks can take many forms. On the economic level, for example, these threats can take the form of perceived interracial competition for jobs and wages. Likewise, African American movement into white areas can be equally threatening. Due to stereotypical notions about African Americans, such actions are perceived as lowering housing values and social respectability. Politically, competitive racism can also be perceived as loss of political power to African Americans as they become more visible in the political and electoral processes. Perceptions of racial threat rise with the percent of African Americans in the same area of the job market as well as increased interracial contact. 16

The degree of interracial competition in the larger society on these various levels find expression on the college campus. As African Americans assert themselves on the economic, political, cultural and social planes of society, racist backlash is the usual response. Present trends such as a decline in real earnings of white males, rising unemployment rates, and the polarization of the “haves” and “have-nots” have helped to fuel feelings of interracial competition. When this is coupled with the growing presence of African Americans and other minorities in the population and labor market and their increasing assertions of fair treatment and cultural expression, the “in-group/out-group” syndrome between the races becomes more acute.

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The college environment is, itself, a haven of competition. Students compete for limited “slots” in departments and programs, limited financial aid resources, and a limited number of A’s. Education in the U.S. is approached as a privilege and not a right. It is something for the “elites” and not for the “masses.” A recent Washington Post article highlighted the differential access to education that exists by race on the college level where African Americans are over-represented in lower level, two-year institutions and are not afforded the legitimacy or respect of the more expensive, prestigious universities which are predominantly white. From this perspective, African Americans become doubly handicapped since they come from a position of disadvantage which, in effect, “rigs” the competition. The university setting becomes the stage for “status politics” where competitive and symbolic racism emerge as a positively privileged status group seeks to protect its interests in the face of an encroaching negatively privileged status group.

Just as the problem of racism on campus is multi-faceted, so, too, are the solutions. Underlying all of these incidents are the racism and inequalities in the society at large. They must be the first level of attack. Racial differentials on all societal levels affect education disparities and the overall interracial experience on the college campus. Inequalities in income, employment, housing, health, and educational quality and quantity must be minimized. This must be seen as beneficial to the entire society, not simply the “minorities.”

Further, education must become more multi-cultural and all encompassing from an earlier stage. As Sudarkasa puts it, “We live in a world where it is no longer intellectually defensible to presume to discuss human history or human affairs from the perspective of any one cultural or racial group.” A well-rounded approach to the world is beneficial to both African American and white students. This education must also include a study of the realities of race and racism in the U.S. Too often the attitude that racism is a “thing of the past” is perpetuated, creating a false consciousness among the youth. This education must also include a mix of educators. In practical terms this means an increase in the proportion of professors and administrators from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. This in and of itself would symbolize movement towards racial tolerance and equality.

As Reginald Jones relates, “It has been generally assumed that integration will in and of itself lead to more positive attitudes and behavior towards Blacks...[however,] there appears to be no general agreement about the effects of interracial contact on attitude change and intergroup behavior. Some studies have found heightened tolerance; some, heightened resistance; and some, no change.” The real changes will have to come in the very workings of the U.S. institutions, especially those of higher learning. Simply adding more minorities and “stirring” will not solve the problems because they go much deeper than that. The mechanisms through which inequalities are perpetuated in every U.S.
institution will have to be assessed and altered. There will, in effect, have
to be a change in “form” as well as of “content,” of “appearance” and of
“substance,” of “quantity” and of “quality.”

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College Students' Attitudes on Neighborhood Integration: From the Classroom to the Community and Back Again.

Robin P. Clair and Michael J. McGoun

It is one thing to agree that the goal of integration is morally and legally right; it is another thing to commit oneself positively and actively to the ideal of integration—the former is intellectual assent, the latter is actual belief.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.*

I grew up in an all white suburb, well, almost all white. There were two black families that literally lived on the wrong side of the tracks. Two large run-down old houses sat within five feet of the rumbling trains. Sometimes my family drove past those houses in our old station wagon. On days that our drive was interrupted by a crossing train, I would watch the barefoot black children playing by the street. I never thought of our suburb as being segregated, at least not until I was in high school.

