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White, male, and "minority": a study of racial consciousness development among white male undergraduate students at a public historically black university

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White, male, and "minority": A study of racial consciousness development among White male undergraduate students at a public historically Black university

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has met the dissertation requirements of Iowa State University

Signature was redacted for privacy.

Major Professor

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For the Major Program

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to mother and hero, *Dorothy Peterson*,
and to my brother and friend *Karreem Shareef.*

This dissertation is also dedicated to the members of my extended family who have loved and supported me unconditionally. May this be an inspiration to my younger cousins to strive for greatness and reach their full potential in every life endeavor.

My aunts:
Carolyn Barnett
Shirley Cross

My uncles:
Richard Whitaker
James Cross

My cousins:
Keshia Cross
Chuck Bradley
Shirl Hill
Darrell Whitaker
Kimberly Cross
Antoine Whitaker
Brian Whitaker
Ja-Nekia Cross

And the next generation:
Krystal Cross
André Hill, Jr.
Sherrell Hill
Darrius Javon Hill
Brenaé Cross

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ABSTRACT

Enrollments of non-Black students at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have recently increased as a result of recent court mandates requiring public HBCUs to diversify their student bodies. As these numbers continue to increase, very little research has been done that examines the racial consciousness aspects of identity development of White students attending HBCUs where issues of race, gender, privilege, and power likely intersect.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine the racial consciousness development of White male undergraduate students attending a historically and predominantly Black university through their academic and social experiences. Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological systems theory of human development was used as the guiding framework to explore how the participants made meaning of their experiences in an environment where they were the "temporary minority" (Hall & Closson, 2005). Four significant themes emerged from the data which were: influence of family and neighborhoods, classroom environments, social environments, and greater awareness of race and privilege. Conclusions, limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have played a significant role in the education of African Americans in the United States, especially during a time in history when access to higher education was denied. Recent court cases such as *Adams v. Richardson* (1972) and *United States v. Fordice* (1992), addressing years of segregation and the unequal treatment of Blacks, have resulted in court mandates requiring public HBCUs to "desegregate" and diversify their student bodies (Brown, 2002). As a result, public HBCUs must grapple with pressures to increase the enrollment of non-Black students, strengthen and maintain institutional quality, and clarify the unique function of the HBCU (Hall & Closson, 2005).

The numbers of non-Black students at public HBCUs continue to increase on many campuses (Brown, 2002; Drummond, 2000; Hall & Closson, 2005; Levinson, 2000; T. L. Scott, 2004; Thomas, 2002; Thomas-Lester, 2004), yet the literature is relatively silent with regard to research addressing the ranges of experiences of these students. A wealth of research exists about the college experiences of students of color at predominantly White institutions (PWIs; Davis et al., 2004; Hernandez, 2000; A.P. Jackson, Smith, & Hill, 2003; Lee & Davis, 2000); however, there is very little research on White students attending HBCUs.

Additionally, although White males in the United States represent the race and gender group that is most privileged economically and socially, they are arguably the most disadvantaged with respect to developing as racial and gendered beings due to the socialization, entitlement, and privilege bestowed upon them within this society (D. A. Scott

& Robinson, 2001). In light of this condition, it would be of great benefit to examine the academic and social experiences that White male students might encounter as full-time undergraduates at a public HBCU and try to gain an understanding of how those experiences might contribute to the development of their White racial consciousness.

Problem

Recent court mandates have required the desegregation of public HBCUs in 19 southern and border states[1] that have maintained a dual postsecondary educational system (Brown, 2002). As the number of White students attending HBCUs continues to rise, very little research has been done to document their academic and social experiences as "temporary minorities" (Hall & Closson, 2005) on HBCU campuses. More specifically, there is a lack of research examining the racial consciousness aspects of identity development of White male undergraduate students attending HBCUs where issues of race, gender, privilege, and power likely intersect for these students in ways that have yet to be systematically studied.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness among full-time, White male undergraduate students who attend a public, predominantly Black HBCU through an examination of their academic and social experiences within the HBCU environment.

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[1] The 19 southern and boarder states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. The public HBCUs established in these states are known as the "1890 institutions" because of their creation after the Morrill Act of 1890 which mandated that the federal support for state-level public higher education provided from the first Morrill Act (1862) also includes colleges and universities that enrolled African American students. Because of the practice of segregation, many states elected to establish separate public HBCUs in order to remain eligible for federal support (Brown, 2002).

Research Questions

1. How do White male undergraduate students attending a public HBCU make meaning of their academic and social experiences in terms of their White racial consciousness development?
2. What roles might being a "temporary minority" (Hall & Closson, 2005) play in the White racial consciousness development of White male students at a public HBCU?
3. What roles might White male privilege play in informing the academic and social experiences of White male students attending a public HBCU?

Theoretical Framework

As the number of White students attending HBCUs continues to increase, there is very little research documenting the academic and social experiences of these students. The research that has been done on White students at HBCUs has focused only on graduate students (Conrad & Brier 1997; Hall & Closson, 2005), who would inherently bring a different set of attributes to the environment and have different educational experiences from undergraduates. Research focusing on the academic and social experiences of White undergraduate students attending HBCUs is currently absent from the literature. This study seeks to expand the body of knowledge not only regarding the experiences of White students attending HBCUs, but more specifically, the academic and social experiences of White male students attending a public, predominantly Black HBCU, and these students' development of White racial consciousness.

Bronfenbrenner's (2005b) bioecological (formerly termed as "ecological"; Bronfenbrenner 1979, 1992) systems theory of human development will be used to contextualize the intersections of race, gender, and environment that are of principal interest

in this study. The model "depicts the dynamic, developmental relations between an active individual and his or her complex, integrated, and changing ecology" (Lerner, 2005, pp. xvii-xviii). The cornerstone of the theoretical structure is the ecology of human development, which Bronfenbrenner (2005b) defined as:

> the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life course, between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by the relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. (p. 107)

Bronfenbrenner derived the ecological paradigm from Kurt Lewin's (as cited in Bronfenbrenner, 2005b, and in Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998) formula, $B = f(P \times E)$, which states that behavior (B) is a function (f) of the interaction (x) of person (P) with the environment (E). To understand why people behave the way they do, such factors as their characteristics, background, and developmental levels must be examined (Evans et al.). In particular, the HBCU environment may prove to be developmentally challenging for White male students who are accustomed to being in the majority. Bronfenbrenner's theory may also provide insight into the ways in which the White male student sees himself as a student at an HBCU in contrast to the ways that he might see himself beyond the campus in society at large. This model is most appropriate for this study because it emphasizes examination of both the student and the interactions with the environment. The influence of the environment is especially salient to this study because of the White male students' positions as members of a smaller minority of students on the HBCU campus.

Renn's (2003) study of mixed-race college students utilized this model as a conceptual framework for racial identity development in college students. She stated that "conceptualizing the development of individual students within a complex, dynamic, interactive web of environments, some of which do not even contain them, provides a rich contextual field of study of cognitive, moral, and identity development" (p. 386). This study examines the interaction and influence of the complex, dynamic, interactive web of environments that Renn speaks of, in a way that provides insight into the strategies participants might utilize to manage their position within these environments.

Bronfenbrenner's model, based on his bioecological systems theory of human development is composed of four levels of nested contexts called microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems that place the individual in the center of developmental influences (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b; Renn, 2003). Microsystems involve the people present within one's settings, the nature of these links, and their indirect influence on the developing person through their effect on those who deal with him or her firsthand (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Microsystems may include classrooms, athletic teams, student organizations, on- or off-campus jobs, or families of origin (Renn). Specific microsystems that may help characterize White males' environment at an HBCU would include such aspects as their academic major, classrooms, labs, academic interactions, campus activities, outside interests, on- or off-campus living status, and proximity of their living space to the campus. All of these may potentially impact the development of their racial consciousness.

Mesosystems comprise the relations among two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). An example of the synergistic effects that may be created by the interaction of microsystems relevant to the

current study may include a student's peer groups on campus as compared to peer groups off campus. According to Renn (2003), "micro- and mesosystem environments may conflict or converge in their developmental influences" (p. 389) especially if students are forced to consider their racial/ethnic identity in new and different ways. A White male student at an HBCU may receive conflicting messages about who he is and his role in society or on campus based on messages received from family and friends, versus messages received from administrators, faculty, campus peer groups, and other sets of friends.

Exosystems are defined as settings that do not contain a developing person, but in which events occur that affect the setting containing the person (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Examples of exosystems that might influence the environment of a college student could include such items as federal financial aid policies, institutional policy decisions, and parents' or spouse's workplace (Renn, 2003). Exosystems relevant to this study include these and, in particular, institutional policies regarding the recruitment and retention of non-Black students, institutional scholarship opportunities for White students, the history and culture of the HBCU, as well as the evolving mission.

Macrosystems encompass "the overarching patterns of stability, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, in forms of social organization and associated belief systems and lifestyles" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b, p. 47). Macrosystems are considered the most distal levels of environmental influence (Renn, 2003), which affect the nature of interaction within all other levels of the ecology of human development (Lerner, 2005). Examples of macrosystems might include cultural expectations, social forces, and historical trends and events (Renn). Examples specific to this study might include societal issues

surrounding race, privilege, and power; historical influences such as segregation and desegregation; and past and present court cases addressing collegiate desegregation.

Bronfenbrenner's model helps locate the student participants in multiple contexts to examine their experiences in the face-to-face academic and social settings in which they participate as students (microsystems) and to explore what occurs when those systems interact (mesosystems). This model also incorporates potentially relevant influences that do not contain the participants per se (exosystems) in addition to the overarching influence characteristics of time, place, race, development, and culture (macrosystems). The use of Bronfenbrenner's model in this study will incorporate all these factors, help frame the students' experiences broadly, and help illustrate dynamics and interplays related to students' development of racial consciousness. Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of a theoretical model based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development that shows the various environmental factors that may be relevant to this study.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the literature on White male racial consciousness development by examining White male students' experiences of the intersections of race, gender, and privilege in a university setting where White students constitute a minority group in terms of enrollment numbers. This study also helps public HBCUs gain a deeper understanding of the academic and social experiences of White males on their campuses and should help foster recruitment, support, and retention efforts should this be their desire.

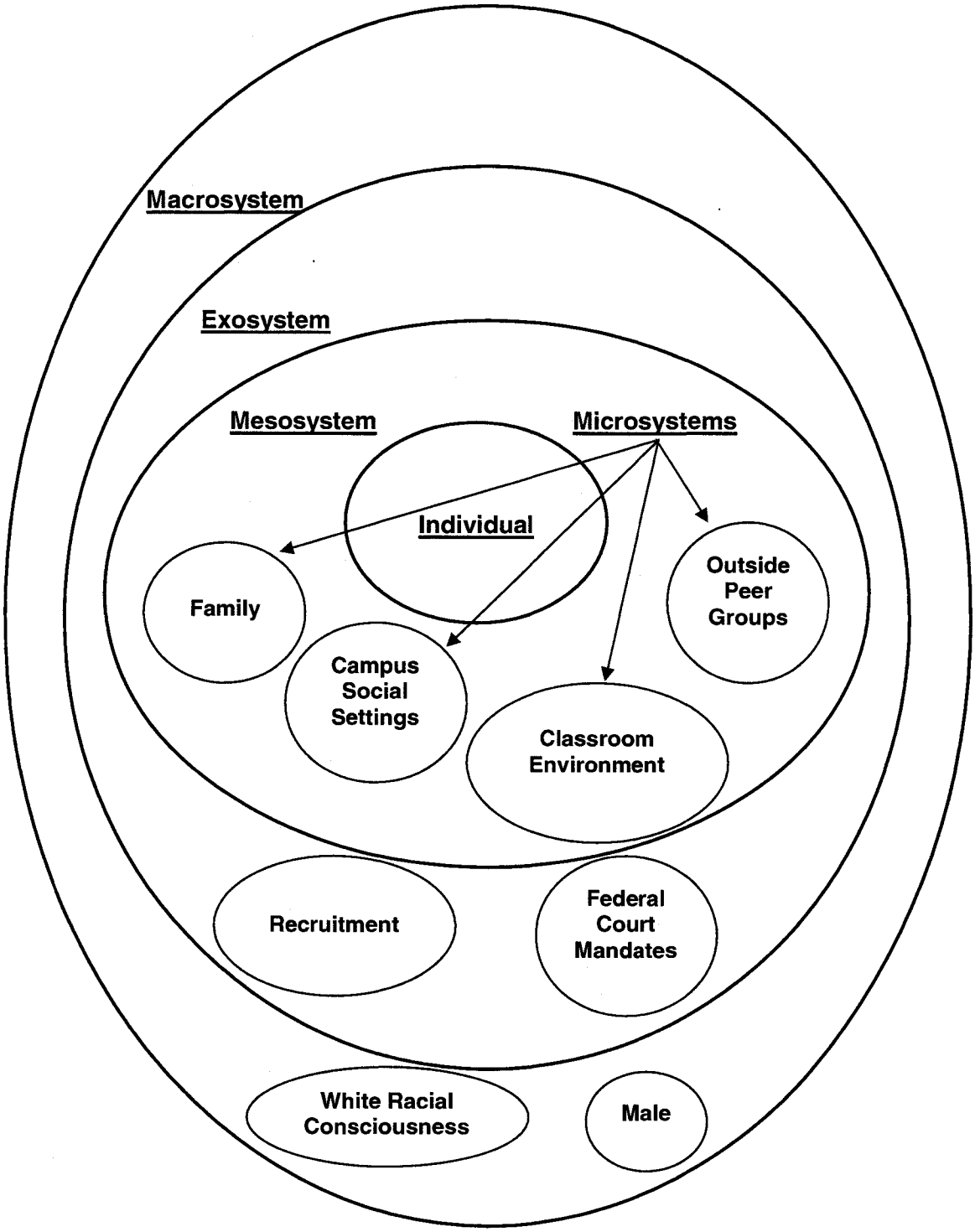

Figure 1.1. Theoretical Model Based on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory of Human Development

Definitions

Black/African American: These terms are often used interchangeably although there can be confusion about these terms and what they are meant to describe. For some, the term African American implies people of African heritage born in the United States who are also the descendents of slaves. This would mean that not all Blacks in America are African Americans. For others, the term describes people of African heritage with U.S. citizenship, thus including individuals who were recent immigrants from Africa or the Caribbean. This would also suggest that not all Blacks are African Americans. But in both cases African Americans are part of the Black group or race. Therefore, Blacks or people of African heritage can have subgroups or ethnic groups that would include Nigerians, Jamaicans, South Africans, and African Americans, just to name a few. While Black people and people of African heritage are synonymous, Black and African American are not (B. W. Jackson, 2001, pp. 14-15). For the purpose of this study, the term "Black" will be the preferred term in order to be more inclusive of all members of the African Diaspora and to be congruent with the term "White." However, the terminology used in chapters 4 and 5 will reflect the language of the respondents.

Historically Black College or University (HBCU): The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, defines an HBCU as:

> any historically [B]lack college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of [B]lack Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] to be a

> reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation. (Higher Education Act, 1965, p. 53)

Predominantly Black HBCU: refers to an HBCU that has an enrollment of 51% or more Black students. In contrast, there are several HBCUs that are historically Black but predominantly White, meaning that the enrollment comprises over 51% White students.

Temporary Minority (Hall & Closson, 2005): refers to a situation in which those who typically hold majority status temporarily become the minority in a specific situation or context. The word "minority" refers solely to numbers (i.e., White students at a predominantly Black HBCU would constitute a smaller proportion of the student body and would therefore be considered the minority).

Transdemography: encompasses specific desegregation initiatives centered on shifting the racial demographics of a campus's student and staff populations. Transdemographic policies and practices promote shifts in the statistical composition of the student and staff populations based solely on race (Brown, 2002). Transdemography is based on legal collegiate desegregation initiatives designed to bring more racial balance to public HBCUs in the 19 southern and boarder states that continued to maintain dual, segregated systems of higher education.

White: The terminology used to describe the White population has varied throughout U.S. history with no consensus as to the optimal term that should be used to describe American descendents of European and Middle Eastern immigrants (McDermott & Samson, 2005). The U.S. Census has always used the term White; however, other

labels such as Caucasian, European American, and Anglo have been used by Whites when identifying their racial group membership (McDermott & Samson). Goldstein (1999) found that the more educated White respondents of the 1996 Current Population Survey preferred the term Caucasian, despite the term's historical association with scientific racism.

The concept of a Caucasian race is, in itself, an example of this scientific racism, which can be seen in the 1781 writings of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, German physiologist and founder of modern anthropology. Blumenbach studied race based primarily on skull features, which he claimed were optimized by the Georgians, a people living in the southern Caucasus region located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea in southeast Europe (Painter, 2003). Blumenbach introduced the term Caucasian as he considered the White people of the region to be as beautiful as the Caucasus mountain range (Painter; Watkins, 2001). For the purpose of this study, the term "White" will be used to be congruent with the term "Black," and also as an effort to avoid further perpetuating the scientific racism inherent in the term Caucasian. As the researcher, I strongly believe that use of the term Caucasian would be counterproductive to the goals and objectives of this study by further perpetuating issues of racism and superiority.

White Privilege: Hays and Chang (2003) described White privilege as the belief that only one's own standards and opinions are accurate to the exclusion of all other standards and opinions and that these standards and opinions are defined and supported by Whites themselves in a manner that continually reinforces social distance between groups, thereby allowing Whites to be in positions of dominance and control. In

addition, Sue (2003) defined White privilege as "the unearned advantages and benefits that accrue to White folks by virtue of a system normed on the experiences, values, and perceptions of their group" (p. 137).

Summary

The goal of this study is to gain an understanding of the academic and social experiences of undergraduate White males who attend a historically Black university, and an exploration of how these experiences might relate to the development of their White racial consciousness. A theoretical model based on Bronfenbrenner's (2005b) bioecological systems of human development was utilized as the theoretical framework for this study to help explore how background, social, and environmental characteristics provide a complex backdrop for the developmental and experiential phenomena of interest.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of literature related to the various components of this study and is divided into three main sections: the historical and political contexts for the study, relevant student development theories, and a discussion of the relationship between students' development and engagement in the campus environment.

Section one of the literature review includes information about the history of HBCUs and their contemporary roles in higher education. Next, the issue of collegiate desegregation is examined through relevant court cases and acts of Congress. Finally, transdemography and the increasing enrollment of White students at HBCUs is summarized and discussed.

Section two of the literature review will explore theories related to this study, including the application of the White racial consciousness (WRC) model (Rowe, Behrens, & Leach, 1995) to gain an overall understanding of the different types of White consciousness development that individuals might encounter. Next, in order to examine this issue more

specifically, the Key model of White male identity development (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001) is also used to frame the phenomenon of interest in this study. Finally, the concept of White privilege, and more specifically, White male privilege is discussed. Section three of the literature review describes Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement, which helps position students within the context of their environments and provides a framework from which to further explore the extent to which they are related to the ethnic/racial identity of the student.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology and methods that underpin this study. The chapter discusses the rationale for the qualitative approach, constructionism, and phenomenology as related to this study, interviewing as the primary method of data collection, and issues related to trustworthiness and credibility. Chapter 3 also incorporates discussion of issues such as insider/outsider status and cross-racial interviewing that are relevant to this study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study including themes and supporting evidence. Chapter 4 also provide answers to the three research questions guiding the study. Finally, chapter 5 presents conclusions, implications for higher education, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature summarizes and connects the various components that establish the conceptual framework for this study. To broadly contextualize past and present events and their impact on the participants, the setting, and the context for this study, Chapter 2 is divided into three main sections deemed relevant to this study including historical and political contexts for the study, an exploration of relevant developmental theories, and a discussion of the relationship between the student and the campus environment.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

HBCUs were established during the segregation period of U.S. history in response to a direct demand for education by Blacks who did not have access to White educational institutions (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). Dating back to a time when Black slaves were forbidden to learn to read and write under threat of physical harm or death, education has been identified as the hope and salvation for the future of Blacks in America (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

> The majority of the 105 HBCUs are located in the Southeastern states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. They include 40 public 4-year, 11 public 2-year, 49 private 4-year, and 5 private 2-year institutions. Most are more than 100 years old with Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, founded in 1837, being the oldest of these institutions. HBCUs offer all students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents. These institutions train young people who go on to serve domestically and internationally in the professions as entrepreneurs and in the public

> and private sectors (White House initiative on historically Black colleges and universities, 2002, p. 9)

In comparison to other American postsecondary institutions, HBCUs vary widely in size, curriculum specializations, and a host of other institutional characteristics. Despite this variety, the one commonality among all HBCUs is their historic responsibility as the primary providers of postsecondary education for African Americans in a social environment of racial discrimination (Brown & Davis, 2001). Given the historic focus of HBCUs on the education of Black students, Allen (as cited in Brown & Davis) identified six characteristics of HBCUs, which are:

> (a) the maintenance of the Black historical and cultural tradition (and cultural influences emanating from the Black community); (b) the provision of key leadership for the Black community given the important social role of college administrators, scholars, and students in community affairs (i.e., the HBCU functions as a paragon of social organization); (c) the provision of an economic function in the Black community (e.g., HBCUs often have the largest institutional budget within the Black community); (d) the provision of Black role models to interpret the way in which social, political, and economic dynamics impact Black people; (e) the provision of college graduates with a unique competence to address the issues between the minority and majority population groups; and (f) the production of Black agents for specialized research, institutional training, and information dissemination in dealing with the life environment of Black and other minority communities. (p. 32)

These characteristics continue to be important components of the mission and goals of all HBCUs regardless of size, location, and curriculum specialization. HBCUs were created for

a specific purpose and continue to serve that purpose today, which is the education of Black Americans.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2004), HBCUs enrolled approximately 290,000 students and employed approximately 55,000 people in 2001. Two percent of all college students in the United States were enrolled at HBCUs in 2001, and Black enrollment at HBCUs accounted for 13% of all Black enrollment in U.S. colleges and universities. Blacks constituted 82% of the total number of students attending HBCUs in 2001. HBCUs conferred 22% of all bachelor's degrees, 17% of all first-professional degrees, 11% of all master's degrees, and 10% of all doctoral degrees awarded to Blacks in 2000–2001 (NCES). HBCUs have produced the bulk of what is today considered the Black middle class: 30% of Blacks who hold doctorates, 35% of Black lawyers, 50% of Black engineers, and 65% of Black physicians (B. Maxwell, 2003).

HBCUs continue to play a significant role in educating Black Americans despite persistent forms of opposition. Recent court rulings designed to remedy years of discrimination and oppression in the form of racial segregation in public systems of higher education have begun to transform the landscape of HBCUs through collegiate desegregation and resulting transdemography policies.

Collegiate Desegregation and Transdemography

Collegiate desegregation remains one of higher education's most important challenges in an effort to achieve equity and equality in postsecondary educational access, opportunity, and attainment. However, higher education researchers and policy makers lack consensus about the role of collegiate desegregation as a strategy to meet the goals of equity and equality, even as coordinating boards and boards of trustees implement collegiate

desegregation compliance initiatives (Brown, 2002). Brown observed that current desegregation initiatives center on changing the racial demographics of a campus's student and staff populations, resulting in a collection of ad hoc policies and practices designed to promote shifts in the statistical composition of the student and staff populations based solely on race. This phenomenon is known as transdemography.

> Transdemography poses a unique set of challenges for public, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Transdemography offers HBCUs the opportunity to both enrich the student campus context and encourage intercultural communication within the academic environment. However, transdemography simultaneously has the capability of eradicating the rich campus culture for which HBCUs have been lauded. (Brown, p. 264)

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance" (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003, ¶ 1). According to Brown (2002), Title VI was a federal attempt to support efforts aimed at desegregating colleges and universities. In the 1973 case of *Adams v. Richardson*, a federal appeals court approved a district court order requiring federal education officials to enforce Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This case is significant because ten states were found to be in violation of the Civil Rights Act for supporting segregated schools. The states were ordered to work actively to integrate the institutions, so long as that integration was not carried out at the expense of HBCUs, which were deemed to play a unique and important role in the education of African Americans (Hobson's College View, n.d.).

The 1992 case of *United States v. Fordice* was another pivotal court ruling. The Supreme Court ruling required that the state of Mississippi do away with all remnants of a dual, segregated system of education. This ruling was similar to the Adams decision except that no special circumstances were outlined for the treatment of HBCUs (Hobson's College View, n.d.). The Supreme Court ruled that

> states must do more than simply eliminate laws barring [B]lack students from predominantly [W]hite institutions to remove vestiges of segregation in higher education. The decision requires states to change all policies that perpetuate segregation "to the extent practicable and consistent with sound educational practices." (Hebel, 2004, p. A24)

The primary concern of the *Fordice* case was whether an institution could be deemed desegregated, even if it had race-neutral missions and policies, as long as it still had racially predominant enrollments. In other words, is an HBCU considered desegregated if it has a 90–99% Black student enrollment? In the *Fordice* case, the Supreme Court ruled that an institution could not be considered desegregated with such a demographic make-up (Brown, 2002). This landmark ruling drives the continuous focus on transdemographic enrollment shifts as the central factor to ascertain collegiate desegregation compliance (Brown). The *Fordice* ruling shifted collegiate desegregation compliance from a focus on fiscal and academic equity to one of mission redesignation and racial composition of student populations (Brown).

The primary aim of current collegiate desegregation initiatives is attracting White students to HBCUs (Brown, 2002). The growing presence of non-Black students on campus raises concurrent questions about the ways in which institutions go about providing

educational guidance and support for these growing numbers of students. Although the legacy of the HBCU has been a relentless commitment to the education of African American students, it is important to note that HBCUs have never been monolithic, monocultural, or homogenous. HBCUs offer a rich history and practice of diversity and tolerance (Brown). According to Foster, Guyden, and Miller (1999; as cited in Brown), "Historically Black colleges have always had a [W]hite presence. From the beginning, [W]hite participation in Black education was the rule rather than the exception" (p. 267).

The fact that HBCUs have always been open to all students makes the idea of collegiate desegregation and transdemography particularly troubling for many supporters of HBCUs. During a period in U.S. history, Blacks were not allowed to attend PWIs so HBCUs were their only option for higher education (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). However, Whites have never been denied access to HBCUs, which makes the required "desegregation" of HBCUs appear oxymoronic. Diversity within an institution's student body offers many educationally relevant benefits for students, but supporters of HBCUs also question how the current set of desegregation policies will impact the unique historical and cultural traditions of these institutions that also constitute their strengths. These are questions that challenge the notion of transdemography and collegiate desegregation and cannot be ignored if progress towards fairness and equity is to be made and access and opportunity for all students is to be realized.

White Students at HBCUs

Increases in the number of White students attending HBCUs have begun to receive considerable attention in the media (Drummond, 2000; Levinson, 2000; T. L. Scott, 2004; Thomas, 2002; Thomas-Lester, 2004). Although the research has been limited, there have been several doctoral dissertations written on issues relating to this topic including case

studies of the trends at specific HBCUs from predominantly Black to predominantly White student enrollments (McClure, 2003; Wilson, 1987), an examination of the factors influencing White students' decisions to attend an HBCU (Hazzard, 1996), and the impact of collegiate desegregation court cases on White enrollment at HBCUs (Seagears, 1988). Beyond these studies, there has not been research examining the topic of this study; more specifically, focusing on the experiences of White undergraduate male students who attend HBCUs.

In 2001, White students accounted for 11% of the HBCU undergraduate enrollment nationally (NCES, 2004). Although there has been increased diversification across a range of racial/ethnic categories on HBCU campuses, the focus has centered on White students (Brown, 2002). Many fear that the increasing number of White students will radically change the institutional culture and climate resulting in campuses that are historically Black but no longer predominantly Black (Drummond, 2000; Levinson, 2000). In fact, three HBCUs now fit that description and are now predominantly White. Those institutions are Bluefield State University (WV), West Virginia State College (WV), and Lincoln University (MO) (Brown).

It is important to note that the HBCUs with the highest White enrollments are all public institutions. Conversely, the HBCUs with the highest Black/African American enrollments are private, and private institutions are not subject to the same type of federal oversight and/or compliance initiatives designed to facilitate collegiate desegregation as their public counterparts (Brown, 2002). The relationship between desegregation initiatives and collegiate enrollment trends suggests that the resulting transdemographic enrollment shifts may very well be eroding the traditional environment and institutional cultures of public HBCUs (Brown).

In addition to collegiate desegregation initiatives as an impetus for the growing White enrollment at HBCUs, White students and parents are discovering that many HBCUs offer a quality education for about half the price of comparable PWIs (Drummond, 2000). Additionally, research by the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute (as cited in Brown, 2002), has shown that White students attending HBCUs have a higher 5-year baccalaureate completion rate than African American students attending HBCUs. In addition, White students who attend HBCUs are often able to engage in more comprehensive actualization (Brown) regarding issues of racism and discrimination, have very little difficulty communicating with people from different races, and have a greater likelihood of dismissing racial stereotypes as false or inaccurate (Willie, 1983).

Despite these positive findings, the increase in the number of White students attending HBCUs remains a controversial trend. Social segregation is a very real issue for some White students on these campuses. Lincoln University, which was once revered as the Black Harvard of the Midwest, is now 70 percent White, yet many student environments at Lincoln remain highly segregated (Levinson, 2000). At Lincoln, Blacks dominate the residence halls, the fraternities and sororities, most social activities, and the alumni association, and White students complain that they feel unwelcome (Levinson). One of the reasons cited for the social segregation at Lincoln is that White students commute, live with family members, and hold down jobs, which affords them little time to play, whereas Black students live on campus because their homes are hours away (Levinson). Another study found confirmation of the "day student" phenomenon at an HBCU, where many White students attended classes by day and left campus once classes were over and were uninvolved in any aspects of campus life beyond academics (Peterson, 2005). Lincoln University is but

one example of the complex reality of transdemographic shifts. However, despite initial concern and uneasiness; overall, White students attending HBCUs appear to find value in the opportunity to engage in new experiences that will contribute to their personal growth and development (Drummond, 2000; Hall & Closson, 2005; Thomas, 2002; Thomas-Lester, 2004).

White Identity Development

Recently, theorists have examined the racial identity development of White individuals primarily through the mechanisms that White individuals might utilize in developing a nonracist identity despite their membership in a privileged group within U.S. society (Helms, 1984, 1995; Sabnani, Ponterotto, & Borodovsky, 1991). A variety of models have been proposed (Helms, 1984, 1995; Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson, 1994; Sabnani et al.; Sue & Sue, 1990) in the growing research on White identity development, the earliest of which emerged from the fields of education and counseling psychology.

The White identity development (WID) model by Hardiman (1982) and the White racial identity development (WRID) model by Helms (1984) are the most well-known examples (Hardiman, 2001). The WID model was originally developed in 1982 (updated in 1992) and includes five stages that describe the development of racial identity in White Americans. The five stages are:

1. *No Social Consciousness of Race or Naivete* about race marked by a lack of awareness of visible racial differences;
2. *Acceptance*, whereupon the White person accepts or internalizes racism and a sense of her/himself as racially superior to people of color, although this sense of dominance, privilege, or entitlement is often unconscious;

3. *Resistance*, marked by an individual questioning the dominant paradigm about race, and resisting or rejecting her/his racist programming;
4. *Redefinition* occurs when the White person begins to clarify her/his own self-interest in working against racism, and begins to take responsibility for her/his Whiteness;
5. *Internalization* involves integrating or internalizing an increased consciousness regarding race and racism, and one's new White identity into all aspects of one's life (Hardiman, 2001, pp. 111-112).

Hardiman (2001) offered her own criticism of the WID model because it ignored or underemphasized the question of how Whites identified culturally with their Whiteness, thus making the model less about identity in the typical sense and more about confronting one's personal racism. The WID was articulated as a model that described the experience of a small number of Whites identified as activists in the struggle against racism. For this reason, it would be a gross oversimplification to say that the WID model defined the racial identity experience for all Whites in the United States (Hardiman, 2001). Further, the WID model was not empirically researched and had a limited impact on the discourse of racial identity in the fields of counseling and psychology (Hardiman, 2001). Finally, Hardiman (2001) herself described the WID model stages as more of a prescription for what she felt Whites needed to do than a description of experiences that Whites shared.

Helms's 1984 WRID model came from the perspective of a Black woman investigating the interplay between Blacks and Whites in counseling relationships. Helms addressed the frustration that all attention in the counseling relationship was focused on people of color, with the assumption that the client was always a person of color and the

therapist or counselor was always White (Hardiman, 2001). Helms (1984) suggested looking at the White person as the subject of analysis and understanding in an effort to promote better psychotherapy relationships and to acknowledge race as a psychological characteristic of both Whites and people of color. Further, Helms suggested the reduction of an emphasis on changing clients who are people of color to adapt to the interpretations of White theorists (Hardiman, 2001). The premise of the WRID model is that, regardless of race, all people go through a stagewise process of developing racial consciousness wherein the final stage is an acceptance of race as a positive aspect of themselves and others (Hardiman, 2001).

Helms developed the initial model by interviewing several White friends and colleagues to determine how they viewed the development of their racial consciousness. In 1990, Helms developed an initial version of the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS), which was designed to assess the six types of White racial identity development schemas described by Helms (Hall & Closson, 2005). In 2002, Helms and Carter revised the inventory to reflect the idea that the scales may interact and that all six scales should be used for interpretation (Hall & Closson). Helms's original model had six stages, which she later changed to six "statuses" (Helms, 1995). However, based on the later acknowledgement by Helms that the scales may interact and that all six scales should be used for interpretation, Helms preferred the term "ego status" over "stage" language (Helms, 1995). The six racial identity ego statuses in Helms's model are:

1. *Contact Status*: satisfaction with racial status quo, obliviousness to racism and one's own participation in it. If racial factors influence life decisions, they do so in a simplistic fashion. . . .

2. *Disintegration Status*: disorientation and anxiety provoked by unresolvable racial moral dilemmas that force one to choose between own-group loyalty and humanism. May be stymied by life situations that arouse racial dilemmas. . . .
3. *Reintegration Status*: idealization of one's socioracial group, denigration and intolerance for other groups. Racial factors may strongly influence decisions. . . .
4. *Pseudoindependence Status*: intellectualized commitment to one's own socioracial group and deceptive tolerance of other groups. May make life decisions to "help" other racial groups. . . .
5. *Immersion/Emersion Status:* search for an understanding of the personal meaning of racism and the ways by which one benefits and a redefinition of whiteness. Life choices may incorporate racial activism. . . .
6. *Autonomy Status:* informed positive socioracial-group commitment, use of internal standards for self-definition, capacity to relinquish the privileges of racism. May avoid life options that require participation in racial oppression. . . . (Helms, 1995, p. 185)

Although the WRID model has been subjected to significantly more empirical testing, critique, and debate than the WID model, Hardiman (2001) identified four major criticisms directed at the WRID model. First, the fact that the WRID model is based on modes of Black identity, or the oppression-adaptive models explaining ethnic minority identity development, is regarded to be an inappropriate approach to understanding the experience of the racially dominant group. Second, the WRID model does not focus on White identity per se, but on how Whites develop different levels of sensitivity to and appreciation of other racial/ethnic groups. Third, the WRID model may not be a developmental model per se because it allows

for the possibilities of skipping stages and for backward as well as forward movement across the stages. The fourth critique is that the WRID model focuses exclusively on White-Black relationships to the exclusion of other races.

In addition, it is important to note that the reliability and validity of scores from the WRIAS instrument have been criticized (Hardiman, 2001). As a result of their critique, Rowe et al. (1995) proposed their own model, the White racial consciousness (WRC) model, which focuses on White racial attitudes and which they refer to as types of White racial consciousness (Hardiman, 2001). The WRC model will be the central phenomenon of interest in this study as it relates to the academic and social experiences of White males attending an HBCU.

In addition to criticism of White racial identity models, Rowe et al. (1995) raised the question of whether or not it is possible to study the racial identity development of Whites in the same way as people of color:

> White racial identity development models often are open to criticism because of the inappropriate use of the developmental concept, the use of an inappropriate parallel with minority identity development, and the use of the term *White racial identity*, when little attention is actually given to White identity. At issue here is whether a White person's sense of racial identity and a non-White person's sense of racial identity develop similar pathways, and whether, in fact, White identity models are about "identity." (p. 224)

Because of the inherent power and social inequities in U.S. society, it would appear to logically follow that the process of identity development should be different for members of the dominant versus nondominant groups. Indeed, Rowe et al. (1995) asserted that even the

term White racial identity development is a misnomer because the models actually provide little insight into the attributes of a White identity. Instead they generally describe different levels of sensitivity to appreciation of other racial/ethnic groups (Rowe et al.). Although these models claim to explain how Whites develop attitudes toward their racial-group membership, they merely suggest that Whites are initially oblivious to racial issues and then develop certain views of racial/ethnic minorities that are then used to define White identity (Rowe & Atkinson, 1995).

Whereas minority identity development models provide a framework for understanding the development of positive attitudes toward oneself and one's racial/ethnic group, White racial identity development models are more concerned with the development of attitudes toward out-group members (Rowe et al., 1995). Whites do not ordinarily experience a clear sense of racial identity to the degree that racial/ethnic minorities do because society has a consistent and overriding positive view of the race with which they identify (Rowe et al., 1995). "For Whites, the salient aspect is not their own difference that they must come to terms with, but rather the fact that some other people who populate their world are different" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 225). Rather than looking at racial/ethnic identity and White identity as highly similar constructions, Rowe et al. (1995) took the position that it would be better to step back from the construct of White racial identity and look instead at White racial attitudes.

> The undeniable reality is that White people say things and act in ways that seem to reflect a variety of attitudes toward racial/ethnic minorities. Rather than regarding these attitudes as a reflection of an underlying "racial identity," we chose to treat attitudes as the primary phenomena of interest. This approach resulted in the

development of the paradigm of White racial consciousness. (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 225)

The criticism of White racial identity models and the inappropriate parallel with minority development deem these approaches inadequate to meet the goals and objectives of this study. The WRC model is a better approach for this study because it focuses on attitudes resulting from behaviors that are influenced by experiences within the environment.

White Racial Consciousness Model

"White racial consciousness is conceived as the characteristic attitudes held by a person regarding the significance of being White, particularly in terms of what that implies in relation to those who do not share White group membership" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 225). Whether the pattern of beliefs are clear and significant or vague and of little concern, it is likely to be reflected to some extent in one's expressed attitudes, overt behaviors, and related affect, and it is from these observable manifestations that a person's "type" of "racial consciousness" can be inferred (Rowe et al., 1995). It is important to point out that although the contributors to this paradigm acknowledge its limitations in that there is a less than perfect correlation among these phenomena, they have chosen to focus on attitudes because they are more relatively stable and more readily available for assessment than are either emotions or behaviors (Rowes et al., 1995).

Use of the term "race" can be highly controversial, complex, and contradictory with both social and genetic components (Rowe et al., 1995). Therefore, these theorists define "White racial attitudes" to mean "attitudes of Americans who consider themselves to be 'White' toward racial/ethnic minority group members to the extent that they are identifiable and recognized as non-White" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 225). The theorists define attitudes as

the "effective orientation regarding the favorability of something" (Rowe et al., p. 226). The relationship between racial attitudes and behavior is formulated as information about racial matters and one's racial experiences interact. The way in which individuals evaluate and process these interactions influences their inherent racial attitudes and behaviors for future interactions and experiences. Racial attitudes are influenced by relevant social norms and behavioral expectations that, in turn, guide the subsequent observable behavior (Rowe et al., 1995). This approach to conceptualizing attitudes and behavior will be instrumental in understanding the experiences of the participants within the HBCU environment.

Bandura (1986) stated that attitudes are sometimes formed as the result of experience, but are more frequently acquired through observation. "Although attitudes are often quite resistant to verbal persuasion, they frequently change as a result of direct or vicarious experience that is inconsistent or in conflict with previously held attitudes" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 226). The resulting dissonance is resolved in a particular way that is considered to be a function of one's innate attributes, learning history, and environmental influences (Rowe et al., 1995). The attitudes of White people toward racial/ethnic minorities are assumed to be acquired in the same manner as other attitudes and collectively constitute the construct of White racial consciousness (Rowe et al., 1995).

The categories or types of White racial consciousness proposed in the resulting model were adapted from Phinney's (1990) stages of ethnic identity. Within this model, the exploration of one's identity and commitment to one's ethnic group are the defining features of four categories of identity development. Phinney identified ethnic identity development as a process of progression through four separate phases: diffuse—ethnic identity is not yet explored; foreclosure—commitment is based on parental values and not made independently;

moratorium—exploring his or her ethnic identity but not yet settled or committed to one; and achieved—the individual has explored his or her identity and is firmly committed. Although Phinney's (1990) model serves as a useful device to help organize White racial consciousness in terms of exploration of racial/ethnic minority issues and commitment to some position on these matters, Rowe et al. (1995) clearly pointed out that they do not accept the theoretical basis, perhaps due to the fundamental emphasis on identity rather than consciousness.

The WRC conceptual model includes seven distinct types. Use of the term types "refers to a describable set of attitudes and not an abstract personality configuration" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 226). This approach is used as a means to classify people according to the types of racial attitude profiles they hold, and it is important to note that speaking of people as being a certain type should be avoided (Rowe et al., 1995). Rather than proposing that there are various types of people, Rowe et al. (1995) proposed that there are seven clusters or types of racial attitudes held by White people. These attitude clusters are described as follows (Rowe et al., 1995, pp. 228-230):

- Avoidant: a lack of consideration of one's own race as well as an avoidance of concern for racial/ethnic minority issues. Whether these issues are found to be merely inconvenient or actually anxiety arousing, their preferred way of responding is to ignore, minimize, or deny the existence of the problematic issue
- Dependent: may involve some kind of White racial consciousness; however, alternative perspectives have not been personally considered. Some who remain dependent and unreflective in adulthood may still look to significant others for what

their opinions should be. The White racial attitudes are held superficially and are not "owned" to the degree that these attitudes have been internalized by others.

- Dissonant: clearly uncertain about what to think about issues dealing with racial/ethnic minorities. These individuals lack commitment to attitudes they may express and are open to new information because of the confusion that they experience. They may be in this situation due to a lack of experience or information, but it is frequently the result of the lack of congruence between their previously held racial attitudes and recent personal vicarious experience. Dissonant attitudes are often held by people who are in transition from one set of racial attitudes to another.
- Dominative: based on the premise that the majority society is entitled to dominate racial/ethnic minority peoples because of an inherent superiority. Persons whose attitudes best represent this type hold an ethnocentric perspective that presumes the cultural correctness of their position and evaluates all others in terms of how close they approach this standard. Any deficiency in matching any aspect of majority society is seen as the result of defects in the personal qualities of racial/ethnic minority people. Persons with such attitudes may tolerate relations with minority people if they are in a superior role, but strongly disapprove of close personal relationships with them. Regardless of their station in life, they seem to think they share in the credit for the accomplishments of outstanding White people.
- Conflictive: People whose racial attitudes resemble conflictive-type attitudes will not ordinarily support obvious discrimination toward racial/ethnic minorities but are usually opposed to programs or procedures intended to reduce the effects of discrimination. The conflict is between two traditional American values: equality and

individualism. Persons whose attitudes reflect the conflictive type usually support issues that clearly involve the principle of fairness but are likely opposed to any alteration of the status quo designed to remediate any currently inequitable situation caused by past discrimination. They apparently think that things may not have been right at one time, but are fine now.

- Integrative: People who hold integrative-type attitudes have a pragmatic view of racial/ethnic issues. Although their views are based on a sense of moral responsibility, their outlook is pragmatic in the sense that their actions are tempered by what effect they are likely to have. Those with integrated attitudes appear to have integrated their sense of Whiteness with a regard for racial/ethnic minorities. They value a culturally pluralistic society, are comfortable with their Whiteness, and are comfortable interacting with minority people. They apparently believe that racism can be overcome by goodwill, rational thought, and democratic processes.
- Reactive: People whose attitudes can best be described as reactive hold quite militant views in reaction to the racism that they recognize in American society. They tend to identify with minority groups and may romanticize the plight or issues relating to minorities. They may sometimes even seem to feel guilty about being White. Those who display reactive attitudes are often sensitive to situations that may involve discrimination. However, they may engage in paternalistic behavior and operate from an essentially White perspective. They apparently are affected by the inequities in our society and feel compelled to react against it.

Table 2.1 illustrates the relationship between modes of exploration/commitment and types of White racial consciousness. For example, according to Rowe et al. (1995) a person

can present attitudes that show neither exploration nor commitment to racial/ethnic minority concerns, which would be deemed "avoidant"; attitudes that indicate only commitment to some view but without personal consideration of alternatives, which would be labeled "dependent"; or attitudes that emphasize exploration but withhold commitment to any point of view, which would be considered "dissonant." Each of these types represents a status of unachieved White racial consciousness because the attitudes are not securely integrated into the belief structure of the individual. In contrast, persons who present attitudes that do not indicate either a lack of either exploration or commitment to racial/ethnic minority issues would be regarded as having an achieved White racial consciousness status. These categories are "conflictive," "dominative," "integrative," and "reactive."

Table 2.1.

Relationship Between Modes of Exploration/Commitment and Types of White Racial Consciousness (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 227)

Exploration	Commitment	Status	Type
No	No	Unachieved	Avoidant
Yes	No	Unachieved	Dissonant
No	Yes	Unachieved	Dependent
Yes	Yes	Achieved	Conflictive
Yes	Yes	Achieved	Dominative
Yes	Yes	Achieved	Integrative
Yes	Yes	Achieved	Reactive

Block and Carter (1996) critiqued the WRC model and the White racial identity model by comparing the two theories in terms of their definition of core constructs and theoretical basis (Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002). In terms of core constructs, they concluded that the organizational framework of phases and statuses is quite similar in both models, and that the specific ego statuses (White identity) and attitude types (White consciousness) are almost identical in meaning (Leach et al.). With regard to theoretical basis, the WRC model was criticized as actually being based on a developmental stage model (Leach et al.). Block and Carter considered the conceptualization of White racial consciousness to be a variant of Helm's (1984) version of White racial identity, and Helms and Cook (1999) concured by characterizing White racial consciousness as a derivative of White racial identity (Leach et al.). "Both White racial identity and White racial consciousness models attempt to explain the same general phenomena, namely, the racial outlook of those people considered to be White in America" (Leach et al., p. 70). However, the difference lies in the fact that Helms's White racial identity model looks at White individuals' use of Whites as a reference group as well as their racist interface with African Americans, whereas the WRC model tries to capture White American's attitudes toward people of color (Leach et al.).

Despite the criticism of the WRC model, there is value in the fundamental position that attitudes are most frequently acquired through observational learning, are rather impervious to verbal persuasion and subject to situational influences, and tend to result in intentions that guide observable behaviors (Bandura, 1986). The WRC model will serve as the principle lens for examining respondents' racial identity aspects within Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development; the WRC model will permit a deeper

focus on the experiences of being White within the HBCU campus environment. Further, as a companion to the WRC model, the Key model of White male identity development (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001) will be used in an effort to focus more specifically on the White male and issues of White privilege. Taken together, these three theoretical models link respondents with the environment, with White racial consciousness, and with White male privilege, which are the main components of this study. The Key model is outlined below and discussed in greater detail as it relates to the context of this study.

The Key Model of White Male Identity Development

The Key model is a theoretically derived identity model influenced by the work of Helms (1995), Myers et al. (1991), and Sue and Sue (1990). The Key model differs from the aforementioned models in that it addresses the convergence of race and gender attitudes that White men may exhibit as a result of socially constructed attitudes regarding appropriate displays of manhood in their lives (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Scott and Robinson explain that although the model is not linear in its design, it does reflect the assumption that initial phases of development involve minimal self-interrogation, whereas the higher levels of development reflect a personal crisis and subsequent resolution that leads to greater self-knowledge. One of the overarching goals of the model is to help White men challenge the debilitating socialized notion that they are superior to others, which can be done through education and experience (D. A. Scott & Robinson).

The Key model itself is circular and suggests that movement occurs in multiple directions (see Figure 2.1). The model is composed of five types of identity stages, including noncontact, claustrophobic, conscious identity, empirical, and optimal. D. A. Scott and Robinson (2001, pp. 418-420) described each type as:

- Type 1—Noncontact Type: The attitudes of individuals in this phase include little or no knowledge of other races or of their own race. The individual will either ignore, deny, or minimize issues dealing with race and race relations, and also tends to exhibit very rigid and traditional attitudes toward gender roles. Low level encounters with race will not trigger dissonance, and the individual is attracted to continuing the status quo. There is a limited awareness of how women and people of color contend with discriminatory practices related to their gender and race, and the individual is not aware of the need for legal steps to correct discrimination. This type is characterized by ethnocentrism and a belief in the superiority of White males to women and to people of color.
- Type 2—The Claustrophobic Type: The "claustrophobic type" begins to realize that the American dream is not reality and may start to look to women and persons of color to blame. He begins to feel that people of color and women are receiving unmerited advantages at his expense. An individual in this stage may seek power for himself while restricting women and people of color from access to their privileges. This person views people of color and women in a stereotyped and overgeneralized way. It is important to note that many White men never exhibit attitudes other than the Type 1 and Type 2 attitudes.
- Type 3—Conscious Identity Type: This type is characterized by a precipitating event, whether positive or negative, that creates dissonance between a person's existing belief system and real-life experiences with women and people of color that contradict his belief system. As a result of such an event, the individual must reevaluate his culture, both as it exists around him and the extent to which he has

internalized it. A person in this phase can either adopt the attitudes of the Claustrophobic type or move into the Empirical type, which would allow him to rationally and realistically look at his feelings and actions toward women and people of color and the overall struggle for power and privilege.

- Type 4—Empirical Type: During this phase, the White male finally realizes that racism and sexism are real and are involved in many aspects of his life. The person begins to recognize his misplaced blame and that women and people of color are not responsible for discriminatory practices that may have directly affected him. He recognizes that his privileged existence was earned through no effort of his own and was done at the expense of many oppressed women and people of color. At this phase, there is a growing awareness of unearned privileges due only to the color of his skin, that have allowed him to more easily negotiate life in comparison to other groups that are different from him.
- Type 5—Optimal Type: Existance in this phase represents a changed worldview into a holistic understanding of the common struggle of all people for survival and success. There is a realization of the value found in working with all people independent of their racial and gender identities, while at the same time there is an increased knowledge of the roles that race and gender relations play. The individual is more aware of oppression and strives to minimize it in an effort to promote more equity and equality for all.

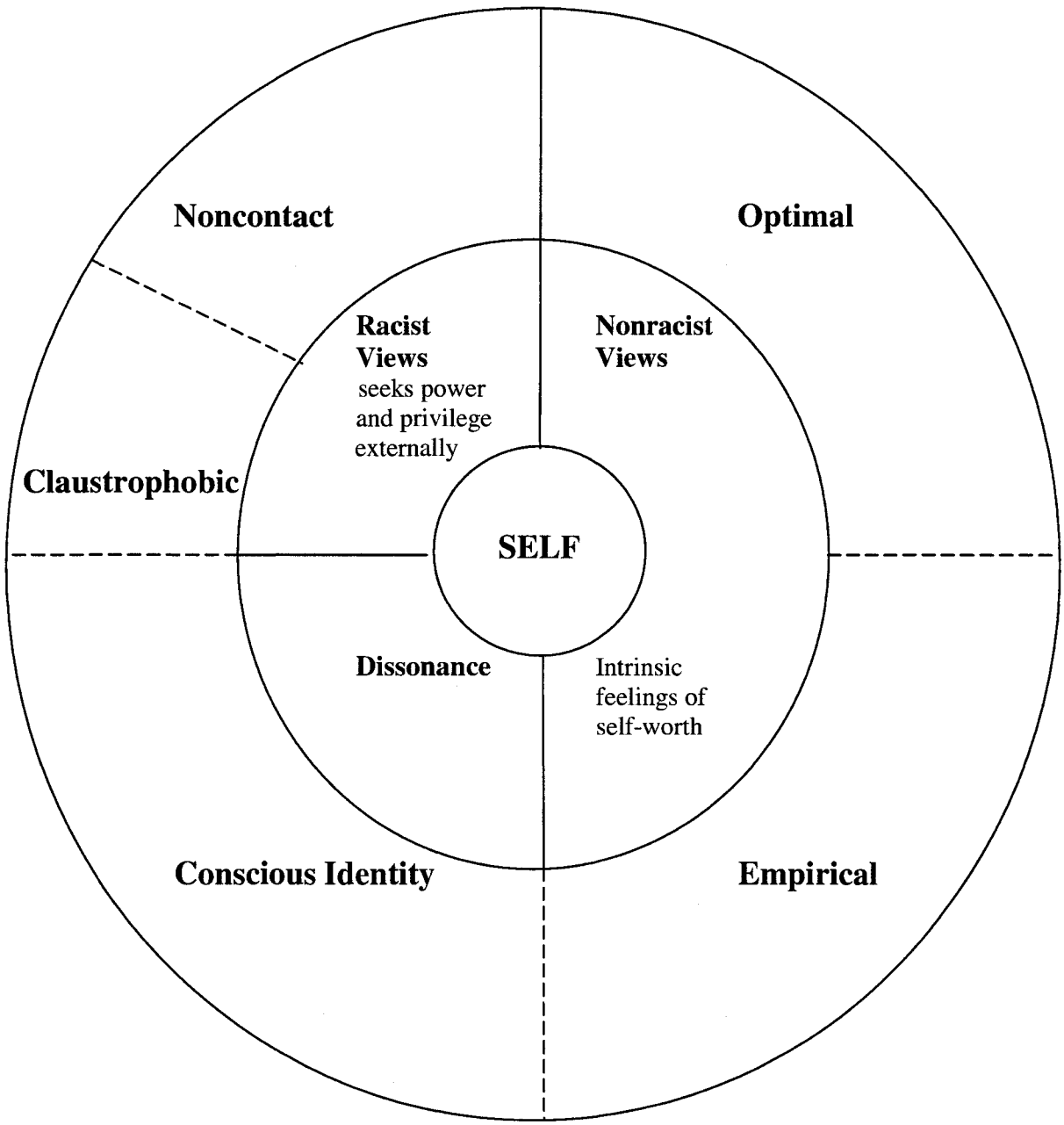

Figure 2.1. The Key Model of White Male Identity Development (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001)

Although the Key model is borrowed from the field of counseling, it offers a way of understanding White male identity growth by considering multiple facets affecting White men's psychosocial identity development. The main counseling-related goal of the model is to facilitate growth in White males to help them see themselves as whole beings—a goal that may conflict with the types of attitudes that may exist as a function of their socialization patterns (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001).

For the purposes of this study, I have positioned the Key model within the core level of development for the individual in Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development. Aspects of the Key model may help illuminate the respondents' meaning making of the interactions and relationships between the individual and members of his environment—especially with Black peers, classmates, professors, and administrators with whom a student may come in contact.

Student Involvement Theory

Astin (1984) defined student involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (p. 297). Highly involved students might devote considerable energy to studying, student organizations, and interaction with faculty and other students, whereas uninvolved students would not expend their energies elsewhere (Astin, 1984). This theory contends that it is not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does that defines and identifies involvement (Astin, 1984). Astin's involvement theory has five postulates:

1. Involvment refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a chemistry examination).

2. Regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.
3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features.
4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality of student involvement in that program.
5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement. (Astin, 1984, p. 298)

This approach focuses on factors that facilitate development rather than examining development itself. In order for student learning and growth to take place, students need to actively engage in their environment (Evans et al., 1998).

For the purpose of this study, I have positioned student involvement theory within Bronfenbrenner's model as one potential way of interpreting the relationships between the individual student and the amount of time and energy spent within the campus envirnment. In other words, student involvement theory may help illuminate aspects of the mesosystem, which comprises the relations among two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Astin's involvement theory includes both academic and social pursuits, which are cornerstones of this study. Outcalt and Skewes-Cox (2002) brought Astin's emphasis on student involvement to bear on Bronfenbrenner's more general concepts of human ecology by proposing a theory of reciprocal engagement, in

which "students and their campuses exist in a relationship of mutual influence. Bronfenbrenner reminds us that environments must be studied as carefully as, and in tandem with, individuals" (Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, p. 333).

Based on these theoretical perspectives, one working assumption relevant to this study was that students who were more actively involved in campus life would exhibit a higher degree of White racial consciousness, which is one form of individual development, than those who were less actively involved. The more involved students were most likely more aware of and comfortable with themselves and their environment. However, there were also elements of the respondents'campus experiences that affected the development of White racial consciousness in other ways. Attention to the phenomenon of involvement in this study also included a focus on potential meaningful involvements outside the campus community, particularly for the respondents who reported less campus involvement. These students felt greater comfort or affirmation in settings where they were in the majority. The roles that a wide range of involvements played in a respondents' development of White racial consciousness were also explored in this study.

White Privilege and Male Privilege

The concept of privilege plays an integral role in the framework of this study. Both the WRC model and the Key model incorporate some aspects of privilege embedded within the stages and types of the models. For example, the empirical type (type 4) of the Key model involves a recognition of a privileged existence at the expense of many oppressed women and people of color (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001); and the dominative type of the WRC model involves attitudes that are based on the premise that the majority society is entitled to dominate racial/ethnic minority groups based on an inherent superiority and

ethnocentric perspective (Rowe et al., 1995). Both models are compatable in many ways because they both involve elements of such issues as privilege, superiority, blame, and dissonance just to name a few.

Sue (2003) defined White privilege as "the unearned advantages and benefits that accrue to White folks by virtue of a system normed on the experiences, values, and perceptions of their group" (p. 137). McIntosh (as cited in D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001) described privilege as a situation that occurs when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to, rather than because of anything they have done or failed to do. McIntosh also likened White privilege to an "invisible knapsack" of assets that an entitled group can access on a regular basis to more effectively negotiate their lives.

Hays and Chang (2003) described White privilege as the belief that only one's own standards and opinions are accurate to the exclusion of all other standards and opinions, and that these standards and opinions are defined and supported by Whites themselves in a manner that continually reinforces social distance between groups, thereby allowing Whites to be in positions of dominance and control. McDermott and Samson (2005) posited that:

> the scholarship on [W]hiteness in the United States has highlighted several important characteristics of [W]hite racial identity: It is often invisible or taken for granted, it is rooted in social and economic privilege, and its meaning and import are highly situational. (p. 247)

For White males in particular, especially those of middle- and upper-class status, a key characteristic of life in this society is a set of privileges that provides them with dominant positions, resources, and life opportunities (Crowfoot & Chesler, 2003). These privileged

statuses are reflected in the behavior toward and interaction with others—including other White men, White women, and people of color (Crowfoot & Chesler). Often these privilege-based behaviors and rewards are visible and known, but may also be invisible, not part of the consciousness, or vaguely understood but ignored (Crowfoot & Chesler). These privileges and assets are often taken for granted because as McIntosh (1989) stated, "[W]hites are carefully taught not to recognize [W]hite privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege" (p. 10). The invisibility of these privileges or the denial of them, lends them special power (Crowfoot & Chesler). According to Crowfoot and Chesler, "if we were fully aware of our special privileges and their dominating effects, some of us would attempt to relinquish or temper them; of course, others of us would not" (p. 356).