As a teenager, I remember my parents teaching us that all people are created equal, that God loves us all, and that we should love each other. During the late 1960s, a black family moved into our suburb, only they didn’t move to the poor side of the tracks. Instead, they moved right into the center of an all-white middle class neighborhood.

My parents’ ideology was put to the practical test. They passed the first test by openly defending the rights of the Washington family to live in the suburb, while others were throwing rocks through their windows. But the second test of their beliefs was more difficult and they failed miserably when my sister started dating Mr. Washington’s son.

I was young and relatively naive about racial matters, but I tried to carry the American creed and my parents’ values, not their failures, into my adult life. In college, I intellectually supported the civil rights movement, but it wasn’t until I was married and in the situation of
buying a house that I came to see the realities of neighborhood integration. My spouse came from a similar background, from a similar suburb on the opposite side of the large industrial city that was the hub of our metropolis. East siders and West siders were almost as segregated as blacks and whites. Choosing a side on which to live after we were married was resolved by our moving into the city.

Now we find ourselves rearing three children in a racially precarious urban area. The street was once all white, yet in one year’s time three black families have moved onto the street. I waited nervously for the rocks to be thrown; there were none. Instead words were thrown in every direction. Some neighbors said they didn’t care if one or two black families moved into the neighborhood, but more than that would bring down the value of the houses. Other whites said they weren’t really prejudiced, but they didn’t want to see the neighborhood “go black.” Older neighbors found it difficult to say the word “black” aloud; rather they spoke in a normal tone until reaching the word “colored” or “black” and then they superstitiously whispered the word as if it were an ominous profanity.

Community leaders came into the neighborhood as more sale signs began to sprout in front yards. Meetings were held at the local bingo hall and both blacks and whites attended. The mayor and councilman spoke on the issue of commitment to a neighborhood, without ever mentioning terms like “white flight” or “block busting”; they managed to instill a sense of security and pride in the neighborhood. That night one of our neighbors, who had previously been concerned that he wouldn’t be able to afford to move his family to the suburbs when the “blacks” started moving in, was so inspired he shook hands with one of his new black neighbors.

I was naive and idealistic as a college student and I am still idealistic today. I believe that our neighborhood can be peacefully and successfully integrated, but I realize that neighborhood integration is just one step in the process of achieving racial equity. As Martin Luther King, Jr., rhetorically asked, “What will he gain by being permitted to move to an integrated neighborhood if he can not afford to do so because he is unemployed or has a low-paying job with no future?”

Students attending an urban university where forced busing is still the norm and racial barriers still exist throughout the city may evidence higher levels of sophistication than I did during my college days. The purpose of this investigation is to address the attitudes of today’s college students on the topic of neighborhood integration.

*All King quotes are taken from The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr. (New York: Newmarket Press, 1983).
The struggle for integration began with the passage of the 14th and 15th amendments to the United States Constitution, ratified in 1865 and 1868, respectively. The Reconstruction era, that followed the Civil War, brought about significant changes for Southern blacks who exercised their right to vote and held political offices. However, in 1877, the reconstruction era came to an abrupt end and with it the civil rights progress of Southern blacks.

Discrimination increased and segregation became the rule with the Supreme Court ruling that upheld "separate, but equal" practices. The formation of the integration-oriented National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 supported integration, as did the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) which was formed in the early 1940s and supported the first Freedom Ride through Southern states. However, not until Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) did legislation support integration. In 1957, blacks' rights were further protected with the establishment of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The most dramatic gains toward integration were achieved during the 1960s. Following demonstrations led by black community leaders and supported by college students on campuses across America, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed. After the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., Congress supported the concept of neighborhood integration by enacting legislation that disallowed discriminatory practices with respect to federally financed housing.

Debates have been waged over the topic of neighborhood integration, both before and since the enactment of the 1968 law on fair housing practices. Some black and white leaders of the early 1900s concluded that integration was not "a viable strategy for the resolution of racial conflict." Recent reports suggest that fair housing has resulted in suburban pockets of poverty. Speaking of the 9.5 million individuals living in poverty in the suburbs, McCormick and McKillop reported that the poor residents "are too dispersed among their better-heeled neighbors to influence suburban congressmen and too disorganized to attract attention as effectively as advocates for the nation's 13.9 million urban poor."