This study sought to examine how issues of White privilege and male privilege might intersect with the temporary minority status experienced on an HBCU campus. Environment is an important factor in this study because the campus itself does not mirror the demographics of society. The White male student is not in the majority in terms of campus demographics, which may raise questions about his racial consciousness development and ability to successfully function in the environment. Privilege may exist in some aspects of the student's microsystems and mesosystems and may not exist in others. The manner in which the student reconciles these factors will provide insight into his level of racial consciousness and development.

Summary

This chapter provided a review of literature relevant to this study. The initial discussion of HBCUs set the historical context for the study to provide an understanding of these institutions and their unique role in the education of African Americans as well as

students from other backgrounds. Collegiate desegregation and transdemography were discussed to outline the historical enrollment shifts at public HBCUs as well as illuminate the present-day issues resulting from the court mandates requiring the diversification of these campuses. A brief discussion of the growing number of White students at HBCUs was provided to establish the reality that many HBCUs are struggling with the decision to comply with court mandates requiring desegregation, or maintain their historic enrollment patterns risking judicial sanctions (Brown, 2002).

The WID model by Hardiman and the WRID model by Helms were then examined and critiqued, leading into the discussion of White racial consciousness. The WRC model is particularly relevant to this study because it focuses on attitudes instead of identity as the phenomenon of interest. The Key model goes one step beyond the WRC model by focusing specifically on White men. Astin's theory of student involvement completed the discussion of directly relevant theories as it enabled positioning the White male and White racial consciousness within Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory and its application to the HBCU setting for the current study. Each of these components interacts with one another and may directly influence one another. Relative degrees of involvement on campus interact with other environmental systems such as family, off-campus jobs, and peer groups, all of which may have impacts on the ways in which the White male student views himself in relation to these environments. In addition, these factors may impact his relationships with others and perspectives on others, especially those who are culturally or racially different.

Chapter 2 concluded with a discussion of White privilege and male privilege, which are important cornerstones of this study. If indeed participants are accustomed to functioning in society with the privileges bestowed upon them strictly because they are White and male,

these assets may be challenged as a result of being a member of the temporary minority at an HBCU. One of the goals of this study was to uncover these challenges and explore how they might contribute to racial consciousness development.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology and methods used in this study. The research design that shaped my choice of particular methods will be addressed and linked to the phenomenon of interest in this study. Additionally, the issues of cross-racial interviewing and insider/outsider status will be explored as they present critical methodological issues for this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY, DESIGN, AND METHODS

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness of full-time, residential, White male undergraduate students who attend a public, predominantly Black HBCU by examining their academic and social experiences within the HBCU environment. This chapter outlines the methodology and methods that were implemented to meet the goals of this study.

The chapter begins with a brief rationale for the qualitative approach as well as relevant epistemological and theoretical perspectives. Information about the research site is provided, as are the criteria for participant selection and the proposed methods of data collection and analysis. The methods section of this chapter also addresses the methodological issues of cross-racial interviewing and insider/outsider status as they relate to this study. Identification of limitations and delimitations are provided, as well as a discussion of researcher role and reflexivity.

Rationale for the Qualitative Approach

The qualitative approach is based on the idea of striving to understand social processes in context while exploring the meanings of social events for those who are involved in them (Esterberg, 2002). Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world by studying things in their natural settings while attempting to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a). All qualitative research is characterized by the search for meaning and understanding, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, inductive, investigative strategy, and a richly descriptive product (Merriam, 2002).

A qualitative approach was most appropriate for this study in an effort to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of the participants as expressed in their own words. One goal for this study was to give voice to White male students as they experience an educational environment in which they are not in the majority in terms of student demographics. This study provided one avenue for these students to share their stories as members of this often overlooked (and for some, highly controversial) student population on predominantly and historically Black college campuses. The use of thick, rich description provided in-depth, detailed accounts of the experiences of the student participants in the study.

The essential elements of the research process are generally defined as epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods (Crotty, 1998). Each of these components is defined and discussed in order as it relates to this study.

Epistemology

Epistemology is philosophical in nature and conveys the way of understanding the world or theory of knowledge rooted in the theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998; Harding, 1987; Jones, 2002). Epistemology can also be described as the relationship between the knower and what is known (Gonazalez, 2003). The epistemology that appropriately underlies this study is constructionism. Constructionism is "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, p. 42). In the constructionist paradigm, the researcher–respondent relationship is subjective, interactive, and interdependent; reality is multiple, complex, and not easily quantifiable; the values of the researcher, respondents,

research site, and underlying theory cannot help but undergird all aspects of the research; and the research product is context specific (Broido & Manning, 2002).

It is important to note that the constructionist paradigm has been embraced in educational practice, including higher education and student affairs, which is especially relevant to my research (Broido & Manning, 2002). Constructionism is most appropriate for this study based on the premise that all knowledge is contingent upon human practices being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 1998). This study sought to understand how the participants interpret their experiences primarily within the context of the HBCU environment.

Broido and Manning's (2002) statement about the values of the researcher, respondents, site, and theory is especially salient for my research. The HBCU environment, which in this case is predominantly Black, creates an inversion of the student demographics typically found at a PWI, yet the experiences of White students in this setting cannot be expected to simply mirror those of Black students at PWIs. This type of environment contains relatively unexplored dynamics in terms of power and control that can influence the degree and type of connections and involvements of White students within the institution and the degree to which they may be comfortable discussing these and related issues with a Black researcher. Issues of insider/outsider status, as well as cross-racial interviewing are especially salient within this study based on my position as a Black male and the position of the participants as White males. These issues will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter.

This study also contains elements of the constructivist perspective which focuses exclusively on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind (Crotty, 1998).

"Researchers employing the constructivist paradigm work with categories and interpretations that are grounded in data, analyze data through inductive means, and concern themselves with the discovery of meaning" (Stage & Manning, 2003, p. 21). From a constructivist perspective, theory and practice constantly inform one another in a mutually shaping manner that neither precedes nor follows the other in a consistent, one-way fashion (Broido & Manning).

Theoretical Perspective: Interpretivism

Social constructionist and interpretive approaches subscribe to the notion that all social reality is constructed, or created, or modified by social actors. The interpretive tradition asserts that researchers should begin by examining the empirical world. Rather than beginning with a theory or preconceived notion of the way the world works, researchers should begin by immersing themselves in the world inhabited by those they wish to study (Esterberg, 2002). The emphasis should be placed upon understanding how individuals construct and interpret reality (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Interpretivism was relevant to this study based on the need to understand the social action of the students within the context of their experiences at the institution based on the dynamics created by the intersection of race, class, and gender. Although various theories were used to provide a foundation, it was the participants and their interpretations of their experiences that guided the study.

In order to understand a particular social action, the inquirer must grasp the meanings that constitute that action.

> To say that human action is meaningful is to claim either that it has a certain intentional content that indicates the kind of action it is and/or that what an action

means can be grasped only in terms of the system of meanings to which it belongs. (Schwandt, 2000, p. 191)

The interpretive theoretical perspective provided a framework for understanding how White male students interpret and make meaning of their experiences as a minority at a historically and predominantly Black institution and how those experiences may contribute to their White racial consciousness development. I was interested to discover how these students construct and interpret their reality as they are no longer in the majority while on campus and explore the contribution of this situation to their academic and social development on campus. This line of inquiry was also designed to reveal the students' perceived significance of their presence at the institution and their sense of belonging within the campus community.

Methodology: Phenomenology

Qualitatively-oriented methodologies seek to gain direct access to the lived experiences of the human actor as he or she understands and deals with ongoing events (M. J. Patton, 1991). The goal is to describe and analyze the activities and meaning that persons attach to their experiences as they engage in organized social interaction (M. J. Patton, 1991). Phenomenology, as the methodological approach for this study, helped as I sought to explain and understand the experiences of White male students at an HBCU.

Moustakas (1994) described phenomenology as "a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience" (p. 13). A phenomenological study focuses on the essence or structure of an experience by showing how complex meanings are built out of simple units of direct experience (Merriam, 2002). Phenomenology as a form of inquiry is an

attempt to deal with inner experiences unprobed in everyday life (Merriam). This type of research is based on the assumption that there is an essence or essences to shared experiences and that the experiences of different people are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon (M. Q. Patton, 1990).

> In order to understand the essence or structure of an experience, the researcher temporarily has to put aside, or "bracket," personal attitudes or beliefs about the phenomenon. With belief temporarily suspended, consciousness itself becomes heightened, allowing the researcher to intuit or see the essence of the phenomenon. (Merriam, p. 7)

Because researchers in the phenomenological mode attempt to understand the meaning of events and interactions of ordinary people in particular situations, the participant's point of view becomes a research construct (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). By engaging subjective thinking, the participant's point of view becomes the reality, which therefore comes to be understood only in the form in which it was perceived (Bogdan & Biklen).

A phenomenological approach not only provided insight into the experiences of the participants proceeding from and utilizing their own words, but it also helped provide an understanding of ways in which these meanings arose and persisted for respondents. As the researcher, one critical challenge was to suspend my own personal beliefs and attitudes and allow the words and conceptual framework of student participants to flow freely in order to create an accurate and faithful interpretation of their lived experiences. A phenomenological approach also provided insight into their position with both the WRC model and the Key

model in relation to their interaction with the environment, which can be illustrated through Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development.

Phenomenology requires us to suspend our usual understandings to have a fresh look at the world with possibilities for new meaning (Crotty, 1998). Cultural aspects of phenomenology, however, may prove to be challenging given that culture translates into pre-existing meanings and systems of meaning as we experience the world. This cultural influence may affect the development of racial identity based on messages received from family, friends, schools, and other social environments. To take a fresh look at phenomena is to call into question the current meanings attributed to that phenomenon (Crotty). The use of the WRC model illuminated these questions and exposed participants' levels of development.

Design

Research Site

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness among full-time, White male undergraduate students who attend a public, predominantly Black HBCU through an examination of their academic and social experiences within the HBCU environment. The site for the study was a public, land-grant institution located in a very small college town in the southeastern United States. East Coast University (ECU) enrolls over 3,400 students pursing degrees in a variety of disciplines, and is a Division I member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Undergraduate White students as a whole comprise 9% of the student population, of which 4% are White males (ECU Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Evaluation, 2005).

Locating a site for this study proved to be extremely difficult. HBCUs tend to be very closed communities that are difficult to gain access to if one is not already affiliated with the institution or has campus or alumni contacts. ECU was selected for this study mainly because I had a contact on the campus that could help with gaining access to potential respondents for the study. After investigating the campus demographics it was determined that ECU would be a viable location for the study based on the number of White male students available to potentially serve as respondents in the study.

Participants

The selection of participants was based on purposeful selection, which is defined as "a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that can't be gotten as well from other choices" (J. A. Maxwell, 2005, p. 88). There are at least four possible rationales for using purposeful selection: (a) to achieve representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected; (b) to adequately capture the heterogeneity in the population; (c) to deliberately examine cases that are critical for the theories that were utilized when the study began; and (d) to establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between settings or individuals (J. A. Maxwell). The second rationale, which is to adequately capture the heterogeneity of the population, was most relevant to this study. The students who were eligible for participation in the study represented a wide range of backgrounds, influences, circumstances, and experiences that helped depict the entire range of variation and provided a more accurate representation of the target population.

Participants for this study were limited to full-time, undergraduate males who self-identified as White. Full-time students were selected based on the assumption that they

would be more involved in campus life and feel more of a connection to the institution as opposed to part-time students who may have had other commitments such as full-time jobs. Undergraduate students were preferable to graduate students based on the assumption that the academic and social maturity, experiences, and educational and developmental goals and tasks of graduate students would be substantively different from those of undergraduate students. Students who are biracial or multiracial but self-identified as White were included in the study given that it would be both impossible and inappropriate for me as the researcher to make judgments about their racial background and their choice of self-identification.

A total of seven students participated in the study, including two sophomores, one junior, and three seniors. One student had transferred to ECU for financial reasons after one semester at Bayside University (BU; a pseudonym), a predominantly White institution located approximately 15 miles from ECU.

In order to achieve a thick, richly descriptive (Esterberg, 2002; Merriam, 2002) qualitative product, it was important to seek men for the study who represented as many academic year classifications as possible to cover the range of development and experiences that may potentially emerge from their stories. For example, a first-year student may struggle not only with identity issues, but also issues that any first-year student might encounter, such as learning the campus and adjusting to college life. In contrast, an upper-level student who has been at the institution his entire college career would most likely have resolved many of the adjustment issues that a first-year student might encounter. An upper-level student might be able to share more accounts of how he has managed his position as a White male at an HBCU and reflect upon experiences that are most salient to racial consciousness development. Regardless of the participants' backgrounds, it is important to reiterate the

difficulties that may have existed by having a Black researcher attempting to engage the respondents in conversation about sensitive issues of race and their personal feelings and experiences. Some of the participants may have been struggling with unresolved issues and uncertainties related to their own racial consciousness development. Although these types of issues presented significant challenges for this study, they are also the same issues that I hoped to uncover, explore, and understand. Issues related to these outcomes are discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

In addition to the basic criteria mentioned above, student involvement was also an important factor. Participants were involved in a variety of activities ranging from internships and community service to research programs and athletics. Three of the participants were members of the Division I baseball team, which was congruent with the literature which states that White students often attend HBCUs on athletic scholarships (Drummond, 2000). At this particular institution, the baseball team was majority White with only a handful of students of color on the team.

I was not able to recruit students involved in such activities as student government or Black Greek life, although several participants expressed their interest in these types of organizations. Leadership in student government would require commitment to the campus community and a desire to serve the student body. Participation in a historically Black fraternity at an HBCU would, in my opinion, require a high degree of comfort within the Black community, which would most likely indicate a heightened sense of racial consciousness. These examples of activities provided insight into how well the student had adapted to the environment, which may have translated for respondents into more advanced racial consciousness development. Although campus involvement was an important

component of this study, I also had participation from students who are less involved in campus life. These students helped provide a more inclusive representation of the full range of student experiences on campus.

Due to the sensitive nature of the study, the recruitment of participants was especially important. Participants were solicited mainly by referral, word of mouth, and snowball sampling. My gatekeeper was instrumental in helping me identify respondents for this study. He helped me connect with faculty and staff who were able to put me in touch with students who would fit the necessary criteria for the study. I even employed what might be an unorthodox method of recruiting students for the study which was to approach them as they were walking by, introduce myself, provide some information about my study, and ask them if they were interested in participating. I only tried this approach a couple of times, but surprisingly, it actually worked.

It was the personalized contact that made the difference in recruiting students to participate. I quickly discovered that email was completely ineffective and that students needed to be engaged on a personal level in order to address any questions or concerns about the study. The overall challenge in sampling this population was to attract a mixture of students who could best represent the White male experience on campus, including students at different undergraduate classifications and levels of involvement on campus.

Data Collection

Four of the basic methods of data collection in qualitative research include observations, interviews, documents, and audio and visual materials (Creswell, 2003). Based on the nature and scope of my research which focused on meaning making by respondents, I selected interviewing as the main method of data collection. As complementary methods,

observation and document analysis were also incorporated. Each method is discussed, with the most emphasis centered on interviewing.

Interviewing

The interview format was especially critical to my research in light of the unique juxtaposition of minority/majority and the challenging of traditional ideas of power and control. Denzin and Lincoln's (2000b) description of the interview as "a negotiated text, a site where power, gender, race, and class intersect" (p. 633) illustrates the power of the interview in examining these types of issues. The interview is considered a conversation involving the art of both asking questions and listening. All parties involved create the reality of the interview situation producing situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b). "This method is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, ethnicity, and gender" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b, p. 633). This brief statement had profound implications for me and my research. As a Black researcher who was interviewing White respondents about their experiences in the "minority" on a historically Black college campus, the dynamics of the situation were quite complex. Issues of insider/outsider status will be discussed in the next section of this chapter as they relate to the challenges inherent in this type of research.

Janesick (1998b) defined an interview as "a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic" (p. 83). The purpose of the qualitative interview is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind in order to learn about the other person's perspective (M. Q. Patton, 1990). The interview is often viewed as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee, in which the interviewer asks

questions and the interviewee responds accordingly (Esterberg, 2002). However, what results is a peculiar conversation in which the interviewee reveals information about him- or herself, and the other does not. Further, the interviewer directs the conversation often with expectations for what should happen during the conversation and for which responses are acceptable and which are not (Esterberg). Instead, interviewing can be described as a form of a relationship between two individuals. These individuals may be close or perhaps typically, distant, and the interview itself may be prolonged, repeated over time, or brief. In each case, two individuals come together to try to create meaning with regard to a particular topic of interest (Esterberg).

My intent for this study was to make the interviews much more conversational by sharing information about myself with the participants. It was important to build rapport and a strong sense of trust with the participants in an attempt to minimize any discomfort raised by the sensitive nature of the study. My goal for the interviews was to create an environment in which participants felt as comfortable as possible expressing their thoughts, opinions, and ideas in their own words so that I might gain a better understanding of their experiences and how they interpreted them. Some participants were more open and talkative than others initially; however, by our final interviews all participants appeared to be much more relaxed and willing to express themselves.

Dilley's (2004) review of the writings of Seidman (1998), Kvale (1983), and Rubin and Rubin (1995) examined the relationships between philosophy and protocol, epistemology and research, and words and meanings. Seidman's (1998) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* is grounded in the phenomenological tradition of three distinct, thematic interviews

designed to question the meanings of lived experiences. Seidman connects the core of phenomenology to the qualitative philosophy through his statement that,

> interviewing provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of behavior. A basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience. . . . Interviewing allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action. (p. 128)

One of the primary goals of this study was to understand how the participants made meaning of their experiences. The in-depth interview approach linked the making of meaning to the behaviors that participants exhibited as they navigated the campus and managed their position within various environments. The interview helped inform insight into both verbal and nonverbal behaviors that may have occurred for the participants. For example, if a participant spoke of staying in his room, avoiding co-curricular activities, and leaving campus regularly on weekends, this nonverbal behavior might indicate discomfort and dissatisfaction with the campus environment.

There is a set of skills—physical, social, mental, communicative—that embody the act of interviewing (Dilley, 2004). The importance of learning the skill of comprehension and the complex aptitude and competence of reflection and representation, cannot be stressed enough and are unteachable by any other method than trial and error (Dilley). "Researchers must ask themselves what they have learned from doing the interviews, studying the transcripts, marking and labeling them, crafting profiles, and organizing categories of excerpts" (Siedman, 2006, p. 110).

This type of continuing conversation with one's self is an important component of the interview process. I can appreciate the courage to ask and address these issues as the research evolves and grows. Consideration of these questions indicates that there will be challenges, surprises, frustrations, and discoveries that are all a part of the research process. Everything will not go according to plan regardless of the degree of strategizing and preparation. These questions call for flexibility, self-reflection, and a willingness to allow the data to chart the path for the research.

> Kvale (1996) offered six steps of analysis for making meaning which include: collecting the subjects' descriptions; allowing for the subjects' self-discovery; condensing and interpreting the interview event by the interviewer; interpreting the transcribed interview by the interviewer; conducting follow-up interviews; and observing if interviewees begin to act differently from the insights of being involved in the research. (p. 130)

The act of crafting meaning from an interview and constructing a product to convey meaning to particular audiences defies homogeny. The nature of interview analysis and reporting is more than merely transcribing what happens when words are spoken (Dilley, 2004). Instead, the researcher must go beyond what is directly said to work out structures and relations of meaning that may not be immediately apparent in the text (Kvale, 1996). "This requires a certain distance from what is said, which is achieved by a methodological or theoretical stance, recontextualizing what is said in a specific conceptual context" (Kvale, 1996, p. 201).

The art of hearing is a necessary skill in qualitative interviewing (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

> Qualitative interviewing is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds. Through qualitative interviews you can understand experiences and construct events in which you did not participate. . . . Qualitative interviewing is more that a set of skills; it is also a philosophy, an approach to learning. (Rubin & Rubin, p. 129)

A qualitative "philosophy and approach to learning" involves three components:

> [1] Understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their worlds in their own terms;
>
> [2] Interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee that imposes obligations on both sides;
>
> [3] The philosophy helps define what is interesting and what is ethical [as well as] provide standards to judge the quality of the research, the humanity of the interviewing relationship, and the completeness and accuracy of the write-up. (Rubin & Rubin, p. 2)

Although all three components are important, the second component was especially salient for my study. The relationship between the interviewer and interviewee was critical for this study given that the topic of the study could be very sensitive. I addressed these issues by being open and honest, building rapport, and allowing participants to speak candidly about their experiences without judgment. I also asked participants at the end of the final interview how they would describe the entire experience of participating in this study and invited them to share their thoughts and feelings whether positive or negative.

Comprehension and understanding are two key components of qualitative research that are conditional, philosophical considerations that are necessarily individualistic (Dilley, 2004). "Qualitative research interviewing is not formulaic, not a process that will generate or

guarantee replicable results or investigations among any group of researchers" (Kvale, 1996, p. 130). Instead, interviewing is a craft, in that it does not follow content- and context-free rules of method, but rests on the judgments of a qualified researcher (Kvale, 1996). An earlier study by M. J. Patton (1991) also supported this notion by indicating that "the worth of the data collected in the interview very much depends on the skill of the interviewer obtaining it" (p. 394). Not only does the worth of the data depend on the skill of the interviewer, but I would also add the preparation of the interviewer. Preparation would include all of the logistical aspects of the interview and the reflexive components as well. I maintained a journal and kept detailed notes of my own thoughts, ideas, and experiences throughout the study so that I was able to be in touch with my own biases and work toward minimizing them. Researcher role and reflexivity will be discussed later in this chapter.

Semistructured Interviews

Structured, semistructured, and unstructured interviews vary according to the amount of control exerted by the researcher during the interview and the degree of structure (Esterberg, 2002). Interviews range from highly structured situations that involve specific questions posed in order and determined ahead of time, to unstructured situations with topic areas to explore yet with neither questions nor their order predetermined. Most interviews fall somewhere in between (Merriam, 2002).

Based on the options available, I adopted the semistructured interview as the most appropriate format for this study in order to yield the most fruitful data. My goal as the researcher was to create a safe, relaxed interview environment that was loose and flexible, so that the path of the interview could be determined at least in part by the responses of individual participants.

The goal of semistructured interviews is "to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). M. Q. Patton (1990) stated that we cannot observe everything we might want to know; therefore, we interview people to understand what life is like from perspectives other than our own. As the interviewer, we must strive to move beyond our own experiences and ideas in order to really understand the other person's point of view.

Although the researcher typically begins with some basic ideas about what the interview will entail, it is important to emphasize that the responses of the interviewee should ultimately shape the order and structure of the interview (Esterberg, 2002). Semistructured interviewing calls for the researcher to listen carefully to the responses of the participant and to follow her or his lead. Because semistructured interviews are not pre-scripted, there is always room for the conversation to take unexpected and surprising turns. Semistructured interviews are especially useful for exploring a specific topic in detail or in constructing a theory (Esterberg). This study required the flexibility and openness to possibilities that semistructured interviewing allows given that this topic breaks new ground in the literature and needs to be open to all of the facets and details that may emerge in the interviews without restriction or limitation.

A number of feminist scholars have argued that these types of interviews are a particularly good way to study women and other marginalized groups (DeVault, 1999; Reinharz, 1992). In the context of my study, White students at the HBCU might in some ways be considered a marginalized group, at least on campus. The semistructured interview approach provided a powerful vehicle through which to explore participants' experiences as

it provided the opportunity for them to more freely and candidly express themselves in their own words.

Phenomenological Interviewing

A study by Attinasi (1992) identified phenomenological interviewing as an alternative approach to the study of college student outcomes. Phenomenological interviewing allows the researcher to gain access to the meaning an individual makes of his or her own experience (Tesch, as cited in Attinasi). Phenomenological interviews are semistructured, being neither a free conversation, nor a highly structured questionnaire (Attinasi). Data collection and data analysis take place more or less simultaneously through a process that has several phases that can be thought of as occurring at different points along a continuum between description and interpretation (Attinasi). Six possible phases, as identified by Kvale (1983), are briefly described as follows:

1. The interviewee describes his or her life-world with respect to the phenomenon of interest.
2. The interviewee discovers new relations, sees new meaning in his or her life-world on the basis of the spontaneous descriptions.
3. The interviewer during the interview condenses and interprets the meaning of what the interviewee describes and, perhaps, "sends" the interpreted meaning back for confirmation or clarification.
4. The interviewer or another person alone interprets the completed and transcribed interview on three levels: (a) the self understanding of the interviewee; (b) a common-sense interpretation that involves extending the meaning of what the interviewee said by reading between the lines and drawing in broader contexts

than the interviewee did; and (c) more theoretical interpretations, based on, for example, an existing social or sociopsychological theory.

5. The interviewer gives the interpretations, based on his or her analysis of the completed interview, back to the interviewee in a second interview.
6. There may be an extension of the description-interpretation continuum to action. (Attinasi, 1992, p.63)

Attinasi pointed out that these phases should not be thought of as presupposing each other logically or chronologically in any strict sense, nor will every study include all six phases. "The offerings of each phase have their own worth and can stand and be utilized independently of the others" (Wertz, as quoted in Attinasi, p. 64).

Seidman (2006) constructed guidelines for what he has come to call in-depth, phenomenologically based interviewing. In this approach, interviewers use primarily open-ended questions with the goal of having the participant reconstruct his or her experience with reference to the topic under study. Specifically, Seidman recommended conducting a series of three separate interviews with each participant:

> The first interview establishes the context of the participants' experience. The second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context that it occurs. And the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them. (p. 17)

Each interview should be conducted in a 90-minute format, which allows ample time for participants to reconstruct their experience, put it in the context of their lives, and reflect on its meaning (Seidman). Seidman also recommended that each interview be spaced from three

days to a week apart to allow time for the participant to "mull over the preceding interview but not enough time to lose the connection between the two" (p. 21).

Seidman's three interview format was adopted for this study. Six of the participants were interviewed three times and one participant was interviewed twice. Each of the first two interviews lasted approximately 60–90 minutes in length, and the third interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. The first interview was designed to learn basic background information and to establish rapport with the participant. The second interview involved questions related to the academic and social experiences of the participant while attending the institution. The third interview provided an opportunity to further explore and clarify areas that were unclear from the previous interviews and to continue exploring new content.

Interviews were conducted during a 2-week visit at the end of February 2006 into early March, 4 days in mid-March, and 2 weeks during late March into early April for a total of 3½ weeks. The interviews were tape recorded in addition to handwritten notes being taken during each conversation. The tapes were transcribed, coded and analyzed, which will be discussed in greater detail in the data analysis section later in this chapter.

Insider/Outsider Status

The type of research that was conducted inherently contained some potentially problematic methodological considerations. The issue of race played a very salient role in my research due to the dynamics that may have stemmed from having a Black researcher interview White participants and interpreting their data. Because the research was centered around issues of race, privilege, and power, it is important to recognize how these issues might have influenced the relationship I had with the participants. The challenge of this situation was compounded by the fact that there appears to be very little literature addressing

a situation such as this offering guidance as to best practices for creating the most beneficial conditions for both the researcher and the respondents.

Insiders and outsiders face different obstacles in collecting data. Insiders may miss out on some things that they may take for granted or what is referred to as "over-rapport," which occurs when researchers come to identify with the group they are studying, resulting in an analysis that is considered to be flawed due to partial perspectives (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1996). Insiders may be expected to conform to cultural norms that can restrict them as researchers (Twine, 2000), whereas outsiders may be plagued by failing to see nuances from the perspective of the informants (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000). Hammersley and Atkinson (1996) recommended that it is best to adopt a "marginal position," which is one that is neither completely outsider nor completely insider. The researcher needs to be intellectually poised between familiarity and strangeness (Hammersley & Atkinson). For the purpose of this study, it was important to be constantly aware of my role as researcher and the impact my presence had on the community. I had to keep in mind how challenging it might be for some participants to openly express themselves, recognizing our racial differences. Researcher reflexivity and a willingness to be flexible and adaptable were important strategies for assuming the marginal position referred to by Hammersley and Atkinson.

All research by its very nature is political, and by transitioning from the academy to the real lives of people, it is laden with tensions and misunderstandings (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000). "Qualitative researchers must continually be aware of how those we study view us as well as how we view them" (Brayboy & Deyhle, p. 163). "Theoretical and methodological decisions reflect who we are as researchers, and influence the way 'the word' is written and

how a story is ultimately told and retold through qualitative research" (Jones, 2002, p. 461). This dynamic is referred to as "working the hyphen" of Self-Other in which the hyphen "both separates and merges personal identities with our inventions of Others" (Fine, 1994, p. 70). Fine described working the hyphen as a "messy series of questions about methods, ethics, and epistemologies as we rethink how researchers have spoken 'of' and 'for' Others while occluding ourselves and our own investments" (p.70).