Proponents of integration, such as abolitionist Frederick Douglass, precede the Civil War. Integrationists argue that integration must take place at a variety of levels in society including education and housing in order for integration to be meaningful. Housing discrimination results in inequity of services and creates social isolation and further economic deprivation. Neighborhood integration creates more opportunity for black citizens through interaction and networking.

Racial integration, especially neighborhood integration, is not a issue. Rather it is laced with intricate complexities which have not yet been satisfied through simple solutions. Prejudice still remains and researchers still attempt to explain its origins and obstinate existence in a free society.
Being a Negro in America means listening to suburban politicians talk eloquently against open housing while arguing in the same breath that they are not racist.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

In order to understand racial prejudice, the terms “race” and “prejudice” must be clearly defined. The biological definition of a race is “a subdivision of a species which inherits physical characteristics distinguishing it from other populations of the species.” This conceptualization has resulted in the scientific labeling of four main races: Australoid, Caucasoid, Negroid, and Mongoloid. The biological definition of “race” is not the same as the average lay person’s definition of “race” which “represents a unity of physical, mental, personality and cultural traits which determines the behavior of the individuals inheriting this alleged unity.” The fact is that all human beings are so much mixed with regard to origin that between different groups of individuals intergradation and overlapping of physical characters is the rule.

In its simplest form the term “prejudice” refers to judgments made prior to obtaining facts or knowledge. A more complicated conception of prejudice has been offered by Myrdal. The author suggested that it is not preconceptions or generalizations made without prior knowledge that results in racial beliefs about inferiority of the black race; rather, it is the collecting of incomplete knowledge and “twisting logic” that results in an “incorrect deduction” about racial inferiority. For example, “He [the black man] is, on the average, poorer; his body is more often deformed; his health is more precarious and his mortality rate higher; his intelligence performance, manners, and morals are lower”; consequently, the unsophisticated individual draws the faulty conclusion that blacks are biologically inferior. Goodman succinctly defined racial prejudice as “a projection onto others of one’s own unacceptable traits.”

According to Montagu, “Today, more than at any previous time in the history of man, it is urgently necessary to be clear as to what this term [race] is and what it really means.” Furthermore, “the fact is that the modern concept of race is a product of irrational emotional reasoning, and, as we have seen, from their inception “racial” questions have always been discussed in an emotional atmosphere.”

Through education we seek to break down the spiritual barriers to integration.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Discussing racial issues, especially integration, became the focus of college classroom discussion in the 1960s. Gorden encouraged college professors to use a method of taped exchanges to help students learn more about social issues, including neighborhood integration, and to exchange their tapes with experts in the field.

The college students expressed low levels of emotion and expressed
what they considered to be liberal and well developed plans to encourage neighborhood integration. A critical and emotional review of the students' conclusions was returned by the experts, who were members of Citizens for Equal Rights of Austin, Texas. Students, first and foremost, always took the perspective that integrating neighborhoods meant moving blacks into white neighborhoods. They never conceived of whites moving into black neighborhoods. Furthermore, the college students' notion that neighborhood integration should be done gradually so as not to upset the white residents "precipitated caustic reaction" on the part of the experts who answered with the following remarks:

Some of the questions you pose, such as, "Do you want to live next door to a Negro?" frankly border on the ridiculous.

It is the attitude that you seem to have that it is you, the white citizen, who are in a position to grant something to the other areas of the populace, which just causes my spine to bristle.

Our Negro citizens are not asking to be accepted, they are not asking for friends, they're not asking to be understood. They're insisting on their rights as citizens of this country—and they'll get them.¹¹

In general the reviewers found the college students to be unsophisticated and naive at best, and racially prejudiced at worst.

"Racial beliefs of the unsophisticated" have been described by Myrdal as lacking in an awareness of "such subtle influences as the denial of certain outlets for ambitions, social disparagement, cultural isolation, and the early conditioning of the Negro child's mind by the caste situation as factors molding the Negro's personality."¹² Twenty years later, Labov supported the views of Myrdal and suggested that "cultural, social, and economic factors" must be considered in order to understand the differences between blacks and whites.¹³ The college students, who had considered themselves relatively liberal and free of prejudice, admitted to having learned a great deal from the classroom project.

The strong emotional response from black leaders may have been due to the content of the tape being racial in nature as implied by Montagu. On the other hand, Kochman has suggested that the black mode of debate "is high keyed: animated, interpersonal, and confrontational" even when the discussion is not racially oriented. Obversely, whites attempt to display a "low keyed: dispassionate, impersonal, and nonchallenging" mode. Blacks see no disparity between emotional argument and reason, while whites feel logic is lost in emotional intensity.¹⁴

The 1960s and 1970s were intense and emotional times, both for community leaders and college students. Today's campuses seem a quieter place to live and learn. However, at Cleveland State University, like many other universities across America, the racial questions have
not been put to rest. In a city which still enforces busing, students tend to come from either well-integrated city schools or completely segregated suburbs. They enter the college classroom with distinctly varied backgrounds in racial understanding.

The purpose of this investigation is to compare the college students’ views today on neighborhood integration to those reported by Gordon in 1965. According to Brigham and Weissback, “with regard to the feelings of white Americans, there seems to be a continuing trend toward acceptance of equalitarian racial policies.” Student tapes will be reviewed by experts in the field to determine if college students have reached a greater degree of acceptance and sophistication in understanding racial integration of neighborhoods. Furthermore, the response of the community experts will be reviewed to see if any changes have taken place in their response styles.

Thirty-two college students enrolled in a group communication course at Cleveland State University were asked to form six small groups and discuss the topic of neighborhood integration. Students formed groups based on proximity of classroom seating; only one integrated group emerged from the arrangement.

Specifically, students were asked if neighborhood integration is a good idea. If they responded with a negative answer, they were asked to supply a superior plan for achieving a more racially harmonious society. If they agreed that neighborhood integration is a good idea, they were asked to supply a plan to achieve neighborhood integration. Students were given the option to do library research on the topic of integration before meeting with their group.

In addition, students were asked to audio-tape record their half hour discussions, type a final version of their plan and a rationale for the choices they made. Finally, students chose a community expert in the field of neighborhood integration to review their tape and assess the students on an effectiveness form.

The effectiveness form was designed by Hirokawa and Pace to judge the effectiveness of university student groups’ decision-making on ethical issues. The original scale included the following items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Warranted</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unwarranted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unreasonable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Reasonable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unfair</td>
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The moral issues previously presented to students were hypothetical in nature. They did not receive the responses from the expert judges. We chose to add two more items to the scale:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Unrealistic</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unuseful</td>
</tr>
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</table>

so the students could see how realistic and how useful their plans might be to community leaders.
Among the various group discussions several common or general attitudes prevailed. First, students often addressed the notion of “forced neighborhood integration” early in their discussions. Group #4 suggested, “It’s not a healthy environment unless they really want to be there,” and a member of Group #1 stated, “They’re going to have to want to live in this neighborhood.” A student from Group #3 remarked that we would “lose a slice of America” by disrupting tightly knit, very ethnic Irish, Polish, German or Italian neighborhoods through forced integration. In other groups as well, the idea that for integration to be successful it should occur naturally and voluntarily was a commonly held opinion.

A second issue that surfaced regularly in the groups’ discussions was education and its relationship to neighborhood integration. Four of the six groups included recommendations concerning education in their proposals for enhancing racial integration and improving relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds. Members of Group #6 expressed their views on education and integration in the following ways:

Integration isn’t going to happen overnight, but if we start teaching our kids...

The people who are hopelessly prejudiced now... they’re lost. We have to worry about the younger people, and the people that are more liberal, and more educated.

Overall, the importance of education as a tool to eradicate fears, racial barriers, and stereotypes was a popular view among the discussants.

While most students agreed that neighborhood integration was a laudable goal which society should strive to achieve, it was also pointed out and emphasized by some students that racial integration must be done carefully and gradually. Group #3 collectively arrived at the conclusion that racial integration could not happen overnight, and that community involvement, not government intervention, would be a vital component in the process.

Two major restraints to neighborhood integration were expressed by the college students: 1) cultural and 2) economic. One group discussed cultural differences implying that a serious transition would have to be undertaken by inner-city blacks moving into all white suburbs. One student from Group #2 said that the integrating urbanites would have to “assimilate suburban norms,” such as property upkeep and keeping an eye on their children.