Methodological critiques of the relationship between researchers and participants have taken a more critical stance resulting in evaluations of the manner in which intersecting social statuses of the researcher and the participants influence what is said, what is heard, and how it is interpreted (De Andrade, 2000). More specifically, because racial and ethnic identities have complex meanings that are produced in social interaction, and are therefore ever-present factors in field research, insider/outsider status is also an ongoing presence or dynamic in the research process (De Andrade).

The concept of "outsider within" refers to "how a social group's placement in specific, historical context of race, gender, and class inequality might influence its point of view on the world" (Collins, 1999, p. 85). This term may also refer to groups caught between groups of unequal power (Collins). Outsiders living within the White society "claim not only to have the ability to understand both self and the world around oneself, but also to illuminate one's positionality and the ways in which that positionality holds epistemic power" (Sanger, 2003, p. 37).

In other words, the meanings and impact of racial difference are complicated by issues of age, class, gender, education, national origins, accent, region, and sexual orientation (Twine, 2000). Personally, I see value in both sides of the argument. "Realizing that racial

outsiderness may have its own advantages and that insiderness may simply create a different set of pluses and minuses, many have agued . . . that it is optimal to have both racial insiders and outsiders conducting research because they reveal different—not better—kinds of knowledge" (Twine, p. 13). In my case, I thought racial outsiderness could work either for or against me; however, establishing positive rapport as much as possible with the respondents might help alleviate any distrust or feelings of apprehension that the participants might experience. I found that it was important to share personal information about myself with the participants, such as my own background, family life, and educational experiences. This type of exchange helped build comfort and trust between us and may have also established points of similarity. My main goal as a researcher was to be upfront and honest about who I am as a person and my interest in hearing their stories.

In this study, I was an outsider to the participants in terms of being of a different racial background, but I was somewhat of an insider on an HBCU campus because the majority of students are Black/African American. Although this type of situation may not be exactly congruent with the original definition and intent of the term "outsider within," I believe that it still holds relevance in a situation such as this, as the power dynamics of the world outside the campus remain the same. I discussed this issue with the participants prior to and during our first meeting so that they were well aware of who I was and so that they could make an informed decision about whether or not they wanted to participate in the study. I believe that this type of self-disclosure is part of being an ethical and responsible researcher. This process allowed participants the opportunity to decline participation in the study if they were uncomfortable with any aspect of the study.

Cross-Racial Interviewing

Another important methodological issue related to this study involved the concept of cross-racial interviewing. "In our society, with its history of racism, researchers and participants of different racial and ethnic backgrounds face difficulties in establishing an effective interviewing relationship" (Seidman, 2006, p. 99). Cross-racial interviewing refers to an interview situation in which the interviewer and the interviewee are of different racial backgrounds. Historically, cross-racial interviewing referred to the feelings of mistrust experienced by members of the Black community who were being interviewed or studied by members of the White community. Black scholars, in particular, have critiqued cross-racial interviewing, concluding that Whites are incapable of grasping Black realities, and that Blacks and Whites approach issues of race with very different foci of interest (Twine, 2000). Further, this general mistrust by Black people of White people would be projected upon the White researcher or interviewer thus preventing access or distorting the quality of communication exchange if access is granted (Twine).

Because this study involved a Black interviewer and White interviewees, very unique dynamics were potentially involved with regard to power, control, and trust. For example, if participants were having a difficult time adjusting to the HBCU environment and harbored negative attitudes toward Blacks, they may have projected those negative feelings onto me, which may have curtailed their ability to openly and honestly share their experiences regarding the phenomenon of interest. Even under the most favorable circumstances, the potentially sensitive nature of the questions could contribute to the difficulty and complexity of the interview situation. My strategy for minimizing this difficulty involved striving to establish a relationship with the participants as much as possible before, during, and after the

interviews in the form of email communication, self-disclosure, and a willingness to openly and honestly answer any questions participants had. I did not encounter any problems with respondents not knowing I was a Black researcher because the majority of them I met face to face before we scheduled the first interview. This is not to say that some participants were completely comfortable, but at least they would not be surprised to find themselves in a situation that was different from what they expected. The goal was to establish a level of comfort that would help minimize any apprehension about participating in the study based on racial differences.

It is important to note that although the interviews were cross-racial, the typical positions were reversed (Black researcher, White participants). Participants may have felt much less comfortable discussing their feelings about attending a historically Black college with a Black researcher. They may have felt the need to provide responses that they believed would be viewed as politically correct so that they would not appear to be racist or prejudiced against Blacks or any other minority group. My strategy for minimizing this type of situation was to try to create a safe and comfortable interview environment for participants by beginning the relationship with honesty and full disclosure about the nature of the research. I discussed the potentially difficult task of discussing race very directly and made sure that participants were informed of their rights as respondents and their power to terminate their participation in the study at any time.

> Interviewers and participants of good will who are from different racial backgrounds can create a relationship that runs counter to prevailing social currents. Maintaining sensitivity to issues that trigger distrust as well as exhibiting good manners, respect,

> and a genuine interest in the stories of others can go a long way toward bridging racial and ethnic barriers. (Seidman, 2006, p. 100)

Another issue that may have occurred in this particular study involved the potential for participants to feel a sense of superiority based on racial difference. Hays and Chang's (2003) description of White privilege might provide insight into this perspective. They defined White privilege as

> the belief that only one's own standards and opinions are accurate (to the exclusion of all other standards and opinions) and that these standards and opinions are defined and supported by Whites in a way to continually reinforce social distance between groups, thereby allowing Whites to dominate, control access to, and escape the challenges from racial and ethnic minorities. (p. 135)

Participants who reflected this type of belief system may claim superiority over Black classmates, attempt to minimize the need for connection to the institution beyond academics, or express disappointment with institutional administration. These types of opinions did emerge in the data from several participants and will be further explored in chapter 4. Throughout my interactions with the participants I did not find that they were attempting to claim superiority over me as a Black researcher. This may have been due to my outsider status, age, level of education, or a number of other factors.

Observation

In addition to interviewing, I incorporated observation as a complementary source of data. Observational data represent a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than a secondhand account obtained through an interview or other form of data

collection (Merriam, 2002). Observation involves taking field notes on the behaviors and activities of the individuals at the research site (Creswell, 2003).

I began by carefully observing the environment both on campus and in the community. On campus observation sites included the conference facility where I was staying, classrooms and academic buildings, the library, the athletic facility, the cafeteria, one of the main student parking lots, and the main campus grounds. I immediately noticed that there were very few White male students in the majority of these locations. One of the most salient locations for this study, however, was the cafeteria. A more detailed account of relevant data gathered via observations is contained in chapter 4.

Document Analysis

Written texts in the form of documents and records provide a way to study human behavior unobtrusively (Esterberg, 2002) and served as a second complementary method of data collection for my study. The first document I analyzed was a printout of the undergraduate student enrollment by level, race, sex, and attendance for 2005, which I obtained from the university website. The data from this document allowed me to see how many White male students were enrolled at ECU for the fall of 2005. I was able to calculate the total percentage of White male students attending the university and also to compare their numbers to Black students and other students of color on campus to gain an understanding of the total "minority" enrollment at ECU.

The next document I analyzed was an email from Patrick (one of the participants) that he sent during the time that elapsed between the second and third interviews. The email described a racial incident that he experienced while on his way to class one day. The email was very lengthy and described the incident in great detail. Patrick explained that he did not

wish to talk about the incident with me verbally, but just wanted to share it because he believed it applied to the study. In addition, Patrick indicated that he was not a very good typist so judging by the length of the email, I can conclude that it took him a very long time to type. I responded to him by email to thank him for sharing the story and to express my concern for his well-being. As he requested, we did not discuss the incident in the third interview.

The email is especially significant because the participant was very open and honest about his thoughts and feelings concerning the incident. This information was invaluable in helping me as the researcher gain insight into who he is as a person and also what the environment might be like for non-Black students about whom, in this case, stark assumptions were made. A detailed presentation and analysis of the incident is described in chapter 4.

The final document that I analyzed was a class paper John, another respondent, gave me. He had written the paper for his English class, and it was based on a speech he delivered on cultural heritage. The focus of the speech and the paper was the similarities between Italian and African American cultures. He made the point that both cultures are very similar in the way that they are almost always stereotyped and negatively portrayed in the popular media. He also drew parallels between the hip-hop culture and the Italian mafia culture. According to John, many of the television shows and movies glamorize the negative aspects of both cultures and perpetuate stereotypes that cause mainstream America to fear these groups, yet be fascinated with them at the same time. One of his main goals in the paper was to raise the level of awareness of the good and positive things that both cultures have to offer,

such as good food, music, progressive sense of style, and overall contributions to popular culture. More of John's views on racism and stereotypes are further explored in chapter 4.

Methods of Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is a process of making meaning and should be considered more as a creative process, not a mechanical one (Denzin, 1989). It is a process that is simultaneous with data collection, in that data analysis should begin with the first interview, the first observation, the first document accessed in the study (Merriam, 2002). Data analysis is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions, and writing memos (Creswell, 2003). More specifically, phenomenological research involves the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of an "essence" description (Moustakas, 1994).

Data analysis strategies may include listening to tapes prior to as well as after transcription, the actual process of transcribing interviews, reading the interview transcriptions or other notes and documents, and writing notes and memos about what is seen or heard in the data (J. A. Maxwell, 2005). Analytic options that are available but often rarely described include memos, categorizing strategies (such as coding and thematic analysis), and connecting strategies (such as narrative analysis) (Maxwell). Other available examples are Miles and Huberman's (1994) contact summary form and document summary form, both of which are designed to focus, summarize, and organize information.

Creswell (2003, pp. 191-195) outlined a generic process of data analysis that involves the following six steps that was followed for this study:

- Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis, which involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up fieldnotes, or sorting and arranging data.
- Step 2: Read through the data to obtain a general sense of the information and reflect on the meaning.
- Step 3: Begin detailed analysis by coding the data. Coding is the process of organizing the material into "chunks" before bringing meaning to those "chunks." It also involves labeling the categories with a term often based on the actual language of the participant.
- Step 4: Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.
- Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be represented, usually through a narrative passage to convey the findings.
- Step 6: Make an interpretation of the data.

Data analysis is an ongoing process of external activity, such as coding and transcribing data, and internal activity, such as reflection and writing memos. The next step in the process includes the implementation of strategies for testing and strengthening initial interpretations formulated during data analysis.

The six steps in Creswell's (2003) process of data analysis were followed for this study. Data were tape recorded and transcribed, then thoroughly read to gain a general sense of the information and reflect on the meaning. The data were coded by organizing similar information into chunks. A typed coding list was organized to document significant passages for future analysis. Coding was also done by selecting information using different colored

highlighters to distinguish different ideas and concepts. The coding process was used to establish significant themes which were modified and changed in order to best represent the data. Finally, the data were interpreted and passages to support the interpretations were selected.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the overall quality of a piece of research that takes into account how an inquirer can persuade his or her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and taking account of (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Four criteria qualitative researchers can utilize in order to establish trustworthiness are: (a) credibility, which means that one must adequately represent participants' multiple constructions of reality, (b) transferability, which refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferable to other contexts, (c) dependability, which is the extent to which findings are consistent or dependable, and (d) confirmability of the data by others (Lincoln & Guba).

Strategies available to check the accuracy of findings in qualitative research include: the triangulation of different data sources, member-checking, the use of rich, thick description, clarification of researcher bias, presentation of negative or discrepant information, prolonged time in the field, peer debriefing, establishing an audit trail of steps taken in the data analysis, and providing a detailed description of the setting (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The strategies that were most relevant and appropriate for this study included triangulation, member checking, rich, thick description, clarifying researcher bias, and prolonged time in the field. Each of these strategies will be discussed in greater detail.

Credibility

Credibility can be established through five major techniques covering a broad range of activities, each of which will be briefly outlined. Prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, and triangulation are examples of activities that make it more likely that credible findings and interpretations will be produced (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Prolonged engagement is the first technique and refers to the investment of sufficient time to learn the culture, test for misinformation, and build trust (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Prolonged time in the field allows the researcher to develop "an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and the people that lends credibility to the narrative account" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). The researcher should be submerged or engaged in the data collection over a long enough period of time to ensure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). The data and emerging findings must be explored to the point of saturation, which occurs when the same things are seen or heard over and over again, and no new information surfaces as more data are collected (Merriam).

I had the opportunity to make three trips to the site spending a total of approximately 3½ weeks on campus. During that time, I had the opportunity to meet with participants, talk with faculty and staff, and spend time observing students. The amount of time that I was able to spend on campus gave me a good sense of the campus culture and the everyday activities of the students.

Persistent observation and prolonged engagement are related in that the purpose of persistent observation is "to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail"

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). If the role of prolonged engagement is to provide scope, then persistent observation provides depth (Lincoln & Guba).

Triangulation reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a) that utilizes two or more research strategies based on the fact that different data collection strategies have different strengths and weaknesses (Esterberg, 2002). Four basic types of triangulation (Denzin, as cited in Janesick, 1998a) include:

- *Data triangulation*: the use of a variety of data sources in a study;
- *Investigator triangulation*: the use of several different researchers or evaluators;
- *Theory triangulation*: the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data;
- *Methodological triangulation*: the use of multiple methods to study a single problem.

For the purpose of this study, data triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation were utilized. Data were collected from a variety of sources using different methods including interviews, observation, and document analysis. Multiple theoretical perspectives to interpret the data were also utilized including Bronfenbrenner's (2005b) bioecological systems model, the WRC model, the Key model of White male identity development, and Astin's theory of student involvement. This combination of theoretical perspectives created a link between student environments and their influences, their racial consciousness as White males, the influence of privilege, and their degree of connection to the institution based on the nature and types as well as the depths of their involvement.

Peer debriefing is the second technique for establishing credibility. Peer debriefing involves asking a colleague to scan raw data and assess whether the findings are plausible based on the data (Merriam, 2002). This strategy serves multiple purposes by keeping the researcher "honest" and open to exploring new possibilities, by providing opportunities to test working and emerging hypotheses, and by providing an opportunity for the researcher to cleanse the mind of emotions, thoughts, and feelings that may cloud good judgment (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Peer debriefing was conducted with several colleagues in addition to both formal and informal conversations regarding my findings and analysis of the data. Peer debriefing was especially useful because it helped me to be able to articulate the nuances of my study and explain the conclusions I was able to draw from the data.

Member checking is a third technique done to determine the accuracy of qualitative findings by having participants comment on my interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 2002). Ideally participants should be able to recognize their experience in my interpretation or suggest some fine-tuning to better capture and articulate their experiences and perspectives (Merriam). Member checking was performed with all participants via email. Participants were sent a copy of the interview transcripts to review for accuracy and to provide any missing information. Cal, David, John, Patrick, and Walter replied to the email contributing minimal adjustments to the transcripts. Overall they felt that the transcripts were accurate to the best of their recollection.

The participants were also sent an email copy of chapter 4 to review for truth and accuracy in my interpretation and analysis of the data. Patrick and John were the only participants who responded to the email. Patrick sent a response email indicating his disagreement with several assertions made in chapter 4. He wanted to clarify that he came

from a very well-educated family and that he was not a first generation college student. He also disagreed with being portrayed as having a dominant attitude and as being uncomfortable as a minority on campus. I replied to Patrick by email requesting that we have a telephone conversation to discuss his concerns; however, he did not respond to my request. As a result, my responses to his concerns were shared by email. John responded to chapter 4 both by email and by voicemail to express his satisfaction with the chapter. He was very pleased with his portrayal and felt that it was accurate according to his behavior and personality. He also wanted to clarify that both his parents were college graduates so he was not a first generation college student.

Dependability

Strategies used to ensure consistency, dependability, and reliability are triangulation, peer examination or peer debriefing, and the audit trail (Merriam, 2002). Triangulation and peer debriefing are also strategies that can be used to check the credibility of findings and have already been discussed. The audit trail "describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (Merriam, p. 27). The audit trail is most effective when the researcher keeps a detailed journal or records memos throughout the study (Merriam). An audit trail was established utilizing a variety of methods including handwritten notes, coding lists, and typed details regarding data collection and analysis. In addition, notes from interviews, meetings, and observations were also components of the audit trail in this study.

Confirmability

Confirmability is based on relative neutrality and reasonable freedom from unacknowledged researcher bias (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In addition to triangulation and

the audit trail, the keeping of a reflexive journal is a major technique for establishing confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reflexive journal establishes a way for the researcher to systematically reflect on who he or she is in the inquiry and to remain sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study (Creswell, 2003).

The reflexive journal was very important for this type of study because in a cross-racial interviewing situation such as this, I needed to be in touch with my own thoughts and feelings and have an outlet for expressing them. A summary of key points from the reflexive journal is presented at the end of chapter 4.

Transferability

Providing rich, thick description is a major strategy to ensure transferability (Merriam, 2002). Rich, thick description refers to data that are detailed and varied enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is taking place (J. A. Maxwell, 2005). It is considered a major strategy to ensure external validity or generalizability in qualitative research (Merriam). These data should "transport readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). For example, in an interview setting, verbatim transcripts of the interviews and not just notes from the researcher are required. For observations, descriptive note taking, or videotaping and transcribing of the specific, concrete events observed are required (J. A. Maxwell). In addition, rich, thick descriptions should provide "enough description to contextualize the study such that readers will be able to determine the extent to which their situation matches the research context, and hence, whether findings can be transferred" (Merriam, p. 29). Rich, thick description can be built using three strategies for making data, which include observations, interviews, and diaries (Morse & Richards, 2002).

Pilot Study

Conducting a pilot study can be of great benefit to the researcher in a number of ways. The pilot study allows the researcher to focus on clarifying any particular areas that may have been ambiguous or unclear, provides the opportunity to test certain questions, and also provides an opportunity to develop and solidify rapport with participants and establish effective communication patterns (Janesick, 1998a).

Interview questions were pilot tested with two groups of people. First, the questions were tested with a White male graduate student at a large Midwestern institution. Then the questions were pilot tested with two White male undergraduate students who attend a different HBCU in the Southeast. The feedback from both populations helped me to refine the questions so that they might yield the most fruitful data. Their feedback also helped me to eliminate questions that were redundant and add questions that would help bring more clarity.

Delimitations

A delimitation of this study is that data collection was confined to a small number of White, male, undergraduate students attending one public, predominantly Black HBCU in the Southeast. A second delimitation is that the study was centered on the development of White racial consciousness (Rowe et al., 1995), which mandates a focus on the individual and the relevant microsystems that may exist, such as outside peer groups and classroom environment, and provides less of a focus on exosystem and macrosystem factors, such as federal court mandates (exosystem) and being of the male gender (macrosystem). These aspects are attended to in this study in the bioecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, (2005b), but they are not the central focus. A third delimitation is that the developmental

focus of this study is White racial consciousness as opposed to White racial identity. Finally, a fourth delimitation is that this study focuses only on White men. A key characteristic of life in this society for White males is a set of privileges that provides them with dominant positions, resources, and life opportunities (Crowfoot & Chesler, 2003). Therefore, this study sought to examine how these privileges would fit or not fit within the HBCU environment.

Limitations

There are several limitations associated with this study. First, it is important to note that the results of the study will not be applicable to all public HBCUs, and the interpretation of the findings may well have alternative credible explanations. The issues of cross-racial interviewing and insider/outsider status may also limit this study depending on the attitudes and responses of the participants and the relative success of the researcher. This study is also limited by the selection of this particular setting and the particular students who chose to participate in the study.

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings will be of great value to a variety of audiences including White parents and students who may be considering attending an HBCU, federal and state policymakers, both public and private HBCU administrators, and student affairs practitioners. The results of this study will also contribute to the literature on White racial consciousness development and educational environment considerations associated with continued desegregation trends at many public HBCUs. Limitations were revisited at the conclusion of the study and are included in chapter 5.

Researcher Role and Reflexivity

One of the characteristics of qualitative research involves researcher reflection on who he or she is in the inquiry and a sensitivity to his or her personal biography and how it

shapes the study (Creswell, 2003). This introspection and acknowledgement of biases, values, and interests are known as reflexivity (Creswell). Reflexivity involves the belief that the personal-self is inseparable from the researcher-self and that these roles must be openly acknowledged (Creswell).

Qualitative research is interpretive research that involves the inquirer in a sustained and intensive experience with participants, which ultimately introduces a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the research process (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000). Therefore, it is critical for inquirers to explicitly identify their biases, values, and personal interests with regard to the research topic and process (Creswell, 2003). The process of engaging in self-reflection will hopefully create an open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers (Creswell).

> The researcher must describe and explain his or her social, philosophical, and physical location in the study. The qualitative researcher must honestly probe his or her own biases at the onset of the study, during the study, and at the end of the study by clearly describing and explaining the precise role of the researcher in the study. (Janesick, 2000, p. 389)

It is especially interesting to see how my own thoughts and feelings about the study evolved and changed as I engaged in the process of performing the research. When I began this study, I took time to reflect upon the biases that I would be bringing to the study. One such bias is that White males are the most privileged members of our society, and that in virtually every situation, they are always in control, whether actual or perceived. Based on my experiences, they tend to be perceived to have more credibility, more knowledge, and more ability than people of color and women.

I believe that there is great value in having a more diverse student body at all HBCUs. However, I do not believe that any HBCU should be diversified to the point where it is no longer predominantly Black. HBCUs have a rich history and play a significant role in the education of African American students, and this identity should not be sacrificed.

In addition, I recognized that there could be unspoken tension between me and the participants as males of different racial backgrounds. I wondered if the participants would approach me with suspicion, wondering why I was interested in studying them. I wondered if I would feel a sense of power over the participants based on the fact that although I was an outsider to the campus, I was an insider in terms of the racial demographic. Researcher role and reflexivity at the conclusion of the study are revisited and addressed toward the end of chapter 4.

Ethical Considerations

Appropriate steps were taken to protect the anonymity of the participants. Pseudonyms were used for participants and any other faculty, staff, or administrators that were mentioned within the context of the study. The name of the institution was also masked to protect the identity of the participants involved.

Recognizing that the discussion of race can be a sensitive issue for some people, I addressed these issues by building rapport with the participants and addressed these issues upfront. Trust, rapport, and authentic communication patterns with participants were established at the beginning of the study to better capture the nuance and meaning of each participant's life from his own point of view (Janesick, 1998a).

Although qualitative researchers can turn to guidelines, others' experiences, and government regulations for dealing with some of the ethical concerns likely to arise,

> the burden of producing a study that has been conducted and disseminated in an ethical manner lies with the individual investigator. No regulation can tell a researcher when the questioning of a participant becomes an interrogation rather than an interview, when to intervene in abusive or illegal situations, or how to ensure that the study's findings will not be used to the detriment of those involved. (Merriam, 2002, p. 30)

In order to conduct this study in an ethical manner, the following steps, as suggested by Creswell (2003), were taken:

- Participants had the right to participate voluntarily and withdraw at any time without penalty.
- Participants had the right to ask questions about the study, obtain copies of the results, and have their privacy respected.
- Signatures of both the participant and the researcher were obtained as an agreement to the provisions of the study.
- Identity and privacy of participants and site were protected.
- Proper IRB approval was obtained from researcher site and host site.

Ethical considerations are of the utmost importance in protecting the rights of the participants and protecting their anonymity. As the researcher, I was obligated to conduct this study in a manner that was not only ethical, but fair, just, and honest.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology and methods for this study with special attention focused on the interviewing method and the methodological issues of cross-racial interviewing and insider/outsider status that may potentially have had a significant impact on

this study. This chapter also provided the rationale for the methodological decisions that were made regarding this study. I believe that the theoretical perspectives, methodology and methods I selected helped me illuminate the various environmental-level influences on racial consciousness development among White male students attending an HBCU. Chapter 4 presents the data analysis and results of the study, and chapter 5 includes conclusions of the study, a discussion of its contributions, and implications of this study for future research and for practice.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness among full-time, White male undergraduate students attending a public, predominantly Black HBCU by examining their academic and social experiences within the HBCU environment as well as other environmental influences. Three major conceptual frameworks informed the design of this study: Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development, the WRC model, and the Key model of White male identity development. Astin's theory of student involvement provided additional theoretical guidance to this study and reinforced the salience of environment for development.

The three research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do White male undergraduate students attending a public HBCU make meaning of their academic and social experiences in terms of their White racial consciousness development?
2. What roles might being a temporary minority play in the White racial consciousness development of White male students at a public HBCU?
3. What roles might White male privilege play in informing the academic and social experiences of White male students attending a public HBCU?

By conducting individual interviews, observing campus environments, and analyzing documents, data were gathered to address these questions. This chapter presents the findings and begins with an introduction to the participants followed by the presentation of major themes and supporting evidence.

Participant Profiles

A total of seven individuals who met the required criteria participated in the study. All participants were full-time, undergraduate, male students who self-identified as White. The participants represented a number of academic majors and a range of campus and community activities. The profiles that follow provide a brief description of each participant as a foundation for understanding their backgrounds, reasons for attending ECU, and other personal information with relevance to the study.

Table 3.1 provides a summary description of each participant including his pseudonym and age, self-identified cultural/ethnic background, class standing, academic college, campus and community activities, and employment status. The data in in the table were all self-reported (excluding the pseudonym in one case). A more detailed profile of each participant follows.

Cal

Cal is a 21-year-old senior with a major in the agricultural and natural sciences. Cal was born and raised in a town approximately 15 miles from the ECU campus, and he described his family life and upbringing in the following way:

> [I] grew up in I guess what you would call [a] middle-class family, you know, parents never divorced, had a sister 13 years older than I am, grew up as a typical, you know, White American kid, like sports you know, going to church with my family . . . it was a very strict household that I lived in, very Christian. So I kind of lived most of my younger years under a shell, kind of sort of, until finally when I got into high school I was finally able to become me and break out of my shell.

Table 3.1. *Participant Descriptions*

Pseudonym	Age	Cultural Background	Class Standing	College	Campus Activities	Community Activities	Job
Cal	21	Irish/ German	Senior	Agricultural & Natural Sciences	Club athletics, research	Volunteer firefighter	Yes (part-time)
David	20	Italian	Sophomore	Health Professions	Baseball team	N/A	No
John	22	Italian	Senior	Arts & Professions	Athletics, radio	N/A	No
Matt		Mexican/ French	Senior	Health Professions	Baseball team, Internship	N/A	No
Patrick	21	Portuguese/ Irish	Junior	Human Ecology	Undergrad research program	N/A	No
Ty	23		Senior	Arts & Professions	Baseball team	Coaching	Yes (part-time)
Walter	19	Romanian/ German	Sophomore	Arts & Professions	Drama, debate, band	Community theater, service	Yes (part-time)

Note. Blank cells indicated data not provided.

Cal described himself as being of "Irish-German decent" and said that he is "not . . . into my culture, but I know where I come from and I know the importance of that." In addition to academics, Cal is also a volunteer firefighter in the local community. He credits this position as a positive factor in helping him gain respect among his peers at ECU.

> Another thing that I think helps is the fact that I'm a volunteer firefighter. I see what it's like in the outside world and I go through so much stuff and then it's been really weird because a lot of people down here have been so interested in that and . . . people look up to me which I never thought would happen

Proximity to home and curricular admissions requirements were two major factors that contributed to Cal's decision to attend ECU.

> First of all it was distance from home um, kind of growing up here. . . . I was kind of scared to go away because I didn't . . . you know . . . scared of being lost and not being accepted and stuff like that. Um, another thing was I had a Spanish teacher that said this was a very good university to come to and that somebody she knew was coming and it was, I wouldn't say it was, you know you could just come and get in here no problem, I mean you have to apply and all that but, concerning my issues that I had in high school with language barriers like as far as Spanish and stuff like that I heard that this was a college that was very open to . . . you didn't have to have Spanish to get in here you know? You just have to have a decent score on your SAT.

Cal is involved with the soccer club on campus and also participates in research projects related to his major. His volunteer service as a firefighter is very important to him, and he values the opportunity to help people when he is needed.

David

David is a 20-year-old sophomore health professions major and is the only participant who lives in a campus residence hall. He grew up approximately 45 minutes from campus in a neighboring state. David is Italian American, the youngest of three children, and describes the neighborhood in which he grew up as "all Black." David described his early experiences with difference in the following way:

> I don't see difference, because, I mean, I grew up around these people [Black people]. Not "these people," but people like this all the time, so it wasn't nothing new to me, you know? So basically, I mean I didn't really see a difference at all.

Perhaps as a result of his upbringing, David was very comfortable on campus with all of his peers:

> I kind of do stuff . . . my own thing . . . but with people from here [ECU], so I mean I don't avoid people that go here . . . people tend to like me more for some reason. I don't why, like, I'm a liked person, I guess. I actually get along really well with a lot of people here.

David is a student athlete, and when asked what factors contributed to his decision to attend ECU, he replied:

> Baseball. That's basically it. I think I'd be going to a community college if the coach didn't look at me and say "We want you to come here and play baseball." . . . This is the only college I applied to.

Until attending ECU, David was not aware of what a "historically Black college" was or meant. He explained, "I didn't really know this was an HBCU before I came here. I mean I knew it was primarily Black, but I didn't even know what an HBCU was until one of my friends that go[es] here told me." David is the first in his immediate family to go to college. He described the family's reaction to his decision to attend ECU by stating:

> They were all happy because I'm the first one in my family to really go to college . . . like not the first one in my whole, like extended family, but the first one with mom and dad, my two [older] sisters and everything. So I'm like the first one to go to a big college per se, so they were pretty excited about it.