Concerns about economic factors led Group #1 to suggest that different races could be mixed more easily than people of different incomes. Groups
Group #1 concluded that in order to achieve neighborhood integration several steps should be taken. First, residents of neighborhoods should be surveyed to gain a better understanding of their interests and willingness to integrate. Second, the students called for benign steering on the part of banks and the real estate industry. Finally, they encouraged further education of young people.

Group #2 called for the discontinuation of forced busing. Rather, they suggested that more money go toward improving neighborhood schools.

Group #3 called for education of young children through education and media and the natural evolution of neighborhood integration.

Group #4 suggested that low interest rates be offered to integrating neighborhoods and that government intervention should be used, especially as a watchdog service to protect the rights of minorities. The students also suggested that community groups should be formed to help with the integration process. Furthermore, at the grass roots level, projects that would bring people together and improve the neighborhoods should be instituted (e.g., neighborhood clean up projects). Finally, Group #4 recommended continuing education to decrease racial stereotyping.

Group #5 called for more government intervention and regulation in the educational system, real estate industry, and mortgage lenders.

Group #6 concluded that better enforcement of existing laws like the Fair Housing Act of 1968 should be implemented. They also thought new legislation should be created to encourage neighborhood integration. Watchdog committees should be formed to protect minorities and ensure their rights are not being abused. Finally, education to reduce prejudice should be continued or strengthened.

In general the students' discussions were less prejudiced than the discussions of the 1960s supporting the trends toward liberalism as reported by Brigham and Weissback. For example, although Group #3 had a fairly weak plan, their discussion addressed integrating whites into black or Hispanic neighborhoods. However, most groups did evidence a rather naive understanding of the problem that could be summarized in the statement by one college student that we'd all be better off if 'God had created us color-blind.'

Students were asked to send their tapes and a written summary of their plan to a community leader who has some expertise in the area of neighborhood integration. Students were encouraged to choose black leaders in order to gain a different perspective (since the majority of students were white). The community experts included two councilmen, a representative of the Community Relations Board, a city prosecutor, a minister, and an administrator from the county extension agency.

Group #1 received a mean of 5.15 on the effectiveness scale from their expert judge. Their lowest scores were in the area of appropriateness,
usefulness, and realism. The reviewer remarked that their plan to audit or survey residents about their attitudes held great potential if it could be implemented. Another expert, commenting on another group, wrote:

It is good to know that integration is acceptable to your group. Some type of statistical information may, perhaps, give us a better view of large ethnic and cultural groups.

Group #2 received the lowest ratings of all the groups (X = 3.66). The expert judge complimented the students on being “open and honest about their opinions on these controversial and debatable topics”; but the expert criticized the students for failing to discuss “other factors, such as the economy, unemployment, the national tone, challenging civil rights laws, to name a few.” Furthermore, the expert felt the students focused too heavily on the subject of busing much to the neglect of neighborhood integration.

Group #3 averaged 4.66 on the effectiveness scale with their lowest ratings in fairness, usefulness, and realism. Although Group #3’s plan was no more concrete than Group #2, they may have received a higher ranking based on some of the issues they discussed. For example, the group members agreed with one student who said, “As the black population increases and their economic strength becomes greater and their political involvement, I think there will be more change for them.” It should be noted that Group #3 evidenced more conflict than any other group. They spent more time debating issues and less time formulating a plan.

Group #4 received the highest ratings of all the groups (X = 6.50). The expert judge wrote:

I was also impressed with the sensitivity to the topic, the sensitive listening, and the mutual respect that occurred. There was a notable absence of time consuming rhetoric, allowing time for the best ideas to surface. It should be noted at this point that Group #4 was the one and only integrated group (50% black and 50% white). The expert judging Group #2 encouraged those students to work in integrated groups in the future as they might achieve better solutions by having different perspectives.

Group #5 received a 4.16 on the effectiveness scale with their highest ratings in realism and usefulness, which was contrary to most other groups. However, their highest scores did not exceed 5 out of 7. The expert judge considered the group to be unprepared and disorganized. While their ideas were perceived as good ones, they were unoriginal and probably difficult to implement.