John

John is a 22-year-old senior whose major is within the college of arts and professions. John grew up in a racially diverse neighborhood in the western part of the state where he says

he was always the minority growing up. Both John's parents are college educated and he has siblings in college as well. John is of Italian American descent, which is a very important part of his identity. When John and I met for our first interview, he was wearing a red track jacket with Italy stitched across the front and an Italian flag sewn on the sleeve. Known around campus as "Italian John," he believes that his Italian heritage makes him more popular and socially accepted within the Black community on campus. Perhaps this kinship is based on the Black community having more familiarity with Italian culture, especially through popular media. Movies such as *The Godfather*, *Goodfellas*, and *Donnie Brasco* are examples of media depicting aspects of Italian culture that are very popular in the Black community. John explained:

> I'm more proud of it and say who I am, so I would say maybe it is a little more easier for people to like, relate to me because I am Italian and I really feel that . . . African American and Italian culture are very close. And they [Blacks/African Americans] like our culture. They love the movies, they love all that. So for me I think it's easier because my friends are like, "He's not White, he's Italian," you know what I'm saying . . . "That's Italian John, and that's John Gotti," you know what I'm saying, so it is a little easier for me . . . being White and being Italian.

One of the documents I analyzed for this study was a paper that John had written for one of his English classes on the similarities between Italian culture and Black culture. The paper emphasized how both Italian and Black cultures are often stereotyped and negatively portrayed in popular media and how these factors often overshadow positive aspects of both communities. Perhaps based on the neighborhood in which John grew up, he noticed these

similarities very early on in his life. John was very passionate about this paper and was anxious to share it to support his opinion about the similarities between the two cultures.

John came to college wanting to play on a Division I baseball team. He hoped to prove to his father that he could earn a position on a Division I team, because it was something that his father had never done. John initially wanted to play baseball at a PWI also located in the Southeast. However, after recognizing that he did not fit the taller, heavier physical stature of the other players on the team, John decided to explore other options. In addition to having the opportunity to play baseball, he also wanted to find a campus where he believed he would feel most comfortable from a social standpoint.

> So I was like, "All right, I'm going to go to ECU because that's what I'm used to." I'm used to being the minority. I just for some reason feel like I could fit in better there. So I ended up coming here. I picked the school because I liked being the minority.

John played baseball for a year and quit, and although he did not play very much during his first year, John said that his father was still pleased that John was on the team. In addition to baseball and finding the right fit, cost was another factor in John's decision to attend ECU and continue attending after he gave up his athletic scholarship.

> I wanted my Mom to pay the cheapest because my brothers were 4.0 students. One of them goes to Wake Forest on scholarship. I was a 2.5 student in high school and I didn't want my Mom to waste like, $20,000 a year if I failed out. I knew I could do it, but I also know the kind of party animal I am and I love to party. I just . . . I honestly love to just . . . I'm a drinker . . . I love to just party . . . my friends like to drink. But my work gets done, you know what I'm saying.

Actively participating in social aspects of college life was very important to John. He expressed how much he enjoyed meeting people and having a good time:

> I really do stand out and I know a lot of people because I just am always up in the party and I'll come anywhere drunk just, hey, party, you know, and just invite people over. I love meeting new people. Sometimes I don't always remember them the next day, but it's fun. I like meeting new people . . . because you never know the connections you'll make.

Although John does not actively participate in campus organizations, he was involved with two internships at two of the local Bayside radio stations. One of the internships took place at the news and talk station, and the other involved working on the radio board for athletic events at the sports station in Bayside.

Matt

Matt is a senior with a major in the health professions at ECU. He is originally from the Midwest and is one of five children. Matt described his cultural/ethnic background as part French and part Mexican and self-identifies as White. When asked what factors contributed to his decision to attend ECU, Matt gave the following response:

> I would have to say 99% baseball. That was it. Because I didn't come here [the Bayside area] until middle school, so I got most of my childhood [in the Midwest], but I also got half and half so it is cool. So I really got accustomed to being around here.

Throughout the interviews Matt was very vocal about his disappointment with his experience at ECU. Matt's frustration was apparent as he expressed his thoughts and feelings about being a student and an athlete at ECU:

> I'm not going to go out and say, "Hey, I'm going to go to ECU . . . I went to ECU." . . . I'm not proud to say that, you know what I mean? I would never have my kids come to a school like this. And that's speaking in every aspect, like I just feel like there's so much stuff that I've missed out on . . . academically wise, athletic wise, being an athlete here, social wise. I mean financial wise, that's pretty much the reason why I had to come here.

In addition to being a member of the baseball team, Matt also had an internship at the student athletic center where he spent approximately 12 hours per week.

Patrick

Patrick is a 21-year-old junior with a human ecology related major. Patrick comes from a very well-educated military family and has lived in several parts of the country. He described his cultural/ethnic background as a Portuguese and Irish mix. When his parents divorced he was raised by his mother, who exposed him to more of the Portuguese culture during his upbringing. Patrick sports a variety of piercings and tattoos, including a very large color tattoo of Portugal on his upper left arm, which he referred to as "the family tattoo."

Patrick described himself as an "intelligent, cocky, pretty screwed up and crazy person [with] a very strong personality and opinions." He also described himself as "the black sheep" who has always been "kind of smarter" and "different" from everyone else in his family. Patrick is also a chef who attended an international culinary school in New York.

Patrick decided to attend ECU at the advice of a family friend who had similar career interests; however, the friend did not inform Patrick that ECU was a historically Black university. Perhaps in her mind, it did not really matter.

> She said come here because they just got a nutrition science program. I think it's actually pretty new here . . . the past couple of years. And I was like, sure. I didn't want to go too far away from, well I guess my parents' home. . . . I've never been anywhere close to them for years. I kind of want to be somewhere close. Right now I'm about two, two and a half hours away . . . just as close as I've ever been for years. Yeah, I didn't really know that it was an HBC. I just figured out what HBC meant. I just walked in here. I didn't know that there was historically Black colleges, and I didn't know they really segregated it that way, like set a name to it. But um . . . yeah, I got here and once I stepped foot on campus I already knew, but it didn't really set in until I kind of got here . . . because I mean, you can hear those things . . . like you can say like, you go to an all-White or all-Black school . . . once you're there and it really is that percentage, it's . . . it blew my mind a little bit. Not really that way [negatively] but I didn't really expect it to that extent.

Patrick recently applied to become a member of an undergraduate research program that is housed within his major department. The program assists students with research based on their individual interests. The students are assigned a mentor to guide them through their research projects that will ultimately create opportunities to travel and present at professional conferences and to submit manuscripts of research for publication in scholarly journals. According to Patrick, only the best students are invited to participate, and if admitted, he will be the only White male student in the program.

Ty

Ty is a 23-year-old senior with an arts and professions major. He was raised in a small, rural town on the state's border. Ty is also a member of the ECU baseball team and

also enjoys coaching varsity soccer at one of the high schools in his hometown. Ty is the only married respondent, which has seemed to remove him from the more social side of campus life. When asked about the campus culture at ECU, Ty replied:

> I don't participate in [it]. . . . I come here, go to [baseball] practice, take my classes and I leave. I don't go to anything. There's nothing really here that, you know, that interests me other than that . . . as soon as practice is over I go home and listen to my wife.

Ty is also unique among the respondent group because of his strong religious values that influence his campus social interactions as well.

Ty decided to attend ECU because he received an athletic scholarship to play baseball. He attended neighboring BU for his first semester but transferred to ECU after considering the amount of debt he would have incurred as a student at BU.

> Completely and utterly the only reason I came here was, in-state and because of baseball . . . they paid for my tuition. That's the only reason I came here. If I came here for academic reasons, I never would have come here. I actually went to Bayside [University] for the first semester but after seeing how, what I'd owe after I graduated it was like staggering compared to what I would owe if I came down here and got an athletic scholarship so you know, [I] kind of took that into account.

Walter

Walter is a 19-year-old sophomore whose major is housed in the College of Arts and Professions. He grew up in a diverse community approximately 45 minutes north of one of the state's major cities. He describes his cultural/ethnic background as Romanian and German. Walter lives off campus with his older sister who is a graduate student at ECU, and

he is actively involved in a wide variety of campus activities including the debate team and the drama society.

When asked what factors contributed to his decision to attend ECU, Walter replied:

> My sister was here. I originally did not want to apply um, because I'm an [X] major and I didn't know that this school had a real big [X] program or anything like that so that's the original reason I didn't look at it. And I really wanted to go to a city school, being out in the middle of nowhere is not fun but I decided to apply and money talks. So when they offered me a full scholarship that was the golden ticket.

Walter is an out gay male, which he believes presents more challenges for him than being a White student at ECU.

> I am the most minority you can be on a HBCU—a White male gay Jew. You really can't get around it here but the biggest obstacle I found is being . . . it isn't being White . . . and I believe it's a cultural thing . . . a lot of African American families are very steeped in Christianity and they're very um, to the T . . . to the book . . . exactly what it says. I feel that stifled a little bit my experiences as a White person on this campus because I've often seen myself not as White but as gay. And oftentimes you have that, no matter what you are there's going to be some type of label or something that's blocking your way and I found that my pile that happens to be on top um, the fact that I'm Jewish hasn't really affected anything about anybody you know they just . . . a lot of people here don't really know what Jewish is or what Jewish means so like, "Do you believe in God?" "Yeah, okay," then they're okay with it um, but I think the biggest obstacle is my sexuality on this campus.

Walter has ambitions of running for Mr. Junior at ECU, which is an elected student government position. Walter explained that holding the title of Mr. Junior would entail performing a great deal of community service, which became of interest to him after his recent involvement in service activities through the drama society. If elected, Walter would be the first known White student elected to such a position in the history of the institution.

Summary of Participants

Although the participants in this study are very unique individuals, they share some common issues and traits. For example, John, Matt, Ty, and Walter all mentioned that they chose to attend ECU because of financial reasons. Several of the baseball players also mentioned that athletic scholarships played a role in their college choice. Other factors contributing to college choice for the participants included proximity to home and more relaxed admission requirements. Additionally, several of them did not know that ECU was a historically Black university until they actually arrived on campus. This lack of awareness and information could have been detrimental to the success of these students had they been unable to adapt to the environment.

Two participants stated that they were first-generation college students, while two indicated that they were not first-generation. Other participants explained that their parents had some college courses and that they had older siblings who were in college or community college. Consideration of the position of the first-generation students coupled with a perhaps mid to lower socioeconomic status threatens any economic privilege and entitlement. Notions of class and the ability to make financial contributions to the college education of the participants are especially salient in this study due to their influence on college choice and access to financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants, loans, etc.

Overall, the participants' families were happy that they were going to college. First-generation college student status as well as other socioeconomic factors may have played a role in their scope of college choices as well as the emphasis placed on their financial aid, scholarship offers, and hesitancy to assume student loan debt. Very few respondents mentioned active parental involvement in their college choice, management of college life, and the development of strategies for success. Nonetheless, the majority of the participants appeared to be successful in their academics and co-curricular activities.

Although the participants in this study expressed a range of beliefs, ideas, and identities, similarities in their experiences provided rich data that yielded insight into their experiences as White males at ECU. One of the strengths of this study was the diversity of the participants with respect to their cultural backgrounds, belief systems, and sexual orientations. The next section will explore the main themes of the study with supporting evidence that emerged from the data.

Themes and Analysis

A total of four significant and often overlapping themes emerged from the data collected for this study. The themes were: influence of family and neighborhoods, classroom environments, social environments, and greater awareness of race and privilege (which included subthemes of experiences with discrimination and judgment, perceptions of privilege, and personal development). Although the final theme is the most central to this study, the three other themes are presented first in order to provide largely environmental contexts grounding the personal awareness described in the fourth theme. Each theme will be presented and developed with reference to participant data followed by an application of the

selected theoretical models to each theme. In a subsequent section in this chapter, the themes will also be discussed in light of the study's research questions.

Influence of Family and Neighborhoods

Pride in their cultural/ethnic heritage, the diversity of their neighborhoods growing up, and conflicting messages from family about race all characterized the familial influences and upbringing of the participants.

For some participants, family played an integral role in how they now viewed themselves and the world around them. John and Patrick in particular received very strong and positive messages from their families regarding their cultural heritage and the importance of taking pride in who they are. For example, John said that his parents

> were just wanting me to grow up, number one to really respect like, your Italian background . . . like that was really important . . . that was really driven into me, like, "Know who you are," . . . "be proud that you're Italian," . . . "make people know," you know what I'm saying, like "[Be] proud of it."

John also grew up in a very diverse neighborhood within the state. When asked what messages he received about race as he was growing up he replied, "Well if my parents really, you know, didn't like other races they wouldn't be bringing me up in Richardson County [pseudonym; a very diverse area of the state], you know, so . . . I think it's one of the most racially diverse counties in America."

Perhaps John's early exposure to diverse populations assisted him in developing the tools and skills he would need in order to successfully function as the "minority" within an environment such as ECU.

John purposefully chose to go to an all-Black college instead of a PWI. John enjoyed being the minority on campus and recognized both social and personal benefits of being different from the majority of his peers:

> The reason why I liked it is because I figured if I went to a White college I'd just be another kid there. Coming to a school like this, you stand out . . . it's like, "Hey Italian John!" "Hey John, how you doing?" You know what I'm saying? Everybody knows you more, and I'm not saying I like to be popular, but I like to meet as many different kinds of people as I can because . . . I mean just going to a school where everybody's the same is not gonna help me grow.

Coming from a military family, Patrick had the opportunity to live in seven different states. His travels with his family in addition to his travels as an adult exposed Patrick to people of different backgrounds and cultures. Patrick described his cultural/ethnic background and the importance of that heritage in the following way:

> I am Portuguese. My dad is a Black Irish . . . Portuguese and Irish mix. So I'm technically only about half White, because Portuguese is Hispanic and since my parents were divorced I was raised by the Portuguese side more . . . very . . . know yourself . . . .respect your heritage, respect your elders. I grew up in a matriarch. The women in my family they run it . . . usually because guys die off pretty quick. Yeah, so when my parents were divorced I was raised that way.

Patrick's statement is complex because he self-identifies as Portuguese, which he categorizes as Hispanic, yet he also considers himself White because he felt that he met the criteria to participate in this study. It is unclear whether Patrick would consider himself White in the literal sense or more so as a White Hispanic. Regardless of his definition, he appeared to

identify more strongly with his Portuguese heritage, but also acknowledged his White, Irish heritage although perhaps to a lesser extent given that he was raised primarily by his mother. Patrick was heavily influenced by his mother's Portuguese heritage, which he said emphasized the values of self-awareness, cultural pride, and respect for elders. The fact that Patrick has the "family tattoo" on his arm makes a very strong, nonverbal statement about how he chooses to self-identify and the importance of his cultural/ethnic heritage in his life.

Both John and Patrick were unique participants in the study based on their upbringing in diverse environments and their strong sense of pride in their own cultural heritages. Other participants appeared to receive more conflicting messages from family about race and heritage. For example, when asked about the first time in his life that he noticed any type of difference among people, Cal replied,

> As a kid I would say I really didn't know much about the difference [between Blacks and Whites] because I wouldn't say our family was racist, but our family was definitely . . . they had their beliefs of Blacks and Whites do not conceive in marriage and stuff like that.

Yet when asked what messages he received about race as he was growing up his response was, " . . . my family wasn't racist. They weren't like, 'You shouldn't hang out with Black people,' you know, they were very open to whoever. . . . " It appears as though Cal was being taught that he should be accepting of others but only to a certain point, reinforcing the idea of a hierarchical society where everyone has his/her place. Whether directly or indirectly, Cal's parents played a role in shaping his views regarding the acceptance of Black people and perhaps other people of color. In the first quotation, when Cal states that his family wasn't racist, it is unclear what "racist" actually means to them. One explanation may be that Cal's

parents would be accepting of casual social relationships with Blacks and other people of color, but would disapprove of close personal relationships.

David discussed similar messages he received from his parents that were also conflicting. Although he grew up in what he describes as an all-Black neighborhood, David's father warned him against developing romantic relationships with Black females. When asked what messages he received about race growing up, he gave the conflicting response:

> Honestly, nothing. I mean my neighborhood was all Black and that's who I always hang around with so my Dad never really said anything about race. Now he didn't really want me like messing with any Black girls, I mean he got pretty upset because I had [a Black girlfriend], but I mean, he can't do nothing, so he didn't say nothing . . . he was just not happy, you know? I guess it was like, you know, when he was younger he was brought up that way so he tried to bring me up that way . . . I mean, not racist or anything, but I guess a standard to live by or something. Would that sound right? I'm just saying, I don't want to make it sound racist or anything.

David states that his father was brought up "that way" which appeared to mean that people from different races should not intermarry or propagate. If this is indeed the case, the neighborhood where David grew up would seem an unlikely environment to avoid such occurrences given that he described the neighborhood as all Black. Also within this statement, David implies that dating a Black girl did not meet his father's "standard" to live by. There is an implied distinction between the values and beliefs of the family and how those values and beliefs might sound or appear to others. It is also evident in this quotation that David may not truly buy into these ideas because he asked if what he said would "sound right" and that he didn't want to make it sound racist. Perhaps if David truly believed in what

he said, he may not have had the same concern for how his statements would be perceived. It is also possible that he did not want to appear politically incorrect and racist, especially to me as a Black researcher.

To further complicate the messages David received from his family, he added that his mother had a different opinion on the matter than his father: "My Mom wasn't like that way at all. She doesn't really care who I mess with or anything." This statement by David's mother is also complex and ambiguous because, although she may not care who he chooses to date, this may not necessarily equate to acceptance of anyone he may choose to date regardless of their background.

David indicated that his beliefs were heavily influenced by his father. When asked what kinds of messages he receives from his father, David replied:

> It's not really like a race thing. . . . if we talk about a certain subject like government, I agree with most of the stuff he says because that's all I've ever heard, you know what I mean. Like, a lot of people here are democratic . . . and I'm republican, so I have to argue against them and I use what my Dad usually tells me . . . stuff like that.

As a second-year student, David may still be trying to establish his own beliefs and opinions independent of what he has been told by his parents. Throughout the interviews, David would often say, "I don't want to sound racist or anything, but . . . " which let me as the researcher know that he had a good sense of what would be potentially considered offensive to others. David's neighborhood environment and the ECU environment may be providing very different perspectives than those he reported receiving from his parents. It was clear that developmentally, David was trying to establish his own beliefs based on his current experiences in light of the messages he received growing up. The next themes will

explore more current aspects of the participants' academic and social experiences as students at ECU, beginning with classroom environments.

Classroom Environments

The classroom environment was especially important to explore because it represents an academic setting where all students come together for the purpose of interacting and learning. Unlike social and co-curricular environments, students are required to attend classes, although their level of active participation may vary. This type of environment requires students to be present at a specific location for a specific amount of time in a setting where they might be the only White student or one of a few in the classroom.

Participants generally agreed that ECU classroom environments were welcoming and safe for them. According to Walter:

> I'd say as far as you know sitting in the classroom and you just feel like an average student. I guess I'd say you know you look different but that's about it . . . working in groups, um no problem. I can't say it's any different than when I went to high school and it was predominantly White.

When asked to describe his experiences as a White male in the classroom at ECU, Patrick shared a similar view based on his own experiences, "It's just like every other class. It's all right. It's not any different to a certain degree." John agreed and explained, "There's no like, bias because you're White or you know different . . . they're not gonna call on you less just because there's a mixture of every kind of descent [heritage] teacher at this school." When asked to describe the dynamic in the classroom between students or between students and the professor, Matt said:

> It wasn't bad actually. I mean I never had any problems with that. I thought it was pretty average. It was nothing out of the ordinary. Everything went fine. I mean we worked with groups—that was never a problem. I mean I pretty much lived on campus so I mean I'd be willing to meet with a group whenever, you know on campus and I never had a problem with anything like that.

Although the participants generally agreed that the classroom was a good environment for them, they did acknowledge that it could also be potentially challenging and uncomfortable at times depending on the degree of controversy of the topic and the number of White students in the class. Several participants indicated that sociology classes, for example, frequently involved discussions centering on race and politics, and these topics would often lead to lengthy discussions and heated debates. Participant descriptions of their discomfort in classes emphasized experiences of hypervisibility, White "spokesmanship," and self-censorship, all of which are discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

Several participants discussed their hypervisibility as the only White student or one of a few White students in their individual ECU classes. Walter explained:

> In the classroom the funniest thing is you're always the student that the professor knows their name of first because you're the one that sticks out so they always remember, "That's Walter," you know, got that name down.

John described an experience of feeling hypervisible in one class where, paradoxically, other students were pointedly looking away from him, leading to John's ascribing feelings of concern and discomfort to his classmates and further ascribing reasons for their feelings:

> It's a little weird sometimes when maybe you're in history class and you're talking about slavery and you're the only White kid in the class. You know people are kind

> of like trying not to look at you but they're probably like, "Damn what's going on in his mind, like is he nervous or anything?" I mean I'll just sit there and answer questions. It doesn't really bother me but you still know in the back of your mind people are probably like, "Damn I know he's blown [speechless, shocked, or blown away] just sitting there looking like he's the only White kid and they know everyone is probably looking at him." . . . Not being mean but just like, "God, I know he's singled out right now."

Because John has spent his life as one of a few White people in his neighborhood and school settings, he was well aware of the empathy that his classmates may have felt for him in the situation he described. Although this might be an extremely uncomfortable situation for other White students who may not share a similar background and experiences, John appeared to be able to successfully manage such situations and continue to focus on his academics.

John also explained that there are both pros and cons to the hypervisibility in the classroom:

> Since I'm usually the only White male, every teacher I've ever had has always remembered my name. So it's good because they develop a more better [*sic*] relationship with you because they remember your name. I've had plenty of teachers who can't remember anybody's name, but they always remember me, so I can understand why. But then on the other hand it's bad because if you don't come to class they know that you weren't there. But they'll be like, "Well so-and-so wasn't here—I can't remember his name though," so they get away with it. But me, it's like—"Oh, John's not here" . . . it's quick . . . so it does screw me sometimes being the only White male in the class, but I like standing out, so that's good.

John reinforced how much he enjoyed standing out and being well known on campus both inside and outside of the classroom. He knows that people will notice him and sometimes even focus on him because he is different. This difference is what made John unique on campus and contributed to his popularity among his peers. An environment like ECU's complements John's extroverted, sociable personality because it allowed him to be noticed with little effort on his part.

Additionally, several participants spoke of being regarded in class as representative of the White majority point of view. This is very similar to what students of color may experience in a classroom setting where they are the only one or one of a few people of color in the class and are called on to represent the minority point of view. The difference, however, is that with White students, especially White males, they are regarded as most intelligent; therefore their opinion comes from a place of authority (Rowe et al., 1995). Walter's observation was characteristic of this situation, and it also expressed his discomfort with this assumed status:

> Lots of times they [people in class] usually look to the White students first to talk about discrimination because we're typically the ones that they think don't think it exists anymore, so they usually look to us first and ask our opinions first, which feels a little awkward at times.

Ty shared a similar experience and also discussed how he handles such situations:

> The only like kind of tough situation about it is that, when I'm probably the only one in there that's White, they actually turn to me and ask me what I think about [the subject/issue], so then I have to say something about it but you know the thing is that, as long as you're the type of person where you know you're straightforward and you

> let everybody know this is how I feel about it but at the same time you have nothing to hide anyway. . . . It's not very hard for me because I'm the type of person where I've never had any problems talking my way out of things and you know just being able to discuss things or win discussions you know, so it doesn't bother me at all.

Ty frames "talking his way out of things" and "being able to discuss things or win discussions" as competitive undertakings. Based on his experiences with discussions that he feels he has no problem being able to win, Ty infers that he possesses the persuasive point of view that will or should prevail.

Although some participants, including Ty, discussed reaching a level of comfort within classroom settings, several participants self-censored during class discussions in situations where they felt their opinions might be unpopular or not well received. For example, David observed:

> They [professors and classmates] actually bring up a lot of race issues, so basically I just kind of stayed out of the conversation. I don't want to say nothing that would offend anybody because it feels like if I say something everybody's going to be on my back. . . . It's not really that they bring up a lot of race issues, it's just issues that I feel I can't speak upon because I'm White. . . . After one of the issues, we [the participant and another White classmate] talked about it, [and] he's like, "I wanted to say something but I was afraid I was going to get beat up." So, stuff like that . . . so he's on the same page as me. I'm not afraid of getting beat up, it's just I don't want to go through conflict.

David's quotation is especially powerful because it clearly defines self-censorship within the context of this study, but it also contradicts the idea of White spokesmanship to some extent.

David stated that there were issues dealing race that he felt he could not comment on because he is White. This belief could be rooted in any number of factors, including a heightened awareness of how his peers might react to his opinions based on past experiences in home and school environments. Although David stated that he did not fear *physical* repercussions of any statements he wanted to make in class, it would be reasonable to consider that concern for his reputation among his peers would be an extremely important factor contributing to his self-censorship in the classroom. This type of concern for the opinions of others might reflect elements of dependent attitudes that could be influenced by the thoughts and ideas of others (Rowe et al., 1995).

Cal shared a similar point of view regarding self-censorship in the classroom, and added how the situation had improved over his four years at ECU:

> At first it was a little intimidating because I didn't really know about how my opinion would be taken . . . I don't know about speaking out and forcing my opinion and all that but the more that I got to know people inside the classroom, and stuff like that I definitely became more confident in myself and in talking to other people.

Cal's quotation demonstrates how he was able to move beyond the need for self-censorship in the classroom by strengthening his relationships with his peers, which in turn helped him build self-confidence.

Patrick also shared an experience of self-censorship during discussions involving race in the classroom:

> I mean no one's right about stuff like that. So, I kept my mouth shut . . . partially because I wouldn't want to get into it because all they were was arguing back and

forth and they weren't getting anywhere. And also because I didn't want to look like I was in the KKK or something like that.

Patrick's quotation first implies that it would be a waste of time and energy to engage in potentially controversial topics such as politics and racism. Patrick makes an almost dualistic assertion that such conversations would either be acceptable or likened to the KKK. Also, his reference to the KKK implies that any contribution he may have made to the conversation would have been controversial and most likely conflicting with the opinion of his peers. It is also possible that Patrick used the reference to the KKK to denote his concern that anyone who did not agree with the thoughts and opinions of the people in his class would be automatically considered a bigot and racist of the worst kind.

The preceding quotations suggest that some participants, particularly (but not only) those at earlier stages in their academic careers, have almost adopted a "me against them" attitude toward their peers when it comes to classroom discussions involving controversial issues. This type of mindset assumes that all of the Black students in class will have the same opinion with no regard for individual thoughts and beliefs. For example, in a previous quotation David stated that a lot of the people on campus were democratic and that he is a republican. His assumption disregards the fact that not every Black person is a democrat and that there are many Black republicans throughout the country. Such assumptions by the participants can be very limiting and cost them opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations with their peers about a wide range of issues.

Several participants had also taken classes at nearby BU and described different classroom experiences. Ty shared his experience at BU and how differently discussions involving politics had transpired in comparison to his experiences at ECU:

> It's like they [ECU students and faculty] can't talk about politics without talking about race. . . . I took one semester over at Bayside and I had two history classes over there . . . one was a history class, one of them was a political science class so that had a lot to do with government, and I can honestly tell you that [race] didn't come up once.

Cal described his experiences in a class at ECU that also contained BU students and the influence of BU students' presence on his comfort level:

> At first [ECU classes were] a little intimidating because I didn't really know about how my opinion would be taken. In some cases it wasn't that hard because there were a lot of classes in my sophomore year that contained a lot of Bayside University students. There were a lot of White students in the class so I wasn't as nervous.

Overall, although the classroom environment was regarded as a comfortable space for participants, there were occasions when they would feel uncomfortable based on the nature of the conversation and/or the demographics of the class. Participants developed various strategies including self-censorship to cope with situations like hypervisibility and White spokesmanship within the classroom. The concept of hypervisibility was previously explored in a 2004 study of descriptions of university life by successful Black students at a PWI (Davis et al., 2004). One of the themes that emerged in that study was a feeling of hypervisiblity experienced by the Black students who were alone in a class with many White students. This phenomenon is known as being "a fly in the buttermilk" (Davis et al.), which goes beyond the idea of standing out in a White environment to the idea of in many ways "ruining" the environment or somehow tainting it and making it impure. This same study also addressed the situation where Black students became the representative of the Black

point of view in the classroom, similar to what the participants described in this study. Although not strictly analogous due to relative position and power in the larger society, participants in this study also felt that they stood out within the classroom environment. The next section moves outside the classroom and addresses the theme of social environments and their influence on White racial consciousness.

Social Environments

Social environments were very complex among the participant group. Participants described a wide variety of social environments, indicating that they had very different ideas of what would constitute a social environment and what types of activities would be involved. For example, Ty, who is married and has very strong self-described religious convictions, did not participate at all in campus social events, parties, or similar occasions, but instead devoted more time to his family. Ty described the influence of his religious beliefs on his relationships with his friends in the following way:

> I mean even my friends here, I don't spend much time with them because like, I don't want to say I'm the only one on the team who's Christian because I don't know that or not but you know uh, I live my life a certain way and you know a lot of them other ones . . . you know, a lot of my friends they like to uh, you know they like to do things that they enjoy doing. It just so happens that some of the things that they enjoy doing I don't and you know, and they respect that and I respect and understand what they enjoy as a good time.