Group #6 received a 4.83 on the effectiveness scale with their lowest scores in realism and usefulness. The expert praised the group for their effort but cautioned them with respect to reliance on education. “Education alone has not shown to be a useful tool for achieving integration,” the expert explained. Their somewhat vague plan did not clearly address the economic problems of minorities.

In general, the experts praised the students for participating in a difficult and controversial topic. Although stereotypical comments sur-
faced, especially in Group #2 (e.g. property values would go down, crime would go up, blacks would have to learn to keep up the property and watch their children), reviewers offered criticism without caustic statements. Emotional arguments were more touching than stinging, as one expert reminded the students that Archie Bunker could never be persuaded from his prejudice against the Polish by his son-in-law, Mike. The reviewer wrote:

Thus, one would ask the question - Why is it that Archie resisted Mike's attempt to educate him? Mike would say "Piece by piece you (Archie) eat my heart out."

The experts seemed to be educating the students who seemed generally unsophisticated with respect to operable (i.e., realistic and useful) plans for neighborhood integration. The expert who used the Archie Bunker metaphor continued:

So what is the answer? Economic preservation. If Mike had been economically sufficient, Archie would have changed his mind about Mike but not about Polish people. This is why I conclude that it is important for education and economic independence to occur in the same time-space, otherwise integration cannot survive.

The street that I live on recently held a neighborhood clean up project. All residents were invited, and afterward neighbors met for hot dogs at the local church. Several neighbors have joined together to form a neighborhood association to encourage both blacks and whites to move to the neighborhood. The board for the association is comprised of both blacks and whites. Finally, most of the neighbors have been acting as watchdogs concerning realtors who have attempted to stir up negative feelings which may lead to white flight.

We do not intend to paint a Pollyanna picture of neighborhood integration, but as each generation grows more sophisticated with respect to racial prejudice, and neighbors begin to work with community leaders, rather than pay "lip-service" to integration, progress can be made. Integration is inextricably linked to political, economic, and educational factors; each must be addressed.

Anyone who starts out with the conviction that the road to racial justice is only one lane wide will inevitably create a traffic jam and make the journey infinitely longer.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.
Notes


6Montagu, 11.

7Montagu, 7.


10Montagu, 51.


12Myrdal, 98


The University as a Pluralistic System: The Case of Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Albert Ramirez

Recently there has been considerable emphasis placed in higher education on the recruitment and retention of minority faculty. There is an expanding literature indicating the problems relating to the inadequate pool of such faculty and strategies and approaches related to effective recruitment and retention.¹ It is apparent that there is considerable interest in this area. Given the predicted demographic patterns and characteristics in the population during the remainder of this century, it is understandable that colleges and universities are pursuing a more diverse faculty. The recruitment and retention of minority faculty, however, is only one component—though a critically important one—of the total university environment. The extent of effectiveness in this area will depend upon the totality of the other components in which it is embedded and that characterize the university as a whole.

The present paper presents a conceptual model that can be used in analyzing the university system and relates this model specifically to the issue of minority recruitment and retention. The main thesis of the present paper is that effective recruitment and retention of minority faculty will be maximal in a university that has the components of a pluralistic system and minimal in a university that has the components of a monolithic system. Basically, these are the same conditions discussed by Amir as leading to positive inter-racial group relations.² The differences between these two types of general systems have been discussed previously and are presented here within the specific context of a university system.³

The Monolithic University System

The discussion will begin with the monolithic university system, since unfortunately it is this system that characterizes the condition of many
American universities at this time. It is also the system from which we need to move away, if effective minority faculty recruitment and retention is to occur. A monolithic university system is one in which:

1. Those individuals in the system—faculty, staff, students, administrators—are primarily or solely of the dominant ethnic, racial, and/or cultural group.
2. There is limited or no contact or interaction among the various ethnic, racial or cultural groups that do exist in the system.
3. There is limited or no opportunity for the diverse groups to learn about each other's cultures, values, and customs.
4. The power relations between groups are unequal and asymmetric, with members of the dominant cultural group in the position of faculty and administrative leadership and authority.
5. The inter-racial relations that do exist within the faculty, student, and staff groups are formal, and limited to certain structured contexts.
6. There is negative interdependence among the groups; the diverse groups have competing and often mutually exclusive goals.
7. The hierarchy and stratification within the system is maximal and related to racial and/or cultural group membership.
8. The monolithic norms of the university are sanctioned by institutional supports (policies, customs, values) and institutional leadership and authority.
9. The analysis and understanding of human experience is from the normative perspective of one cultural, racial, or ethnic group.
10. The institutional structure promotes assimilation, acculturation and cultural uniformity.

The components listed above are not mutually exclusive, but closely inter-related. Typically, if two or three are found to exist in a university, one might expect some of the other conditions to also prevail, since these are based on a congruent, unidimensional value-belief system. To the extent that a university is characterized by the above ten components of a monolithic system, there will be little impetus to recruit minority faculty, or if such impetus does exist, little effectiveness in such efforts. A monolithic system, as defined above, is primarily a racist system. Minority faculty will not be attracted to such a monolithic university system, no matter what efforts the institution may engage in to recruit the person.

The Pluralistic University System

Minority faculty recruitment and retention will be most effective in a pluralistic university system. A pluralistic university system is one in which:

1. Those individuals in the system—faculty, staff, students, administrators—are from the multiple ethnic, racial, and cultural groups of our society.
2. There is extensive contact and interaction among these diverse groups on campus.
3. There is extensive opportunity for the diverse groups to learn about each other's cultures, values, and customs.
4. The power relations between groups are equal and symmetric; power and leadership are not dependent on race or ethnicity; members of minority groups are in the position of faculty and administrative authority.
5. The inter-racial relations within the faculty, student, and staff groups are informal, intimate, and multi-contextual.
6. There is positive interdependence between the diverse groups, such that they have mutually compatible goals.
7. The hierarchy and stratification within the system is minimal and independent of race, ethnicity, or cultural group membership.
8. The pluralistic norms of the university are sanctioned by institutional supports (policies, customs, values) and institutional leadership and authority.
9. The analysis and understanding of the human experience is from multiple ethnic and cultural perspectives.
10. The institutional structure promotes multiculturalism and cultural diversity.

To the extent that a university is characterized by the above components of a pluralistic system, there will be energetic efforts to recruit minority faculty, and such efforts will be more likely to lead to effective outcomes. A pluralistic system is an open, diverse system, and therefore will be one to which minority faculty will be attracted.

From Monolithic to Pluralistic

Most universities have components within them from the two systems; most institutions are not completely monolithic or totally pluralistic. It is clear, however, that if universities wish to recruit and retain a greater number of minority faculty, they must engage in institutional change strategies in the direction towards becoming pluralistic systems. In order to address condition #1, there must be systematic and programmatic efforts to recruit faculty, staff, and students from the multiple ethnic, racial, and cultural groups that make up contemporary American society. No university can aspire to be a pluralistic system if the plurality that represents the broader social fabric is not to be found within its walls. Innovative and active programs to recruit minorities must be developed and implemented. But mere presence on campus is not enough—there must be extensive contact and interaction among all of these diverse groups, both among themselves and with the broader community (condition #2). Programs on campus that foster and promote this type of interaction need to be initiated and developed. With effective and meaningful interaction, the opportunity for the diverse groups to learn about each other’s cultures, values and customs will be enhanced (condition #3). This type of learning experience needs to exist in the classroom, imbedded in the curriculum, as well as the other components of the university, i.e. the dormitories, clubs and organizations, special seminars and workshops, etc.

Although the above conditions are important, from the perspective of the present writer, condition #4 is one of the most important—if not the singular most important—criterion for developing a university environment that is pluralistic. It is essential that the existing power relations between the groups be equal and symmetric. Power and leadership in the system must not be a function of race and ethnicity. Members of minority groups need to also be in positions of power and authority and to be involved in the decision-making policies of the entire university, not just those relating to minority affairs. Minority faculty and administrators must be in positions to define what is meant by “excellence”; this is critical to the development of a pluralistic university. Funds and programs
supporting multicultural research, scholarship, and teaching have to be available, particularly so that minority faculty can better pursue their intellectual and academic interests. Such a program at the University of Colorado at Boulder, called IMPART (Implementation of Multicultural Perspectives and Approaches in Research and Teaching), has been quite successful in this regard. The legitimacy of minority faculty must be seen on an equal par as that of non-minority faculty. This is especially important with respect to their research, scholarship, and creative work, which, especially in the humanities and the social sciences, may be quite distinct from the traditional and mainstream perspectives of those disciplines.