Ty implies that he does not socialize with many of his [ECU] friends and teammates because the types of activities they participate in would conflict with his religious beliefs. Although Ty never specified what things his friends enjoy doing, it could be assumed that he is

referring to typical college social behavior such as drinking and partying. Because Ty is a married Christian, it is more apparent that these activities would not appeal to him. Despite these differences, Ty and his friends appear to have a mutual respect for each other and the decisions each has made. Based on this passage, Ty's predominant social environment is family and perhaps sports, which differs from the stereotypical social environment of full-time undergraduates.

An unanticipated but highly relevant social environmental factor for respondents was the presence of BU. Respondents noted that many White ECU students—themselves included—often socialized at BU and in the city of Bayside because of its more traditional bar scene and the presence of more White students. According to Matt:

> There really is not a scene set up for ECU. That is why they [White ECU students] go to Bayside [University] to hang out. . . .Two of my best friends go to Bayside, so that is kind of why it is a lot easier for me. But I mean like that's a well-rounded school . . . they're a Division III school . . . they actually have football, they've got their athletics, they've got extra-curricular activities, they've got the bar scene, like all the things that the college kids would want to do. You just don't see that here. It's nonexistent compared to Bayside.

Matt's quotation specifically outlines the elements of what he would consider a "real" college," which are all the social outlets and features that he believes ECU is lacking. John echoed the social draw of Bayside when discussing the challenges of being a White student at ECU, but quickly added:

> A lot of people don't take the time on this campus really to get to know you. If you're White on the campus you do kind of get stereotyped, but I mean in a way, a lot of

> times it's your fault because you don't go out there and try to meet a lot of people. White kids don't usually live on campus. And if they do, they only really hang out with each other. So like, I really don't know a lot of White kids because they don't live on campus, they stray away, and like go live in Bayside, you know, go to Bayside University to party.

Patrick also discussed social relationships with people from Bayside:

> I do know people over there [in Bayside]. I don't talk to people every day, like right now I can take people or not take people. I do hang around with people once in a while . . . go to a bar . . . or go to a little house party or just hang out and watch TV. It's not so much that they're [people from Bayside] not affiliated with here [ECU], that has nothing to do with it, but it is just the fact that over there, not too many people are.

Although Patrick does not necessarily have a strong need to socialize with other people, his comments seem to suggest that when he is in the mood to socialize, he would choose to do so with people who live in Bayside and most likely attend BU.

Several participants discussed how many students on campus feel that there is simply nothing to do. John noted that he "asked a lot of other White kids, [and] they're just like, 'I hate this school. . . . It's so boring.'" This opinion was shared by other participants as well. When asked to describe the campus environment, Matt said:

> I would say that it is the worst experience, college wise. I am saying this as anybody would say it . . . it didn't matter what race you are. Because it all goes back to how it's ran [*sic*]. Let's just put it this way, we've got a movie theater, we've got a bowling alley, there's stuff to do, but there's people that are put into positions that

> don't coordinate anything. So you could say that I don't see much of any campus activities . . . there's very few of those. This is what they call a suitcase kind of college where you just go home on the weekends because there is nothing to do around here.

Matt continued, "Most [students] are from Richardson County, about two hours away. It's not that bad to drive. I'd say 80% of those kids drive home [for the weekends]." However, for those students who remained in the area, Matt reiterated how limited their options were at ECU and why Bayside was such an attractive alternative as a social outlet:

> Well I could compare it [ECU] to Bayside [University], like the people who hang out here. Like Bayside is an actual legitimate . . . they're a legitimate college. Their kids . . . they come from New Jersey and all over but they want to stay there on weekends, they want to hang out. They've got that scene like remember I said nobody wants a school here, there's really no scene set up for ECU . . . it's for Bayside. That's why you go to Bayside because they're hanging out . . . I mean they're partying at that bar or whatever. They [the city of Bayside] want them [Bayside students] there.

For most respondents, ECU and their fellow ECU students played very minor roles in their social lives and the decisions they made regarding social activities with others.

Participants described their circles of friends in different ways. For example, Matt shared his difficulty connecting with other students besides his teammates during his first few years at ECU, but later reached out to meet other people:

> I'd say if you want to call it [his social circle] baseball team only, maybe . . . but I mean like that was my first couple of years. Now my last couple of years it's been a little bit better. I will say you do feel like an outsider, I mean definitely . . . but I mean

> you've got to be the one to make that change, so like once I got used to the campus and stuff, I was cool with a lot of people . . . played like pick-up football here and there and go out, and that's how you've got to meet people, you know, and actually participate in some of the activities.

David, who is also a member of the baseball team, explained how the team is almost its own exclusive group that rarely interacts with other students. David explained, "the baseball team . . . they always sit together, they don't ever talk to nobody, not they don't ever talk to nobody, but nobody like, tries to interact with them either, you know what I mean? I don't see much interaction." Although David has his circle of friends which includes many other White students, he also makes an effort to get out and interact with other people:

> I've got a group of friends that hang out all the time and actually [there are] a lot of White people in the group and we hang out all the time. We eat together and everything and the relationship there is good so I guess like you've got your group of people you hang with and you stick with them, you know what I mean. I hope that's understandable, you know like if I sit at this lunch table with some people and I probably sit with them the whole year and not go explore different places. But I explore. I go around and talk to people.

In a way, David sets himself apart from the other people in his circle of friends. By exploring and talking to other people, David was able to establish more relationships with different types of people on campus. Perhaps the fact that he grew up in what he described as an all Black neighborhood helped him to be able to comfortably interact within the predominantly Black campus community.

Walter made a similar statement about the cafeteria and how White students position themselves:

> I'd like to think of myself as someone who mingles and hangs out with people who you know I get along with and they're fine and I usually do. A lot of my friends are you know, some are White, some are Black, some are Hispanic, across the board I have friends. But the funny thing is I didn't start noticing until a few weeks ago is when I go to lunch, the lunch table I sit at is predominantly White, and there's no other table like that in the cafeteria, and a lot of the athletes here are White, and those are the people who I have befriended and why, I honestly I do not know. I don't know if it's a comfort zone that we find ourselves in or if it's some type of visual, you know back home kind of thing if we were around other people that look like us it made us feel more comfortable. I have no idea but I started noticing it the more people I was sitting with, the more people I started to hang out with looked like me. If you had never been there before and you walked in right dead center, "Oh there's the White table," you know it's . . . you pop . . . we obviously stand out.

I spent several hours in the cafeteria observing students and was able to witness exactly what Walter described. I observed a group of approximately six to eight White students sitting together at a table in the middle of the cafeteria. I am not sure whether or not any of them were student athletes, but they appeared to be a very close-knit group by the way they interacted with each other. There was lots of smiling, laughing, and yelling among the group, and their body language was very friendly and open. This group of students definitely stood out among all the other students in the room, but it looked as though they were comfortable being there and having a good time with each other.

> Walter also added that occasionally the lunch table groups are more diverse: I'm not saying it's all the time like that . . . it's not like, "Okay you can't sit here if you're not White" you know. It's not like that at all. But I'd say on campus if you're in a classroom you know 75% of the people in that classroom will be African American but at the lunch table 75% of the people are White.

I also witnessed more diversity at a couple of tables as Walter described. One of the tables I observed included Walter himself as he sat at a table with one other White student and four to six Black students. They appeared to be very good friends as they laughed and talked just as any other group of friends would do. Although they sat very close to each other, the volume of their conversation was very loud. As they were eating lunch they were whispering, laughing, and singing along with the television a few yards away blasting music videos.

The cafeteria was the one campus social setting that almost all participants discussed. Perhaps other campus settings were not as salient for participants because the majority of them lived off campus. Both David and Walter described the cafeteria as a setting where White students come together for whatever reason, and that a similar degree of hypervisibility existed similar to what was described in the classroom. The difference in a social setting is that the students choose to be in that particular location with that particular group of people as opposed to the classroom where they are required to be present. Also, the White students in the cafeteria almost chose to be hypervisible by always gathering to have lunch in the same area each day, which over time became the section where they would be "expected" to sit. It appeared as though the White students did not mind being hypervisible in the cafeteria because they were in the company of their friends in a relaxed atmosphere

without being concerned that they might be made to feel uncomfortable or "put on the spot" during a classroom discussion.

The environments in which these social circles exist also played a role in the nature of the activities and the types of people involved. For example, Walter explained how he has two distinct circles of friends based on whether he is at home or at school, and different types of activities were attached to each of those group interactions:

> The people who I hang out with here are not the people I hang out with let's say, when I'm at home and I'm talking the types of people as far as you know the color of their skin. When I'm here at ECU, you know, I find myself going out with a lot of people who are African American you know we do certain things but when I go home and I'm with students that look like me. We do different activities we do, like um, here it's a lot of on campus . . . in your room, watching TV, just kicking back kind of thing . . . don't really go out much but when I'm at home we go out to the movies, we go out shopping, we go to the mall and stuff like that so here it's more of a stay in and chill when I'm back home it's more of a go out and chill kind of thing.

One influential factor in the discussion surrounding the social environment was the way in which respondents defined what constituted a "party." White ECU students and Black ECU students (as reported by respondents) appeared to have very different ideas of what a party entails. For example, Walter described a party as a "group of students getting together at somebody who has an apartment or has a house, you know, loud music, order pizza . . . late nights." Initially Walter indicated that his social interests are usually different from his friends, except when it comes to parties. He explained his social experiences outside the classroom by saying:

> I find it a little different here just because I don't feel like I fit in in certain social scenes . . . I don't listen to the same type of music that a lot of my friends listen to . . . social events as far as you know concerts go you know outside I don't really find interest in a lot of some of the concerts that some of my friends would go to. Parties . . . we go to them. . . . [I] don't feel too much different in party settings.

Walter also indicated that most of these parties would take place off campus, but related one instance of an on-campus party:

> Last week I was the only White student at a party and I didn't notice until I left. If someone else was to take a look at that situation and saw the one White boy at a party on campus, they probably would think it was weird. I was the White boy and I didn't think of it. I didn't even notice until we were leaving. I was like, "Hey, wait a minute. I was the only White person there, wasn't I?" It was on campus but it definitely should have been off campus because if we would have gotten caught we would have been in a lot of trouble.

Walter appeared to compartmentalize his interactions with his different groups of friends and the activities in which they would engage. For example, Walter explained that he doesn't fit into certain social scenes and that his musical preferences are different from many of his friends on campus. However, one of the activities that he has in common with his Black friends is partying. It is unclear why the on-campus party Walter described would have gotten them into trouble and should have been held off campus. There could be a variety of reasons for this which might include the presence of alcohol or drugs, or that there might have been too many people and too much noise for an on-campus event.

In contrast, John described how he strives to combine components of what both White students and Black students would consider a party:

> All they [Black students] want to do is like, dance . . . they want to have the music playing. I have that, but I bring the kegs, like the common what you'd call 'White' [parties] . . . all my friends are Black, but they're not seeing it as White parties, they're seeing it as college . . . having fun. And I've tried to show people at this school, like, it's not being White going to parties. This is the real college life. You can bring the reggae music, you can have the people playing beer pong, keg stands, people just wilding out, you know just wrestling each other, just random, crazy stuff, and I think they really, like, bond, and . . . guys that walk around you think are thugs would be in there playing the games that everyone calls "White" and they'll like it.

Although John's statement is meant to be inclusive, he normalizes a "White" definition not only of what a party is, but also on what constitutes the "real college life."

Nevertheless, these quotations illustrate the complexity of environments and the different meanings social settings may hold for different groups of people. Among the participants in this study there was great variety in social settings including home life, local (Bayside) bars, off-campus parties, and campus environments such as the cafeteria.

In this study, social environments were complex and entailed at times conscious negotiations and decisions by respondents. Social environments were, for the most part, self-initiated and independent of the campus, yet were primary sites of informal interaction where respondents were able to develop friendships and participate in an enjoyable social atmosphere. Respondents participated in parties with ECU students, and also socialized away

from campus, and in some cases, strict separation of social circles was also apparent. Overall, participants described finding and creating comfortable and enjoyable social environments.

The next theme addresses a greater awareness of race and privilege, which will be broken down into subthemes including experiences with discrimination and judgment, perceptions of privilege, and personal development. It is important to note that the first three themes were focused largely on environmental factors, and the fourth and final theme is focused on the complex theme of personal awareness and potential development.

Greater Awareness of Race and Privilege

Participants discussed how their lives changed as a result of being a temporary minority student at ECU. Several of them were confronted with issues and ideas that challenged ideas and beliefs they previously held, which were most likely heavily influenced by their families and peer groups. This theme will be separated into three subthemes including: experiences with discrimination and judgment, perceptions of privilege, and personal development.

Experiences with Discrimination and Judgment

Several participants discussed experiences both on and off campus that made them feel as though they were being judged because of their race or their affiliation with ECU, and often this judgment carried a discriminatory impact or meaning. It is important and relevant to this study to explore such events because these can allow participants to experience briefly the negative effects of being in the minority and feeling somewhat powerless. For example, Matt discussed how he felt ECU and its students were being discriminated against by the local community in several ways:

> I've also come to realize that the people in this town really don't want this school here, because that explains why there's no bars around here. When you go to Bayside they make ECU [students] pay more [bar cover charges], because they [ECU students] always get into fights, stuff like that. There used to be very little fast food around here, I mean you know for college kids . . . there's a couple more now but there used to not be that many, just because they [the townspeople] just didn't want it here. That's why this place is just stuck here in the middle of nowhere. Nobody wants us here.

Matt's quotation is very complex in that it seems to imply that ECU is unwanted within the community because it is an HBCU and because of perceptions that the young, Black, ECU students are prone to violent behavior. Demographics of the small town in which ECU is located reflect a majority Black population; however, this is easily explained by the presence of ECU students. Absent of the campus's student population, the community would be considered majority White.

The use of the term "us" in the last sentence of Matt's quotation may indicate an identification with the ECU community—not as a White student, but just as a student. In addition, Matt's statement may represent his frustration at being discriminated against because he attends a predominantly Black university and is thus affected by the outcomes of those perceptions, being negatively grouped with other students. The limited fast food outlets for students and being overcharged at Bayside bars are examples that might reflect the negative perception of ECU students in the community. Matt continued to explain how this perception of ECU students translated into a more tangible outcome based on the cover charge for ECU students and BU students at a bar in Bayside:

> One time we went to this [bar] in Bayside . . . it was five bucks to get in for Bayside [students] and like $20 [for] ECU [students]. I was like, "You're kidding me right?" That's how they did it one time . . . and I was like, "You guys know that's illegal. That can't be legal."

Matt also reported that another popular Bayside bar will soon be following the same policy of requiring ECU students to pay a higher cover charge compared to BU students. This experience may provide Matt insight into what it is like to be unfairly judged based solely on gender or race. It is also an example of being a temporary minority by virtue of his status as an ECU student.

Matt raised the issue of perceptions of violent behavior among ECU students, and Ty and John discussed their concerns about violent behavior by students within the ECU environment. The following passages by Ty and John are especially significant because instead of being the victims of judgment by others, they in turn passed judgment on their peers. Ty noted that he avoided certain social situations on campus because of safety concerns:

> I would have to say given the fact that the media around here gives this university, given some of the things that you know situations I've heard that have happened here, given situations that I hear people are gonna do, you know, I avoid. I go out of my way to avoid social situations here. I make sure of that. Like when they have a thing here every year for homecoming they bring singing groups in here, and you hear things like well this group [of students], they're bringing stuff [weapons]. That's why they have to put all these metal detectors out here you know during that kind of stuff, you know. They're going to do this to so and so you know you just . . . I mean, we're

> adults, man . . . I'm 23 years old, I mean if you can't come here and you know enjoy a concert without worrying about if somebody's going to stab me or not, I mean that's why I said there's certain people [students] here that all they're worried about is the social setting . . . that [more concern for social life than academics] happens with every university but it just seems like that's why I dodge that.

Ty expressed his concern for personal safety at campus events, but also alluded to his perception of different types of students at ECU and why they come to college. John expressed a similar point of view with regard to the more violent student element at ECU. He was also more specific about his views on ECU students who were more concerned with the social aspect of campus life and did not take their academics seriously:

> I would say if I described the people here, I'd be like, most of them are idiots. I mean to be honest, the friends I hang out with like to have fun. It's not about fighting all the time. Of course when we get drunk we end up almost having to fight people all the time but we just want to have fun and make our college experience. They're not kids you would say . . . White. They're all kids from Richardson County . . . come from the hood . . . you would never think . . . but they want to do something different and have fun, it's college. A lot of the kids out here just want to smoke weed, you know, act stupid, fight people . . . you can't go to a party here without someone getting in a fight.

John portrayed his circle of friends as different from those who initiate negative behavior, although John and his friends will fight for example when necessary. His main point was to distinguish his friends from those who go beyond having fun and participate in more violent and dangerous behavior.

John further explained his thoughts about why some of his peers behave in the manner that they do based on where they come from and their motivation for attending ECU:

> They [ECU] give a lot of kids that wouldn't normally get the chance to go to college, or shouldn't always get the chance because they're coming with a one-point-something in high school . . . they give them a chance to try to turn their life around. And some of them do, but some of them, they're just like . . . this kid should never have been accepted in college . . . like, he just came here, fought people for a semester, you know, pulling out their guns, you know what I'm saying. This is college. You're supposed to be above that. I would say there's a lot of stupid people out here . . . it is everywhere. But like I've had people that, it's funny, they would come from the Richardson [County] area, and it's like [ECU] is worse than being in Richardson [County]. They'll be like, "I came down for homecoming, I got two guns pulled on me. This is college!" And I'm like, "Man, you've just got degenerate people sometimes that come here and they don't want to graduate from here. They just want to come here and have summer camp and just play around, and still act like they're in the hood. They don't want to better themselves, they just want to fight . . . they want to act stupid." Those are the people you don't want to hang out with. I'll show you the people you want to hang out with you know what I'm saying.

John made a clear distinction between the type of people that he hangs out with, who just basically want to have fun, and those who always cause trouble. John attempts to dismantle the stereotype that all students from these areas are troublemakers. The passages by Ty and John provided evidence that some of the participants experienced not only judgment by other people but that they also participated in the judgment of other people within the environment.

David discussed a different type of experience with discrimination involving one of his peers. A Black student to whom David usually talked and considered a friend approached him one day and in the course of their conversation conveyed that she could not trust him because he is White.

> I don't understand why she couldn't trust me. She didn't say because I'm White, but she pretty much [implied it] the way she said she could trust anybody else in the cafeteria at the time except for me and probably any other White person. That's just the way it came off to me. It might not have been, but that's just how I feel.

Again this is an example of a participant feeling unfairly grouped because of his race and not being judged on his individual merits. This type of generalization challenges the concept and value of individualism, where the person is regarded as discrete from other beings. This idea of individualism has become a cornerstone of the American way and is rooted in Western philosophy (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Both Matt and David expressed their frustration with what they felt was a violation of their individualism. They were very uncomfortable with someone else making assumptions about them based on their group membership.

Additionally, Patrick shared via email a painful, discriminatory experience with me that took place on his way to class one day. He was passing by a young Black male student, a young Black female student, and an older Black man 50–55 years old when the older man asked Patrick if he was "going to the get together tonight." Patrick politely asked him what he was talking about, and the older man explained about the haunted trail were people went to scare each other and "dress up like ghosts and what not." Patrick replied, "It's March, doesn't that type of thing only happen during October?" thinking that the man was referring to a Halloween event. The man replied, "Really, I'm not kidding. Are you coming?" In his

confusion, Patrick decided it would be best to just continue on to class and the older man said, "Play that funky music White boy." Patrick stopped and the man asked, "Do you remember that song?" Patrick said yes and was suddenly interrupted by his cell phone, which he took as the perfect opportunity to terminate the conversation and get away from the older man.

Two minutes after walking away, Patrick said he realized that "the 'crazy old man' had just invited me to a KKK rally." Patrick's email explained his thoughts:

> He [the older Black man] was racist, but more then that he was hateful. It was different, this guy used some kind of old school racism I hadn't thought still went on. I can't emphasize or even explain what it was like to recognize this, HATE is really the only word for it, HATE in its purest form and spoken without remorse or guilt. HATE not for a person but for a people in general. I hadn't even seen this man before and he went out of his way to engage me, spreading his hateful attitude toward me.

Patrick continued expressing his reaction to the incident by writing the following:

> Yelling and anger I can deal with, I understand it, even being treated like dirt is something I can at least recognize. This was different. I was pissed while sitting in class having not understood how I could be so gullible. Not just pissed though, sad and like less of a person. As you probably noticed I'm okay with being unique, however this was the first time sitting in a class at ECU that I felt like total shit and separated for being White. Not different, White. I was actually offended and hurt by what that old guy had said, and I'm not exactly sensitive.

This email from Patrick was especially powerful because he felt that the experience was compelling enough to take the time to email me regarding not only the experience but also

his feelings about the experience. In this situation, Patrick's environment took on new meaning as he was blatantly made to feel like an outsider on his own campus. This type of dissonant incident caused Patrick to feel confused, insulted, and powerless.

Walter also spoke of discrimination not based on his race, but on his sexual orientation. He discussed how he believed being gay in the ECU environment precluded him from joining certain clubs and organizations on campus:

> It's not the fact that I'm White that keeps me out of certain groups . . . I don't know if you can tell from my mannerisms but I am gay so that has kept me out from a lot of other groups um, example fraternities on this campus um, they're all you know, the Divine Nine [the nine historically Black fraternities and sororities] so they're all not restricted to Black students but if you're not Black you don't feel like you can join one of those fraternities. There's only one fraternity on this campus that would accept me for being White and it's a Christian-based fraternity and because I'm gay I don't feel welcome there either so it's, you know that plays into it, so for me I haven't really focused on a lot of the race and that kind of aspect as much as my sexuality has kept me from it.

Because ECU is a historically and predominantly Black institution, many of the norms and mores of Black culture carry over into the overall campus environment. Walter was well aware of this influence and discussed how those beliefs and values impact him as a gay male:

> I guess um, at my school, the way I feel is that I have to be, you know, in order to be considered a man versus just a boy, um, you've got to stand taller and be more rough and tough kind of thing, and that's not really who I am. So I never tried to be that . . . um . . . so a lot of this goes back to my lifestyle, and how I really don't care what they

> think. But I do feel the pressure at ECU to be more masculine than I would maybe at another institution. I would probably attribute it to . . . I don't want to say that in a White household I was raised differently than maybe someone in a Black household because I don't understand that but what I've seen is that Black males tend to strive to be more masculine than White males do.

The Key model discussed the issue of masculinity and rigid, prescribed behavior for men (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). In Walter's case, not only must he deal with society's expectations of him as a male and as a White male, but he also must deal with the expectations of males within the Black community. Walter recognized the expectations of his peers, but courageously made the decision to not feel pressured into being someone that he is not.

Walter's lens as a gay White male shapes the way in which he functions within the ECU campus community, directly influencing the environments to which he perceives that he does or does not have access. He simultaneously experienced multiple privileged and oppressed identities that may marginalize him in some settings and make him superior in others.

Participant experiences with discrimination and assumed judgments appeared to result in dissonant attitudes that prompted respondents to re-evaluate their thoughts and opinions on racial issues. These experiences may challenge the participants to try to view themselves and their attitudes in new and different ways based on their experiences and with reference to their environments. Participants must also attempt to make meaning of these experiences and determine if their attitudes will change or if they will remain the same. This

type of situation involving experiences, reflections, and potential growth represents a period of transition from one attitude or type to another within both the Key and WRC models.

Perceptions of Privilege

Participants expressed very different ideas about what elements constitute privilege and its existence in their own lives. Identifying these beliefs and attitudes was especially challenging seeing as the concept of privilege can be subtle, complex, and for many, difficult to identify and accept (Crowfoot & Chesler, 2003; D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Several participants made statements that reflected the luxury they have of choosing whether to recognize privilege or ignore it. For example, David seemed oblivious to the existence of privilege that may characterize his own life. Furthermore, he indicated that if it did exist it was by no fault of his own. When asked what meaning being a White male had for him David replied:

> Everything is the same for everybody . . . for me anyway. I don't go out looking for privileges though . . . I just live my life you know what I mean? I don't go out looking for stuff to happen to me. If it happens it happens and I probably won't even realize that it's happening.

Patrick made a similar statement by saying, "I don't really think of myself as a White male . . . I just think of myself as male." These statements reflect the freedom that the White male has to ignore or to explain away any unearned benefits in society that may be bestowed upon him strictly for being White and male.

Several participants also expressed that they felt as though issues of race and inequality are overemphasized. Patrick explained:

> I think people put way too much emphasis on stuff like this though. That's what I think. I think like, you go around and you kind of put emphasis on that, it kind of like holds you back. . . . I think it has a lot to do with how you grow up . . . like if you grow up in a hateful environment you're going to get that, and if you don't you're not.

In this quotation Patrick seems to imply that people have the choice to either focus on race and inequality issues or not. The environment does play a critical role in shaping beliefs and attitudes, but many environmental factors may simply be beyond one's control. Patrick's comment also reflects a sense of individualism that places emphasis on the individual's capabilities and achievements as opposed to a collective identification. The individualistic attitude disregards the welfare of marginalized groups and those who may be oppressed (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Patrick's comment is spoken from a position of power and reflects one of the consequences of racism for White people, which is that they do not consider race or racism to be an important issue that directly affects them and those who look like them (D. A. Scott & Robinson).

David brought up the popular television reality show *Black White* that involves a Black family and a White family experiencing the world as the other race. David believed that the Black male character was hypersensitive about racism and prone to seeing it in areas where it did not exist. David explained:

> I notice that when he's walking on the street he seems to think everything is about racism. Like if he sees a White person looking at him . . . just looking at him, he thinks it's racism. Like if he gets good service in a store like they approach him and

> like the clothes area and a guy comes over and says may I help you, he sees that as racism . . . where, I mean that happens to me, I don't see it as racism.

David failed to recognize that a White male experiences the world differently from a Black male or other person of color, which may influence how they interact with the environment. David went on to say, "I think . . . don't get me wrong, I'm not racist . . . I don't want to sound racist, but people use that excuse [racism] for a lot of things. That's what I feel . . . " Again, David expressed his sensitivity to appearances and concern with judgment from others. Both Patrick and David's comments reflect elements of a dominative attitude of the WRC model (Rowe et al., 1995) by positing that judgments based in their perspectives are both superior and correct.

Cal shared an experience from his ECU multicultural [subject matter] class that addressed the inequality of educational opportunities for Blacks, with which he seemed to disagree:

> [In] the multicultural class we're talking about how the Whites are mainly the norm and that the Blacks aren't thought of as being educated, stuff like that where I kind of feel like it's still being . . . it's still an issue, yes but sometimes it's being overplayed because there are a lot of very successful Black people. I mean we have Black history month . . . look at all the people that are in Black history month so for people to say that Blacks aren't a part of this country I believe is wrong, but I mean there's still issues, yes, because of segregation and stuff like that and yeah, there's a lot of different culture issues but it still to me like sometimes it's hard to listen to because some of it is just hard to grasp because they're talking about how bad it is when really sometimes it's not that bad.

Cal's statement reflects an instance where class content and interactions with peers have helped him explore and perhaps clarify his own ideas and perspectives, which is a positive byproduct of such classroom interactions. He appears to recognize the inequality that exists with regard to educational opportunities for Blacks, but he also indicates that the progress that has been made should be acknowledged, and that in many ways that same progress should be sufficient to silence the argument. It is Cal's position of privilege that allows him to suggest that the condition of the Black community is not as bad as it is sometimes proclaimed to be.

Several participants had different opinions about privilege and recognized it within society and for themselves to different degrees. For example, John discussed how he saw White male privilege in corporate America:

> I think it [being White and male] helps in corporate America because most of the bosses that you usually see on TV or that you usually see heading companies at least when I've had jobs, they're usually White males, you know . . . I don't know, old, young, whatever but not even females, just White males, you know what I'm saying. All the rich guys that you see, like the Republicans and Bush and all them, they have all the money, and Donald Trump, Bill Gates . . . I mean they earned it, but I'm just saying like they're all White males.

In this passage John recognizes the over-representation of White males in top corporate positions; however, he also attributes this success to merit, while failing to recognize any unearned advantages that the White males he mentioned may have had that assisted them in their achievements.

Despite his views on emphasizing the progress of educational opportunities for Blacks, Cal was very clear and precise as he discussed the privileges that he received as a White male. Cal explained:

> I feel like, okay like if I go for a job interview or something like that, I don't feel like I am going to be judged very harshly because I am a White male. I feel like, no offense, but if someone that was Black or Mexican or something like that went to apply for a position that I was applying for, they would be judged a lot harder. So I do . . . again it is a subconscious thing that I don't think about it, but I have a lot of advantages. I don't have to be scared that I am not going to get a job or something like that. I know I will have a chance. A lot of people go into a job thinking, "Well there is a good chance that I am not going to get it." And I also feel that being a White male, I feel like I am not judged as hard as a lot of other people especially, White women or women in general. But I sometimes feel like I get away with a lot more stuff because I am a White male.

This quotation illustrates that Cal is aware that privilege exists and that he benefits from it through no effort of his own. He also acknowledges that this privilege contributes to his confidence and his likelihood of being successful. What Cal fails to mention, however, is a subsequent step about how he feels about this position of privilege and/or what he can do as a White male to dismantle the inequities and share opportunities with others. In order to continue his growth in this area, Cal could consider creating more opportunities to interact with people of diverse backgrounds and learn more about their experiences and immerse himself in readings and discussions to gain a greater self-knowledge about racism and discrimination (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001).