Only when equal power relations exist can there be inter-racial contact that is informal, intimate, and multi-contextual, condition #5. Dominant-subordinate relationships are not conducive to the types of personal bonds that are linked to patterns of friendship, partnership, collaboration and collegiality. Minority faculty who sense unequal and asymmetric power relations with non-minority faculty, and whose interaction with such faculty is solely formal and limited to faculty meetings or committee assignments, will not feel a part of the university community. Consequently, their retention rate will be minimal; they will be recruited by more pluralistic universities.

Positive interdependence between the diverse ethnic, racial and cultural groups is essential (condition #6). Such a relationship exists when the various groups share super-ordinate goals and recognize that the only way to achieve such goals is by mutual cooperation. In a pluralistic system, the goals of affirmative action and commitment to academic and cultural diversity are mutually shared by all segments of the university community; the link between academic and institutional excellence and diverse faculty and curriculum is acknowledged and valued. There is a recognition that, in order to reach this and related goals, the cooperative involvement of all faculty, department chairs, deans and other administrators must be achieved.

If the above conditions are met, it is more likely that the hierarchy and stratification within the university system will be minimized and be independent of race, ethnicity or cultural group membership (condition #7). Additionally, it is likely that the norms of the pluralistic system will be sanctioned by institutional supports—policies, customs, values—and institutional leadership and authority (condition #8). The importance of this condition can not be overemphasized. In institutions that have developed effective minority faculty recruitment and retention efforts, such efforts have been based on policies, procedures, and programs endorsed or developed by the campus leadership. Target of Opportunity positions, for example, have been utilized to increase the number of minority faculty. In most cases, the commitment to and execution of such strategies has originated within the academic leadership structure of the institution. Diversity has to be perceived and recognized as an
institutional goal, a priority that is incorporated into the institutional strategic plan. The incentive and reward structure of the university incorporate this priority: FTEs, funds for recruitment and retention, and allocation of resources.

Finally, in a pluralistic university the analysis and understanding of the human experience is from multiple ethnic and cultural perspectives (condition #9), and the institutional structure promotes multiculturalism and cultural diversity (condition #10). There exist ethnic studies programs and/or centers that focus on these areas. The curriculum is not ethnocentric—reflecting primarily a white, Western European perspective—but ethno-diverse.

One final point needs to be made about “minority” faculty. An analysis of the ten conditions/components of a pluralistic system suggests that in such a system the term “minority” is not only inappropriate, but invalid. As discussed in a previous paper, the term “minority” connotes unequal status and power, as well as a number of other negative attributions such as, “inferior,” “less than,” “deprived,” and “disadvantaged.” A common example in academia as it relates to this term is the reference to “qualified” minorities, an assumption that somehow being minority and being qualified are mutually exclusive. The only time “qualified” is used in faculty recruitment is in reference to the recruitment of minority faculty. Such negative associations and attributions reflect a monolithic perspective, not a pluralistic one. The present author has a preference for the term “plurality.” In the earlier paper, a case has been made for moving away from minority and towards plurality. Within this conceptualization, “pluralities” in contemporary American society consist of black Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans who, because of their racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity—and their socialization and experiences in this society—can be active contributors to the development of a culturally pluralistic society. The term minority has emphasized the negative characteristics of these individuals and groups; plurality emphasizes what these have to offer in achieving a more open society.

Given the above discussion concerning characteristics of pluralistic university systems and the term “minority,” a more appropriate title for this paper is “The University as a Pluralistic System: The Case of Plurality Faculty Recruitment and Retention.” If real commitment exists for transforming our colleges and universities from ethnic, racial and cultural monolithic institutions to pluralistic institutions, this can best be achieved by the recruitment and retention of plurality faculty.
Notes


5*Faculty Review on Equity and Excellence* (FREE) (Boulder: University of Colorado at Boulder, 1987).


7Ramirez (1990).
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