Walter was much more specific about his awareness of privilege and how it is evident in his life:

> As a White student like, I mean . . . just as a White male in general I feel fortunate because no one judges me offhand. I go into a building and nobody automatically looks at me because of what I look like. In the United States I am considered normal. Normal in the world isn't even male. Normal in the world is female, don't have any money, and live in Africa. That is, you know the majority of the population of the world. But here in the United States, I am what people consider to be "normal." So when I go somewhere people don't look at me funny. So in a lot of ways, it's made everyday living a lot easier.

Walter has been able to recognize the advantages he receives in society based solely on his race and gender, despite any marginalization he might experience as a gay male. Walter continued:

> And that's something I've learned being at ECU. People say, you know, "Discrimination still exists," and before I came to ECU I used to say, "No it doesn't," you know, because discrimination is not just somebody coming up and saying to you, "You're Black and I don't like you." It's the looks that you get, you know when you walk into a store, you know, when somebody comes up and says, "Hi how are you doing?" and they don't greet the White person; it's because they want you to know that they're there and they're watching you because they think you're the one that's going to shoplift. It's more than that, and at ECU being White, I've gotten a sense of what getting those looks feels like.

Although he was the youngest participant in this study, Walter appeared to have the greatest clarity about the intersection of privilege, race, and gender within the environment. He was also able to pinpoint learning and personal development outcomes from being a student at ECU. According to his quotation, he makes the connection between his status as a White male student at ECU and what he has learned about racism and discrimination as a result.

Several participants also discussed experiences with privilege in the classroom. Patrick explained how teachers expect him to excel:

> You ever heard of teacher expectancy? Students excel by how a teacher . . . like teachers can zero in on people. And it makes them do better because they are kind of being zeroed in on and the other ones that aren't, aren't doing as well. That's a rough way of saying it. And to a certain degree I think it seems like the teachers think I'm going to do good, so I actually seem to be doing better. And a lot of students seem to think that they're good . . . which I try not to think is because I'm White because I wouldn't want that to be the case.

Patrick's statement implies that teachers automatically expect him to perform well in the classroom. This mindset reflects elements of the dominative attitude of the WRC model based on a belief in White superiority and ethnocentrism (Rowe et al., 1995).

John shared a similar perception of privilege as a male in the classroom:

> I think the female teachers gave the male students a little more leeway in stuff . . . not a lot, but a couple. I had a couple of teachers that maybe, I don't know if it was because I'm male they liked me [or] because I was goofy or whatever and I thought . . . it did seem to give me a little more leeway but I still, like, at the end didn't even get the grade I thought. So it really didn't end up working my way, but they still

> seemed to like me. Other than that, I don't think it's really helped, especially in the classroom.

Cal appeared to express much more clarity about the role that privilege has played for him in the classroom:

> If anything it's been good because I've really learned a lot about people . . . I haven't really had a bad issue as far as race. I've never had anybody discriminate against me because I am White or something like that or because they thought I was being ignorant because I am White or something like that. I've never had that um, I guess there have been some times in class where I feel like I have gotten the edge because I am White. Um, there have been a couple teachers where I kind of felt like maybe gave me a little bit more of an edge because I'm White and I am a minority here and stuff like that but I don't . . . I've never really come straight against it [discrimination] or come across it.

The perceptions of these respondents provide evidence that they were privileged in the classroom because of their race and gender. Not only were these respondents able to recognize this privilege, but they were also able to articulate it, which indicates a deep level of awareness. This type of awareness is most similar to the empirical type of the Key model which involves the recognition that existing privilege was earned through no particular effort of their own (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). This type of privilege could also be detrimental especially when it is undeserved and unwarranted seeing as it does not account for the personal abilities and talents of those receiving the privileges. A specific reason must exist for teachers to treat White males this way in the classroom. This type of treatment only

further perpetuates the societal belief that White males are inherently superior (Rowe et al. 1995).

The behavior of the teachers, some of whom were White and some of whom were people of color, may be interpreted in a number of ways. Perhaps the teachers were striving to make the participants feel more comfortable in the classroom environment recognizing that they might have been the only White student in the class. Another interpretation may be that the teachers either consciously or subconsciously believed in the inherent superiority of the White male, which would be similar to the dominative attitude in the WRC model (Rowe et al., 1995). Participant responses indicated awareness that they stood out in the classroom and that they had developed methods of coping with such situations. Although they developed coping mechanisms of their own such as self-censorship, there was also evidence that they were assisted by teachers who may have given them special treatment in some cases.

Personal Development

The participants were asked about aspects of their experiences as White male students attending an HBCU and how they felt those experiences may contribute to who they are, how they function as students, and how they view the world. A variety of answers were shared ranging from personal enrichment to a greater sense of belonging and satisfaction. Patrick, who has lived in many areas of the United States and encountered many diverse populations, described the impact of his experience in the following way:

> I have learned a lot more about Black culture since I've been here . . . which I'm not saying in any way is a bad thing or a really good thing anyway, but you kind of . . . it's good to learn about something you didn't really know about before. I think I got a

> little bit more in touch with the race part, like when you start growing up and getting past it and you're like, all right, everybody is racist, it's just a normal thing, but then you become more aware of that. And it's almost like embracing the fact that I am White in a Black campus.

Although Patrick previously stated that he feels that too much emphasis is placed on race, it is important to note that he realizes that race does matter and that it is a very real issue in our society. Patrick's statement reflects elements of the conscious identity type of the Key model, which involves dissonance caused by some particular experience followed by the recognition that racism and sexism exist. The empirical type follows and is characterized by personal awareness and growth toward minimizing privilege and inequity (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001).

Cal voiced similar thoughts but exhibited much more introspection. The ECU environment has helped Cal be more open and accepting of other racial/ethnic groups. When asked how attending ECU has affected him, he replied:

> Oh yeah I mean it's definitely made me think a lot more positive about other people, even though I kind of did already. I've noticed I don't let myself think a lot more negative about people after coming here, um mainly with the Hispanic nature like because I came to college there was a lot of Hispanics coming into our town and in the area and I was very frustrated, but now that I come here and I realized why they're coming here to the states and all that I've definitely become more calm [in demeanor] in my reactions and in the way I act.

Cal continued:

> I definitely think that it's helped me work with other people of a different race and nationality and it's mainly helped me realized that I stereotyped. Yes they [stereotypes] were there, [but] they don't need to be, like stereotypes. Basically the school has helped eliminate stereotypes from my life, like I don't look at a Black guy and go, "Oh he's a drug dealer and drives around in a big SUV with rims," you know I don't think that, I definitely try to give the person a chance and look in depth before I go and judge them so I definitely think school's helped me with that.

In this passage Cal very openly reveals many of the stereotypes he held toward Hispanics and Black males and that ECU has helped him to question such stereotypes. Although it is unrealistic to believe that Cal could completely erase stereotypes from his life, it is notable that he has acknowledged them, questioned them, and is working toward reducing them.

Cal also explained how college has opened his eyes to certain things that he needed to change. He shared the following story of how his environment influenced his behavior:

> The town where I'm from we had me and I think four or five other friends [who] were known as, you know, the hick boys in high school. We were the cowboys, you know and you know we didn't really . . . we weren't racist . . . we didn't run around saying, "We're gonna hang you," or something like that but we did have . . . we all had trucks and we put the Confederate flags on the front of them, but you know if you go through all those surrounding towns [near the town where he grew up just across the state line] you see that. I wouldn't say it's, you know nine times out of ten if you see that technically the person has a certain belief of racism, but I wouldn't say that I did.

> I mean I had it [the Confederate flag] on the front of my truck because that was what we were known for um, and you know . . . how do I phrase this . . . I believe we were southern boys but we weren't racist southern boys and coming into college you know I realized that. Before coming down here one day, the first day I came down here I was like you know I took it off not because I was scared but because I didn't want to offend somebody. And that's when I knew that I had a different feeling you know than other people would, you know. I didn't come down here blaring it like you know, "This is the way I feel." One kid [at ECU] has it in a mesh thing across the back of his truck, and yeah he's kind of bold for doing that down here.

This story indicates Cal's heightened sensitivity to others in his environment. Although it is likely that Cal's actions were done initially to avoid conflict and controversy instead of to reflect any real change in his attitudes, this situation early on might have caused Cal to develop a dissonant attitude as described in the WRC model. Individuals whose attitudes can be described as dissonant lack a commitment to attitudes they may express and are open to new information. They may also lack congruence between their previously held racial attitudes and recent personal experience (Rowe et al., 1995). Ultimately he decided that the Confederate flag symbol would not be respectful to display on his vehicle while at ECU. Cal had to come to the realization that the flag held a different meaning for his peers at ECU than it did for him and his friends from home and that he would need to adjust his behaviors accordingly and perhaps explore the meanings more deeply as well.

Matt spoke less about growth or new learning in dealing with racial/ethnic issues, but instead shared at length his frustration with the ECU administration and the way in which the

institution was run. He viewed his survival at ECU almost as a badge of honor for surviving the past four years.

> I can now say there's a lot of things in life that can happen to me and I'll be like, "Well, you know what, I've gone through a lot of stuff," and I honestly feel, I can say this has made me stronger. And I think that's really good. I feel like you can be put down so much . . . but like I'm about to graduate, I'm still here, you know, I'm still going through it, so I've got to be positive. I really think that I've gone through a lot at this school, and it's a good thing to be able to say I went through it. It's a good thing I survived, you know. I didn't quit. I made it through it so I know I am not a quitter. I try my hardest and I am about to graduate so it's got to be a good thing.

As one of the participants who grew up in one of the most diverse neighborhoods, has a diverse group of friends, and is most actively engaged in the social aspects of ECU, John expressed his overall satisfaction and sense of belonging at ECU by stating that:

> I've learned a lot and it taught me like this is where I honestly belong like as weird as it sounds I need to go to a college like this because I just interact better . . . this is probably where I should have ended up. This is more where I make sense, like . . . being.

Again, John was the one participant who felt most comfortable in the ECU environment. He believed that ECU is where he belonged and where he felt most comfortable seeing as he had no problem being the minority and actually enjoyed standing out and being well known among his peers.

Walter found attending ECU to be a beneficial experience for him and expressed his satisfaction with ECU by saying:

> I'm just very happy that I came here because it's proven to me that I can work with anybody. I can get along in a group no matter who it is. They don't have to be like me, we can have differences, we can look different, we have different interests, we can speak differently, but we can still work together and get something done and that's a really, really valuable skill that I think is going to continue for my entire life and I don't think I would have realized that I had it if I didn't come here.

He also explained how he has benefited the ECU community as well:

> I don't know if I can expand on that but I can flip it over on how I think it's affected other people. I think it's important that other people be around people that's not like them. A lot of the times I think African American students come here because they want to be around other African American students and I think I've provided something that's different from that and has let them see not only that Black people go here but White people go here too, and you know there are differences in people and I think that they've learned from me and I've learned from them as well.

Walter raises an interesting point to consider which would involve the perceptions that Black students have of White students who attend an HBCU and whether or not they see value in having non-Black students on an HBCU campus.

Participants were generally able to identify some degree of growth and personal development from their experiences as White male students at ECU. The data illustrate how the complex environments of the participants interact and converge to help shape their attitudes and behaviors. The four themes discussed provide a unique glimpse into the thoughts, ideas, and experiences of this fascinating and understudied population.

The next section explores how Bronfenbrenner's model provides a context for understanding the influences of the environments within which the participants are situated. Astin's theory, also focused on environmental influences and engagements, will then be discussed in light of this study. Sections on the Key model and WRC model then follow.

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory of Human Development

Bronfenbrenner's model "depicts the dynamic, developmental relations between an active individual and his or her complex, integrated, and changing ecology" (Lerner, 2005, pp. xvii-xviii). Several participants of the study discussed unique environmental factors specific to their own development on all four levels of contexts (microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems). Microsystems involve the people present within one's settings, the nature of these links, and their indirect influence on the developing person through their effect on those who deal with him or her firsthand (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Examples of microsystems include home, school, peer group, and workplace (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). "Microsystems for college students include classrooms, laboratories, athletic teams, living situations, friendship group, student organizations, on- or off-campus jobs, families of origin, partners or spouses, and possibly children" (Renn, 2003).

One example of a relevant microsystem within the context of this study was athletics. Three of the participants were members of the baseball team, which is a Division I sport on campus. These participants indicated that the opportunity to play baseball was one of the main reasons why they chose to attend ECU. As a result, this institutional influence became even more salient because it helped shape their college choice and the primary environment in which they would function. In addition, athletics could provide a social network in the

form of teammates and other athletes, as well as structure in the form of practice schedules, games, and study sessions.

Illustrating how the salience of various environments in Bronfenbrenner's model may shift and change over time, athletics were a significant environmental influence for John, but only for his first year. Initially John wanted to play baseball to please his father, but he quit the team after what he felt was unfair treatment of himself and other players. John's situation also illustrates a mesosystem in the Bronfenbrenner model, which comprises the relations among two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant. In this case, John's family and the baseball team were two microsystems that interacted during the time that he was involved in athletics thus creating a mesosystem that was later decoupled when John left the baseball team.

Another microsystem relevant to this study that emerged from the data was the presence of BU located approximately 15 miles from ECU in the neighboring city of Bayside. This institution is a four-year, predominantly White university with a total enrollment of 7,000 students. According to several participants, BU provided a social outlet in a more traditional college atmosphere independent of their own home campus. Indeed, some respondents frequently evoked BU as a "real" college, mostly in terms of social involvement, in comparison to ECU. As was evident in the data, Bayside and BU were very strong influences on all of the participants' social lives. These two entities also contribute to the outside peer group microsystem.

Exosystems are defined as settings that do not contain a developing person but in which events occur that affect the setting containing the person (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Recruitment and federal court mandates, as represented in the original model, were much

more distal for the participants and were not discussed in the data. However, participants' general unawareness of HBCUs and offers of both academic and athletic scholarships to attend ECU are exosystems that are closely related to federal court mandates and recruitment efforts.

Macrosystems encompass "the overarching patterns of stability, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, in forms of social organization and associated belief systems and lifestyles (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b, p. 47). Macrosystems are considered the most distal levels of environmental influence (Renn, 2003) that affect the nature of interaction within all other levels of the ecology of human development (Lerner, 2005). Two important macrosystems emerged from the data in this study. First, two participants cited religion as salient aspects of their upbringing and identity that helped shape how they viewed and continue to view the world. According to Cal:

> Through reacting with the other kids you know helped me work together with them and you know and realize yeah there's a difference but you know we can still work together and I shouldn't judge people and that was another thing with religion, it was we shouldn't judge people.

Ty had a similar upbringing and described the role of religion in his life in this way:

> It [religion] plays a direct role as far as my life . . . ..day to day life. I could stay here with quite a few guys on my baseball team, go back to their apartment and throw back a 24-pack . . . smoke Lord knows what, but it just doesn't interest me. It's not part of my life. It's not a part of something that I feel like I need to do to have friends. All I am interested in is maintaining what I need to do here at the university to make me a better person. Tomorrow, to make me a better person next week, make me a

> better person for the rest of my life and possibly I can only hope to teach my kids as well as my parents taught me and put them in the right direction . . . do all I can to raise them the right way, with morals, just with a good direction. I'm sure that's what every man wants to be able to provide for his child, or for his family.

Although Cal and Ty expressed very different life lessons and guiding principles, both belief systems were based in religious convictions.

The second macrosystem that was especially salient for one participant in particular was sexual orientation. Walter self-identified as a gay male, and as such, sexual orientation, race, and religion converged to create unique challenges for him within the ECU campus community. Walter described at length in the earlier section how he felt that his sexual orientation was a greater obstacle for him at ECU than was his race.

Figure 4.1 illustrates an adapted theoretical model based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development modified to include environmental factors that emerged from this study. After analyzing participant data, it was clear that some microsystems were more important and had a stronger influence than others on personal development in terms of WRC. For example, athletics was added as a microsystem for those participants who were members of the baseball team, given that it was a very important part of why they came to ECU and it heavily influenced their overall campus experience. In contrast, campus social settings were still considered a microsystem, although they were not as significant to the participants as family or outside peer groups.

Participants described complex peer groups, social settings, and relationships to the city of Bayside and BU. Peer groups for several participants were compartmentalized based on location. Some groups existed at ECU, whereas others existed in their hometowns or in

Bayside at the university. The city of Bayside as well as BU created additional settings for some participants who sought settings for social interaction beyond the ECU environment. Social settings encompassed a variety of locations, some of which included ECU, but most of which did not.

Sexual orientation and religion were added to the macrosystem based on the fact that they are related to the subculture or culture as a whole in forms of social organization and associated belief systems and lifestyles (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). Although these factors appear very distant from the individual core in the model, they were very salient for several of the participants and heavily influenced their experiences in the environment. Economic issues such as family socioeconomic status and first-generation student status were also important macrosystems in this study. These issues in relation to current financial aid and scholarship policies combined to make ECU a realistic if not attractive option for many of the participants.

These examples illustrate the influence of the environment according to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development. It is clear that geographic, social, and cultural environments have had an impact on the development of the participants. These environments and influences help establish the context for the discussion of the major themes that emerged from the data in this study.

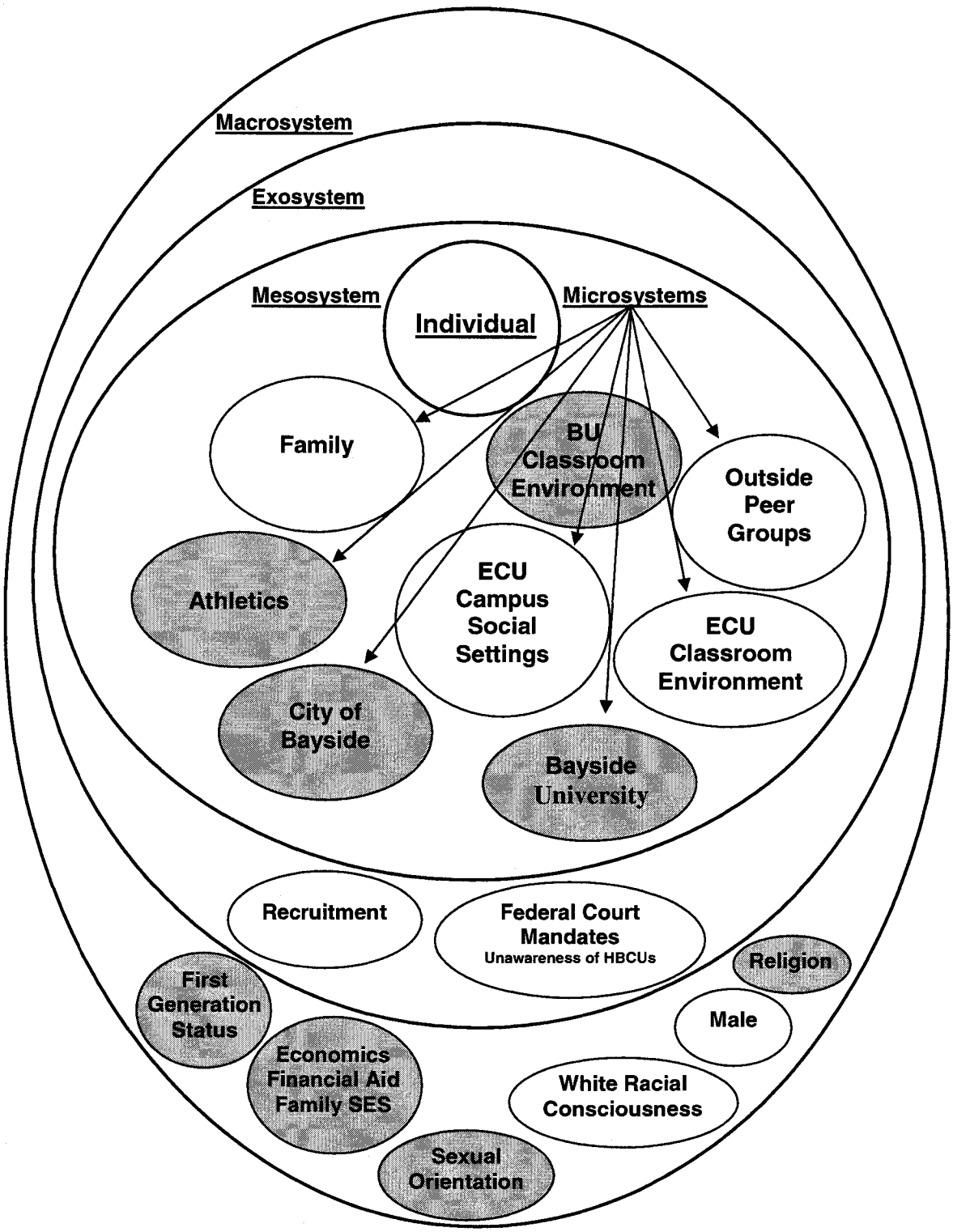

Figure 4.1. Adapted Theoretical Model Based on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory of Human Development *Note.* Items in grey circles were added based on data.

Astin's Theory of Student Involvement

Astin's theory of student involvement provided additional theoretical guidance to this study and reinforced the salience of environment for development. Astin (1999) defined student involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (p. 518). This theory contends that it is not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does that defines and identifies involvement (Astin, 1984). Astin's involvement theory has five postulates which were outlined in chapter 2.

The participants in this study devoted varying amounts of time to academics and to campus activites. Three of the seven participants were members of the baseball team and were therefore connected to the instiution in that way. Several participants were involved in academic research projects as well as campus and community internships. Beyond that involvement, they spent little time within the campus environment outside of classes.

Astin's (1984) second postulate is most salient to this study because it refers to the degrees of involvement existing on a continuum regardless of the activity. Participants were involved in a variety of activities including athletics, club sports, the drama club, and the debate team. Despite these activities, the majority of the participants were not very involved with the campus environment socially. Most participants established their social networks independent of the ECU campus. In some ways the participants were very involved; however, their overall investment in the campus environment as a whole was limited to environments such as the campus cafeteria. The lack of programming and planned activities for students that Matt and John described, was a major issue that most likely contributed to this lack of campus involvement.

The Key Model of White Male Identity Development

The Key model of White male identity development addresses the convergence of race and gender beliefs that White men may exhibit as a result of attitudes regarding appropriate displays of manhood (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Although the model is circular in design, its "lower" phases involve minimal self-interrogation whereas the "higher" phases are characterized by greater self-knowledge regarding, among other things, prior assumptions of superiority. The model's five identity stages are: noncontact, claustrophobic, conscious identity, empirical, and optimal, and were described in chapter 2 (D. A. Scott & Robinson). The conscious identity type and the empirical type were most evident in this study.

The classroom experiences including hypervisibility, White spokesmanship, and self-censorship as described by the participants reflect elements of the conscious identity type of the Key model. The conscious identity type is "characterized by a precipitating event, whether positive or negative, that creates dissonance between a person's existing belief system and real-life experiences that contradict the system" (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001, p. 419). This identity type is relevant perhaps because a student may suddenly recognize for the first time how it feels to be the only "minority" in the class or by being given the task of serving as the spokesperson for the race. These types of situations reflect parallels to what students of color often experience in classes at PWIs.

Another example of the conscious identity type was evident in the experience Patrick described with the older man who made racist comments toward him. The comments made toward Patrick came from a hate-centered position of superiority on the part of the older Black man. The older man used his position of power as a member of the majority within the

HBCU environment to make Patrick feel marginalized. The incident represented a negative event that created dissonance for Patrick, which could cause him to adopt the attitudes of the claustrophobic phase (i.e., seeking to gain power for self while restricting people of color from access to privileges), or the empirical type (i.e., recognizing the reality of racism and his privileged existence; D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001).

To some degree, evidence of the empirical type was also evident in participants' perceptions of privilege. The empirical type of the Key model helps articulate Walter's statements about his struggles as an out, White, gay male at ECU. The empirical type is characterized by a realization that racism and sexism are real and are involved in many aspects of life. Further, the empirical type also involves the recognition that the privileged existence of the White male—earned through no effort of his own—is at the expense of many women and people of color who have been oppressed (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Walter discussed how he felt fortunate that he is not automatically judged the way people of color and women are. He also explained how in reality, underprivileged women in Africa are "normal," yet in the United States, people consider wealthy White males to be "normal." Walter acknowledged how he personally benefits from this broadly accepted perception.

The experiences of participants at ECU may have helped move them forward through the different types as described in the Key model (D. A. Scott & Robinson, 2001). Exposure to temporary minority status at ECU could have helped participants experience and understand that racism and discrimination do exist in many forms and that they experience privilege based on their race and gender regardless of whether they pursued it or not. BU may have contributed to the participants' development as well in many of the same ways, or it may have stifled it as well. Because BU was an escape for many participants and served as

an alternate social environment, it may have prevented participants from actively engaging in a full range of ECU experiences. For example, the conscious identity type is pivotal because it presents an opportunity for White males to either adopt the attitudes of the claustrophobic phase or progress into the empirical phase, which would involve new development and insight (D. A. Scott & Robinson). These opportunities for progression into a new type within the model could have been curtailed by the presence of BU, which could be a more comfortable environment to which participants had easy access.

The White Racial Consciousness Model

The WRC model is based on "characteristic attitudes held by a person regarding the significance of being White, particularly in terms of what that implies in relation to those who do not share White group membership" (p. 225). The seven attitudes of WRC are: avoidant, dependent, dissonant, dominative, conflictive, integrative, and reactive (Rowe et al., 1995) and are defined in chapter 2.

The most salient attitudes from the WRC model with regard to the influence of family and the neighborhood environments of the participants were dominative and dependent. The dominative attitude is "based on the premise that the majority society is entitled to dominate racial/ethnic minority peoples because of an inherent superiority" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 229). Evidence of this attitude in the messages participants received from family is reflected in David's father's beliefs about him dating a Black girl from his neighborhood in high school. David stated that to date a Black girl would be below the "standard" which entailed tolerance for superficial relationships with people of color but disapproval of close personal relationships. Cal's statement about messages received from his parents also suggested a

similar tolerance for superficial relationships by being "open to whoever" but a disapproval of Blacks and Whites marrying.

The dependent type is characterized by those who have developed some kind of White racial consciousness but not personally considered alternative perspectives. These individuals often look to significant others to help determine what their opinions should be (Rowe et al., 1995). David illustrated dependent behavior when discussing how he said he often agrees with what his father says because that is all he has ever heard, and he would often use information his father provided him with in order to debate with his peers.

Dissonant attitudes are characterized by uncertainty about what to think about issues dealing with racial/ethnic minorities (Rowe et al., 1995). Both David and Cal received conflicting messages from their parents with regard to appropriate boundaries with people of color suggesting a hierarchy of acceptable relationships. Attending ECU may assist participants in solidifying or challenging the messages they have received from their families and move them toward establishing their own beliefs and world view.

The classroom environment forced respondents into a position of hypervisibility that often led to self-censorship or roles of White spokespersonship. These examples of how participants responded to experiences within their classroom environments can be reflective of attitudes and beliefs that are held regarding WRC. For example, participants who self-censor in the classroom could be exhibiting avoidant behavior, which is characterized by ignoring, minimizing, or denying the existence or importance of problematic racial issues (Rowe et al., 1995) by withholding their participation from these discussions. However, peer pressures and conflict avoidance appear to be strong factors as well. For example, what appears to be immediately problematic for David is the likelihood of inviting conflict or

disapproval, attracting or exacerbating his hypervisibility, or providing reasons for others to judge him negatively by engaging in controversial conversations.

Social environments were an important factor for participants. These environments included the neighboring city of Bayside and the BU campus. Given that most of these environments were independent of the ECU campus, they may reflect at least partial elements of both avoidant and dominative attitudes. In terms of avoidance, students could thus avoid having to deal with adjusting to social settings at ECU and working toward actively engaging in the campus community, given that Bayside provided at least a partial or temporary respite from these challenges. The dominant attitude involves a belief in an inherent superiority and a lack of desire to establish close personal relationships with people of color (Rowe et al., 1995). Although several participants were successful in connecting with their peers on the ECU campus, the majority of the participants chose to look outside the ECU campus community to other environments to meet their social needs. These social needs were met by traveling home on weekends or by visiting predominantly White BU or the bars in Bayside.

The reactive attitude of the WRC involves militant views in reaction to racism within American society. People who display reactive attitudes tend to identify with minority groups, may romanticize the plight or issues relating to minorities, and are sensitive to situations that involve discrimination (Rowe et al., 1995). Elements of this attitude were illustrated in Matt's reaction to the Bayside bars that charged ECU students a more expensive cover charge than for BU students. In this situation, Matt felt discriminated against based not on his race or other physical characteristic, but on his affiliation with ECU and the negative connotations that he felt were ascribed to all ECU students and to him as well. Matt appeared

to align himself with an identity as a member of the predominantly Black ECU campus community, although in other instances he appeared to distance himself as a member of the ECU community. Matt's reaction to this situation is also based on self-interest. Since he was involved in the incident, then it is unfair and something must be done to address it. In addition, the differences in cover charges and the lack of more social-oriented business establishments as explained by Matt, serve as examples of this negative perception of ECU students. Another example illustrating elements of the reactive attitude was Cal's recognition of the reality of racism through his classes, although he also reflected elements of a dominative attitude because of the judgments he made about the validity of discussions and contrary opinions involving issues of racism and inequality.

However, the dominative attitude was also expressed with regard to some participants' acceptance of the connotations of Black peers' unpredictable and violent behavior. Those who hold dominative attitudes presume that "any deficiency in matching any aspect of majority society is seen as the result of defects in the personal qualities of racial/ethnic minority people" (Rowe et al., 1995, p. 229). This perception of ECU students existed both on campus and in the community, with tangible consequences for students such as higher cover charges and metal detectors at concerts, further reinforcing the perceptions.

As an environment, ECU had the potential to influence participants' attitudes as described in the WRC model (Rowe et al., 1995). For example, participants could express the avoidant attitude by failing to engage in the campus community or place any value on discussions about race and inequity. They could also express avoidant attitudes by using Bayside University as a way to escape dealing with any discomfort or dissatisfaction with ECU. The ECU environment could also reinforce dominative attitudes if participants were

unwilling to challenge their own beliefs and ideas about cultural correctness and the inherent superiority of Whites in this society (Rowe et al., 1995). Dominative attitudes could also be supported by the BU environment if participants engaged in a comparison of the two campuses citing areas where BU was viewed as superior over ECU. Most significantly, the ECU environment could be the setting for experiences that might cause dissonance in participants' beliefs and challenge them to consider new information.

Themes with Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness among full-time, White male undergraduate students attending a public, predominantly Black HBCU by examining their academic and social experiences within the HBCU environment. The four themes as they relate to the three research questions that guided the study are:

1. How do these students make meaning of their educational (i.e., academic and social) experiences in terms of their White racial consciousness development?
    a. Theme #1—Influence of family and upbringing
    b. Theme #2—Classroom environments
    c. Theme #3—Social environments
    d. Theme #4—Greater awareness of race and privilege
2. What roles might being a temporary minority play in the White racial consciousness development of these students?
    a. Theme #2—Classroom environments
    b. Theme #3—Social environments
    c. Theme #4—Greater awareness of race and privilege

3. What roles might White male privilege play in students' interpretations of their academic and social experiences?

    a. Theme #4—Greater awareness of race and privilege

This study sought to examine the academic and social experiences of White male undergraduate students as a public historically Black college and the influence on their development of racial consciousness. The research questions guiding the study are addressed below in turn, with reference to relevant data and thematic findings.

1. How do White male undergraduate students attending a public HBCU make meaning of their academic and social experiences in terms of their White racial consciousness development?

Overall, students had positive experiences in academic settings both in the classroom and in group meetings. Participants did, however, describe situations where they felt hypervisible being the only White student in the class or one of very few. Participants also described self-censoring behavior in the classroom which involved choosing not to join class discussions for fear of negative reactions to their opinions, which could lead to heightened visibility and negative regard. Several participants also described being looked upon to speak as the representative for the White point of view during discussions in class. This form of race spokesmanship is somewhat similar to what many students of color have described experiencing at PWIs, except for the greater authoritative stance that is granted to Whites (Rowe et al., 1995).

Socially, participants described a clear disconnect with non-academic aspects of the campus environment. Many participants, as well as both their Black and White ECU peers, would often leave campus on the weekends feeling as though there was nothing to do.

Participants also chose to spend time socially in the neighboring city of Bayside or on the BU campus. Participants' social environments were complex and involved different circles of friends depending on the setting and the types of activities involved. Although the majority of the participant data were congruent, one participant (John) was much more involved in the campus social environment and thrived on standing out and being different from his peers.

These findings regarding academic and social settings suggest that these experiences have had a direct influence on the racial consciousness of the participants. A broad range of influences were identified, which were perhaps similar to many other types of student development. Some participants appear to have made meaning of these experiences in a variety of ways. For example, the participants who were members of the baseball team recognized that there is meaning attached to being a White male player on an all-Black campus playing on an almost all-White team. Matt described how the team is not only marginalized in the eyes of the administration and their peers because it is almost all White, but also because they do not have a winning record.

Other participants gained new knowledge about Black history and culture through classes and interacting with their Black peers. There was also evidence that some participants had established more negative attitudes about their experiences and were critical of the administration and the behavior of their peers. Several participants also expressed a greater awareness of discrimination and privilege through personal experiences on campus and within the surrounding environment.

The findings of this study are congruent with the limited literature on the experiences of White students at HBCUs in several ways. For example, the majority of the participants commuted to campus, several living with family members (Levinson, 2000), and could be

considered "day students" (Peterson, 2005). In addition, three of the participants in this study were attending the institution on athletic scholarships (Drummond, 2000). The findings of this study were also congruent with the literature, which asserts that despite initial concern and uneasiness; overall, White students attending HBCUs appeared to find value in the opportunity to engage in new experiences that contribute to their personal growth and development (Drummond, 2000; Hall & Closson, 2005; Thomas, 2002; Thomas-Lester, 2004).

2. What roles might being a temporary minority play in the White racial consciousness development of White male students at a public HBCU?

Academic and social environments played a significant role in students' experiences of temporary minority status. Within the classroom environment, participants described experiences that made them feel singled out and hypervisible as White students. Their immediate strategies such as self-censoring illustrate that students recognized their "minority" status, accepted it to some degree, and developed ways to respond and interact within that particular setting.

Socially, the majority of participants chose to live off campus and to maintain social circles independent of or in addition to relationships at ECU. Like many of their peers, most participants created social networks at the neighboring BU. The majority of participants also maintained more social relationships with family and friends from their home communities, and the "suitcase" reputation of ECU facilitated this maintenance. These behaviors appear to suggest that in certain ways participants felt uncomfortable with the temporary minority role and preferred functioning in environments where they could maintain their majority status.

John was the exception to many of the findings for the other participants. This exception illustrates the important role of environments as described in Bronfenbrenner's model (1979, 2005a, 2005b). For John, early environments played a key role in his ability to adapt to and feel comfortable in situations where he was in the minority. He grew up in a diverse neighborhood and was one of a few White students in class or often the only White student in class. John's attitude toward being in the minority was much different from his peers. His desire to be in the minority and to stand out actually contributed to his decision to attend ECU where he knew he would not be "just another White student" as he would be if he attended a PWI.

Participants also reported experiences in which they felt as though they were targets of discrimination. These experiences were especially powerful because they provided an opportunity for the students to gain a temporary glimpse of what people of color may experience based solely on gender or racial/ethnic background.

3. What roles might White male privilege play in informing the academic and social experiences of White male students attending a public HBCU?

White male privilege was definitely evident in the participant data. Both academically and socially, participants always knew that any discomfort they may experience as a temporary minority on campus could be alleviated by removing themselves from the campus environment in favor of an environment where they perhaps felt more comfortable. Participants could go home to their families, home to their apartments off campus, or to the neighboring town to socialize with people who looked like them. This illustrates a privilege that these students have that people of color, for example, may not have at most PWIs.

Some of the participants expressed their awareness of the privileges that are available to them, whereas others appeared oblivious to their existence—a finding established in prior research (Cowfoot & Chesler, 2003). Several participants privileged the rightness or appropriateness of their own standards and opinions to the detriment of others' standards and opinions—which also echoes earlier research (Hays & Chang, 2003). For example, several participants were very critical of the ECU administration and the way that the university is run. One participant in particular described his frustration with how the ECU administration has a tendency to hire friends, relatives, or other "insiders" for critical ECU positions regardless of their qualifications or knowledge of the job. Another respondent noted the insider advantages in corporate America for White males but was also quick to ascribe merit to these individuals and to this "good old boys" network that he acknowledged would privilege him over males of color and women.

White members of the baseball team were also the beneficiaries of privilege given that they were recruited to play for ECU through scholarships and were often the starters on the team while the few players of color sat on the bench. This type of situation created a social distance on the team between the White players and the players of color, several of whom decided to quit, which in this case reinforced White players' positions of dominance and control (Hays & Chang, 2003).

Researcher Role and Reflexivity

One of the characteristics of qualitative research involves researcher reflection on who he or she is in the inquiry and a sensitivity to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study (Creswell, 2003). This introspection and acknowledgement of biases, values, and interests are known as reflexivity (Creswell). Reflexivity involves the belief that

the personal-self is inseparable from the researcher-self, and that these roles must be openly acknowledged (Creswell).

I began this study thinking that I would be able to immediately gain access to the HBCU of my choice to conduct this study. I quickly discovered that this would not be the case. Without some affiliation to the HBCU of choice or someone on the inside to help serve as gatekeeper, it seemed impossible to make the proper contacts and obtain the required permission to conduct a study such as this. I spent months trying to make contact with certain institutions with no success. This was a significant source of frustration for me based on my own assumptions of researcher entitlement.

Once I was able to identify a viable site, my concerns shifted to more logistical matters. I wondered how I would be accepted in an HBCU environment as an outside researcher coming to campus to study White male students, which is a controversial topic in itself. I was concerned about whether or not I would be able to find enough participants who would be willing to engage in a study such as this. And if I did find enough participants, would they actually be honest with me? I was also concerned that having not attended an HBCU would prevent me from being accepted as well.

I knew that the cross-racial interviewing situation inherent in this study could pose a major problem. Initially I thought that if I approached the participants with honesty and respect, that they would reciprocate and candidly open up about their experiences. Once I got to campus I began to question this approach thinking, "Who am I to think that I will be able to pull this off professionally and effectively?" I wondered if I would encounter anything in the interviews that would make me angry and if so, would I be able to handle it?

There were occasions during some of the interviews when participants made statements with which I personally disagreed. These were situations where I would have handled myself differently if we were not in an interview setting. My normal reaction would have been to engage in a discussion or debate about the issue; however, I quickly realized that instead of reacting to their statements I should be grateful that the participants felt comfortable enough to openly express themselves, which is exactly what I wanted them to do.

Now that the study is over, I find that I still have the same opinions about White students attending HBCUs. I still believe that great care must be taken to make sure that HBCUs do not lose their identity and compromise their rich history and legacy. However, I also believe that this experience is invaluable for White students, especially White males, and that more White students should take advantage of the opportunities that HBCUs have to offer. Although it is clear to me that the students I met were changed by their experiences in generally positive ways, their experiences and perceptions demonstrate that issues of racism and privilege still exist and that White males will continue to be in a position of power because of it. An education at an HBCU does not serve as a cure-all or solution to eradicate this, but the question must be asked whether or not HBCUs should be expected to take on such a task.

This study has given me an even greater appreciation for HBCUs and all that they do in higher education. I also have a great deal of respect and admiration for the White students who are able to actively engage in these environments and make contributions to their campus communities as any student on any campus should strive to do. The main personal benefit of this study for me is that it has fueled my desire to continue to conduct research not

only in this area, but others as well. It is my hope that this research will be a contribution to the field and will encourage others to contribute as well.

Summary

Chapter 4 established the findings of this study through the presentation of participant data according to the major themes that emerged. The four themes were: influence of family and neighborhood, classroom environments, social environments, and greater awareness of race and privilege. The three research questions that guided the study were also revisited and addressed according to the thematic findings and participant data. Chapter 5 presents conclusions and limitations of the study, implications for higher education, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine the development of racial consciousness among White male undergraduate students attending a predominantly and historically Black university through examinations of their academic and social experiences. Three major conceptual frameworks informed the design of this study: Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development, the WRC model, and the Key model of White male identity development. In addition, Astin's theory of student involvement provided complementary theoretical guidance to this study and reinforced the salience of environment to development. Through semistructured individual interviews, document analysis, and participant observation, information was obtained about the lived experiences of the seven White male participants attending ECU. The data collected from their experiences provided insight into the ways in which the participants made meaning of their experiences in both academic and social environments. Thematic findings were presented in chapter 4.

This chapter presents conclusions, limitations, ethical considerations, and recommendations based on the outcomes of this study. I will also briefly discuss some of the contributions of this study to the literature on White racial consciousness development, student development, and HBCUs. In addition, implications for future research and practice are presented.

Conclusions

Overall the participants experienced some forms of racial consciousness development grounded at least partially in their temporary minority status at ECU. Rowe et al. (1995)

stated that "although attitudes are often quite resistant to verbal persuasion, they frequently change as a result of direct or vicarious experience that is inconsistent of or in conflict with previously held attitudes" (p. 226). This study provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences in their own words and to express their own interpretations of those experiences.

The term temporary minority took on different meaning for different participants in this study in terms of how they viewed their engagement within the ECU environment. For example, Matt spoke at length about his ability to endure, persist, and survive within the ECU environment without quitting. Matt appeared to emphasize "temporary" in terms of the amount of time that he would have to spend at ECU before moving on to another environment. He almost appeared to dismiss ECU as "not real" by comparing it to BU, which he described as a "real college."

John and Walter appeared to place more emphasis on the "minority" aspect through their development of empathy and their depth of personal understanding. John and Walter appeared to be much more open to growth, whereas Matt appeared more concerned with surviving and getting out of the environment. Temporary minority status also took on meaning in a more personal and tangible way for some of the participants. For example, Patrick's campus encounter with racism involving the older man perhaps made the concepts of racism and discrimination more real for him because he was personally engaged in the incident from a position of powerlessness.

Conclusions can be drawn about the ways in which participants made meaning of their experiences based on their behaviors. For example, in the classroom several participants developed mechanisms to cope with hypervisibility and appeals to White spokespersonship.

Students would often resort to self-censorship in the classroom if a controversial subject was being discussed or if they believed that their point of view might cause conflict.

The social environment also provided evidence regarding the ways in which participants made meaning of their experiences. The majority of the respondents did not participate in the social environment at ECU and described ECU as a suitcase college for most students, Black and White. Instead participants returned to or developed more comfortable social outlets in other settings including their hometowns or at BU. These decisions can also echo dissatisfaction or discomfort with the ECU environment and their status as a temporary minority. The students recognized that they were different and made decisions about how they would cope with this status. Many of the comments made by the participants were very similar to studies of students of color on predominantly White campuses. However, the difference in this situation was that the White students could simply leave campus and regain their majority position, further perpetuating the emphasis on "temporary" status and not on "minority" status.

White male privilege was almost an inescapable reality for the participants. The WRC and Key models helped contextualize participants' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Within the WRC model, the dominative and dissonant attitudes were most prevalent. Participants' status as "White privileged males" was confounded by issues of class, economics, and athletics. Several of the participants displayed evidence of being in transition from one set of attitudes to another based on their experiences at ECU that challenged their current beliefs and attitudes. The conscious identity type of the Key model (D. A. Scott & Robinson) described several of the participants who had experienced dissonance and how they responded to the situation. Some participants were far more "advanced" or "developed"

according to these models, much of which may be based on age, life experiences, and background. Most participants were generally at more mid-level positions of development within both models and could clearly articulate changes in their perspectives and the experiences that gave rise to those changes. However, it remains unclear the extent to which their enrollment at ECU caused or impacted this development, in a measurable sense.

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory of human development helped illustrate the complex environments and influences that were present in the lives of the participants. The use of Bronfenbrenner's multiple systems perspective permitted a broader examination of personal development that attends to multiple simultaneous environments and influences. The HBCU environment can be challenging for White male students who are otherwise accustomed to being in the majority, and the college campus per se may not be the primary environment of reference for these students' meaning making and development. The majority of the participants came from neighborhoods and backgrounds that were not as diverse and did not prepare them for what they experienced at ECU. Participants had to engage in a process of observing the environment, then deciding how to manage their position within it. Participants indicated that they experienced growth as a result of attending ECU, and in many cases, changed the ways they thought about issues of racism and discrimination.

Several participants experienced a constant shifting of statuses between minority and majority environments. For example, when the participant members of the baseball team were in that particular setting, they were in the majority because the team is predominantly White. However, in class and on campus at large, they were in the minority. Finally, whenever these particular students left the campus environment, they were most likely back

in the majority. Other participants most likely experienced similar shifting depending on the environment. Participants such as John and Walter were most likely able to make these transitions more smoothly than others based on their background and experiences with diverse populations.

Participants' reasons for attending ECU were almost completely congruent with the literature on college choice for White students who attend HBCUs. Participants cited athletic scholarships, academic scholarships, lower cost, short distance from home, and more relaxed admissions requirements as reasons for choosing to attend ECU, which were similar to items cited in the literature (Drummond, 2000; Levinson, 2000). However, the literature did not address students such as John who, in addition to the factors found in the literature, also chose to attend an HBCU based on his level of comfort with being the "minority" and his desire to stand out among his peers.

There was also congruence between the literature and this study with regard to social segregation. For example, participants who were members of the baseball team were more likely to socialize predominantly with their teammates and other student athletes. Although this type of behavior is not unique to this particular campus, it is significant because the majority of those student athletes were also White, which gives the appearance of self-segregation by race, whether intentional or not. Commuting to campus, living with family, and holding down jobs were reasons cited from the literature that promote social segregation (Levinson, 2000). ECU was very similar to other public HBCUs in that Black students dominated the residence halls, the fraternities and sororities, and most social activities, which were additional reasons that social segregation may have occurred (Levinson, 2000).

Participants in this study consistently spoke of how the experience of being a temporary minority at ECU transformed their way of thinking about themselves and others. This type of development is consistent with the literature that suggests that White students who attend HBCUs are often able to engage in more comprehensive actualization (Brown, 2002) regarding issues of racism and discrimination, have less difficulty in communicating with people from diverse backgrounds, and have a greater likelihood of dismissing racial stereotypes as false or inaccurate (Willie, 1983). Overall, participants in this study were able to find value in the opportunity to engage in new experiences and environments that would contribute to their personal growth and development as stated in the literature (Drummond, 2000; Hall & Closson, 2005; Thomas, 2002; Thomas-Lester, 2004).

Contributions

This study explores the development of students within a particular setting that has not previously been addressed in the literature. Some studies have focused on the experiences of White graduate students at HBCUs, which are very different from those of undergraduate students. This study contributes to the literature on White male racial/ethnic identity development, especially in a non-majority college/university setting. This study will also help public HBCUs gain a deeper understanding of both the academic and social experiences of White male undergraduate students on their campuses, which can assist them in policy making, programming, and admissions decisions.

Another contribution of this study is to reflect the importance of HBCUs and to draw attention to the changing demographics of the student body, especially at public HBCUs (Brown, 2002). It will hopefully draw attention to the complexities of transdemographic enrollment shifts at public HBCUs and the implications for educational experiences and

students' development. As White enrollment at HBCUs continues to rise, these institutions must be prepared to manage these changes effectively and efficiently.

This study also makes a contribution to the use of the WRC model and the Key model in helping to understand the attitudes and beliefs of the participants within the contexts of being White and being a White male, although they could not completely address the uniqueness of this study. For example, the two models imply that Whites and White males have very little sense of their privilege and have little to no exposure to people of color. The models do not account for individuals who might be in settings where they are not in the majority in terms of numbers as was such in this study. Both models address the attitudes and types from a standpoint of negativity and guilt on the part of Whites and White males that must be resolved. These models make no provisions for more progressive Whites and White males who may be more in touch with their privilege, such as many respondents in the study, and who with time, may well also work toward dismantling oppressive institutions. Perhaps the WRC model, which was developed in 1995, should be revised and updated to reflect environmental influences including but not limited to greater enrollments of Whites at HBCUs, and more modern awareness and attitudes toward privilege, power, racism, and discrimination. This study helps raise new questions and suggests new ways that these models can be utilized to understand college students and their experiences.

Limitations

Seidman's (2006) three interview method was utilized for this study. Unfortunately, one of the seven participants did not respond to requests for a third interview resulting in a total of 20 interviews instead of 21. Another limitation for this study was the number of participants. I originally sought eight to ten participants; however, only seven were willing to

participate. Some equipment failures occurred during this study that resulted in limitations that should be mentioned. The tape recording device utilized during the first interview with one of the participants failed to function properly, so interviews one and two were combined at our second meeting. A final limitation was the tape containing the data from the third interview with one of the participants broke before it could be completely transcribed. However, handwritten notes were taken during the interview as well which were used for coding and data analysis.

Another limitation of this study was that it focused on one institution and had only seven participants from that institution. In order to speak more broadly about the White male undergraduate student population at HBCUs, this study would need to be extended to other campuses and involve more participants. However, the design of this study provides insight into the academic and social experiences of one small segment of this understudied population. The three interview approach also helped gain a deeper understanding of who the participants were and how they made meaning of their experiences at ECU.

Another limitation of this study involves the concept of cross-racial interviewing. Cross-racial interviewing refers to an interview situation in which the interviewer and the interviewee are of different racial backgrounds (Twine, 2000). In this study the extent to which cross-racial interviewing impacted the data can never be known. During the third and final interview, I asked participants how they felt about participating in the study and how they would characterize the "Black interviewer/White participant" dynamic. All six of the seven respondents who participated in the third interview indicated that they found the interview situation to be very comfortable and they felt they had no problems being honest with me as a Black researcher. I believe that to some extent they truly felt that way; however,

I also believe that in some cases they may have responded differently if I were a White researcher. Examples include our discussions about what it was like for them as White males at an HBCU, what they would change about their experiences at ECU, and what their greatest challenges were as students at ECU. This is not to suggest that the respondents were being dishonest; however, it acknowledges the reality that racism, bias, and discrimination exist in everyone to some degree and cannot be completely discounted. I do believe that respondents were as honest as they felt they could be and at times I was surprised by some of their candid responses.

Implications

This study suggests that more intentional steps be taken toward meeting the needs of White male students who attend predominantly Black public HBCUs like ECU. For example, dissatisfaction with the social environment was a salient issue in this study. Administrators at ECU and other HBCUs could develop a comprehensive schedule of events and activities that would appeal to diverse segments of the student population that would keep students on campus and interacting with each other, especially on weekends. More opportunities to get to know each other and share interests and ideas would also benefit the entire community by helping students feel more of an investment in the campus environment. ECU could also consider collaborative educational and social events and programs with BU that would help students connect with each other and experience both types of environments.

Participants in the study appeared to indicate that both their positive and negative experiences as White male students at an HBCU fostered their development. Most participants learned valuable information about themselves and about others that helped identify, confront, and dispel negative stereotypes that they may have had. Their presence at

ECU may have also contributed to the development of some of their Black peers for many of the same reasons.

As the numbers of White students continue to increase at HBCUs, support services should also be developed to meet the need of students academically, socially, and personally. These services would involve participation and collaboration between admissions, orientation, counseling, career services, and academic affairs. This study also suggests that student affairs administrators on HBCU campuses examine the ways that they recruit, retain, and support non-Black students. Special attention must be paid to the academic and social experiences of White students in ways that yield developmentally relevant experiences and honor the continuing importance, legacy, and purpose of HBCUs for all their students. This study can also help HBCUs gain a better understanding of the challenges White students may face as temporary minorities in order to put programs and services into place that would help address those issues and challenges.

This study will also assist White males and their families who may be considering an HBCU as an option for higher education. Valuable insights into the potential academic and social realities of being a temporary minority on an HBCU campus can be gleaned from this study to assist in the decision-making process. This study may also help White males considering an HBCU to explore their own levels of racial consciousness and explore the influences of racism, bias, and privilege in their own lives. Perhaps these students may view attending an HBCU as a tremendous opportunity to learn, develop, and grow in an environment that may be very different from what would be considered their norm.

More focus and attention needs to be directed toward HBCUs, both public and private, to better understand the unique role of these institutions. One way to do this is to

become more aware of the history of these institutions in addition to the current challenges that exist ranging from financial concerns to collegiate desegregation (Brown, 2002). This understudied area of higher education has much to teach about tolerance, perseverance, triumph, and success. These institutions have endured through a variety of internal and external challenges without losing the focus of providing educational opportunities not only for Black students, but for all students.

Collegiate desegregation and transdemography are very real issues for public HBCUs, including ECU. This study helped shed light on the complexity of these issues when considering demographic shifts in non-Black student populations at HBCUs. It is important to determine just how diverse public HBCUs can or should become without losing their identity and the important role they play in the educational opportunities of Black Americans.

Recommendations for Future Research

This one study can be a catalyst for other studies related to exploration of the development of White male undergraduate students attending HBCUs and the numerous implications of the transdemographic enrollment shifts that are taking place on many of the public HBCU campuses. After conducting this research, there are several recommendations that I would offer to help contribute to the literature on issues related to White racial consciousness development, HBCUs, transdemography, and cross-racial interviewing.

This study should be replicated at other public HBCUs to see if there may be similarities in participant responses. This study could also be expanded by focusing on the academic and social experiences of White female students at HBCUs to see if there are similarities to their male counterparts.

College choice would also be an important topic to explore with White students who attend HBCUs to determine what factors contribute to their decision to attend these institutions. Along the same lines, a study should be done focusing specifically on White student athletes who are recruited to play a sport at an HBCU to gain insight into their experiences as students and as athletes in an HBCU environment.

The development of the participants was a central theme of this study. It would be of interest to conduct a study of White HBCU alumni who have been out of the HBCU setting for different periods of time and have them reflect back on their experiences as students and the meaning they made of those experiences then and discuss how those experiences have influenced them now. Finally, more research should be conducted on cross-racial interviewing—especially in a situation where the interviewer is a person of color and the interviewee is White.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: A study of the academic and social experiences of White male undergraduate students attending a public historically Black university
Investigator: R. Darrell Peterson, Iowa State University

PURPOSE
The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the development of White racial consciousness among full-time, residential, White male undergraduate students who attend a public, predominately Black HBCU by examining their academic and social experiences.

The specific research questions being addressed by the study include: 1) How do White male undergraduate students make meaning of their White racial consciousness development via their academic and social experiences? 2) In what ways might being a temporary minority contribute to White racial consciousness development? 3) What role might White male privilege play in informing the academic and social experiences of White male students attending a public HBCU?

PROCEDURES
If you agree to participate, your involvement will consist of participating in an approximately three 60 minute individual interviews. Interview questions will address your experiences as a student at this institution.

Prior to beginning the study there will be discussion of the informed consent form and confirmation of your eligibility. You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions about the study or the informed consent form. Following completion of the informed consent form, we will begin the interview.

RISKS
The potential risks to you involve only those inherent in self-reflection. As such, risks to you are minimal.

BENEFITS
Benefits to respondents might include a greater self-reflection and the opportunity to contribute to the understanding of the experiences of White male students attending a public HBCU.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION
You will not have any costs and will not receive any compensation for your participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Records of participation in this research project will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. It is possible that these records could contain information that personally identifies you. Interviews will be tape recorded to foster accuracy in data collection and analysis. You will not be identified by name, either in the coding or the reporting of the data, in this study in an effort to maintain confidentiality. Audiotapes and notes will be stored by the principle

investigator in a locked file cabinet for 3 years. Should you withdraw from the study at any point, all recorded materials will be returned to you and will not be used in the study. In addition, you be given the opportunity to review the written report prior to its dissemination. In the event of any report or publication from this study, your identity will not be disclosed. Results will be reported in a summarized manner in such a way that you cannot be identified.

_____ By initialing in the space provided, you verify that you have been told that audio recordings will be generated during the course of this study.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you agree to participate in the study, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to take part, or if you stop participating at any time, your decision will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. As previously mentioned, should you withdraw from the study, your comments will be deleted from the transcript and not used in the study.

QUESTIONS

Questions are encouraged. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: R. Darrell Peterson; 244N Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 50011; 515-294-3817; rdarrell@iastate.edu, or Dr. Florence Hamrick, Major Professor, N239A Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 50011; 515-264-9628. If you have questions about the rights of research subjects or research related injury, please contact the Diane Ament, Director, Office of Research Assurances at Iowa State University, 515-294-3115.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study as explained. You will receive a copy of this form.

Respondent's Name (printed): _____

_____ _____

(Signature of Respondent) (Date)

****

INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I have discussed the above points with the respondent. It is my opinion that the respondent understands the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in the research study.

Investigator's Name (printed): _____

_____ _____

(Signature of Investigator) (Date)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Script for Student Interviews

You have been contacted to participate in this interview to as part of a study whose goal is to explore and understand the academic and social experiences of White male undergraduate students attending a predominantly Black, public HBCU. I invite your honest opinion, and all responses will remain anonymous. I will begin by asking a series of questions to stimulate the discussion. Please feel free to share your thoughts.

Interview 1

1. Please tell me about your background.
2. Describe the first time in your life that you noticed difference (that you were different or that someone else was different from you).
3. What messages did you receive about race as you were growing up?
4. What factors contributed to your decision to attend this university?
5. How did your family, friends, peers, etc. react to this decision?
6. How would you describe the campus climate/culture? How would you characterize/describe the university to someone who has never been here?
7. How would you describe race relations on campus?
8. What is it like to be a White student on this campus?

Interview 2

1. How would you describe your experiences as a White male in the classroom? Tell me about an instance or two that illustrates this.
2. How would you describe your social experiences as a White male outside the classroom? Tell me about an instance or two that illustrates this.

3. In what ways has race or racial issues played roles in your classes or your classroom experiences? Does it come up, and in what ways? As part of the class content or discussions? As part of student or instructor dynamics?
4. What types of activities are you involved in on campus?
5. In what ways has race or racial issues played roles in your campus involvement and friendships?
6. What kinds of things do you do socially with other students here, and with friends who don't attend the college? Has this changed and in what ways, during the time you've been a student here?
7. If you could change anything about your experience here as a student, what would it be and why? What would you want to remain the same?
8. How has the experience of attending this university affected you? In what ways have you changed or grown since coming here as a student? How are you different than you were when you first came here?
9. What has been your greatest challenge as a student at this institution?
10. What have you learned about yourself from the experience of attending an institution such as this?

Interview 3

Specific questions for interview three will be determined based on data collected in the first two interviews. Participants will be asked to reflect on the meaning of their experience. The third interview will also be an opportunity to clarify or further explore any content from the previous interviews.