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Laura Josephine Wesely
Respect, it goes both Ways:
Exploring School Connectedness and
Students' Experiences of
Microaggressions from Teachers

ABSTRACT

This mixed-method study explores what kind of microaggressions high school students of various ethnicities and racial identities experience from their teachers, and if type and responses to microaggressions vary according to the levels of perceived school climate. Qualitative thematic analysis was used to find out what types of microaggressions were experienced. Using quantitative measures of school connectedness and teacher support as well as qualitative thematic analysis, the study analyzed differences in the ways in which students who experience low and high levels of school connectedness responded to these microaggressions. Twenty-one participants were interviewed, and nine were further sampled using quantitative measures. The findings were that students experience teachers stereotyping, teachers making students feel erased and adopting color blind narratives, teachers singling out students and calling out differences and teachers minimizing student concerns. School connectedness and teacher support appear to be protective factors for students who experience these kinds of microaggressions.

**RESPECT, IT GOES BOTH WAYS:
EXPLORING SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS AND STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF
MICROAGGRESSIONS FROM TEACHERS**

A project based upon a joint project, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore whether high school students' perceptions of school climate are related to their experiences of microaggressions from teachers. Specifically, this study asked what kind of microaggressions students experience from their teachers, if a lack of school connectedness is related to the type and frequency of microaggressions from teachers to students, and if responses to microaggressions differ according to the high school students' perception of school connectedness.

Beyond educating future generations, schools have a legal responsibility to protect students from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability and age (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). What is more, researchers agree that school climate, broadly defined as the quality and character, reflected in the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, as well as organizational structures of a school (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli & Pickeral, 2009), has a significant impact on how students perform (Bellmore, Nishina, You, & Ma, 2012; Benner & Graham, 2011; Eliot, Cornell, Gregory & Fan, 2010; Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen & Palmer, 2012; Toleson, 2014; Stone & Han, 2005; Wilson, 2004). Wilson (2004) writes:

Children's experiences in school are fundamental to their successful transition into adulthood. In school, children negotiate and renegotiate their relationships, self-image, and independence. They cultivate interpersonal skills, discover and refine strengths, and

struggle with vulnerabilities...schools must provide a safe environment for children to develop academically, relationally, emotionally, and behaviorally. (p. 293)

Despite the overwhelming and evidentiary support for positive school climate and the sheer legality of affording equity and freedom from discrimination, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) received 344 complaints of racial harassment in elementary and secondary schools in 2016 alone. OCR further reports that in 2016, “Black K-12 students are 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions as White students” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, pg. 13), and that Black and Latinx students, English learners, and students with disabilities remain disproportionately underrepresented in Advanced Placement classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). These data highlight a gap in achievement and opportunity that has been aptly dubbed the “opportunity gap” (Carter & Welner, 2013; Flores, 2007). Because some members of society are excluded from receiving the same opportunities as others, the issue of education and access to it, is a matter of social justice.

Along with the Office of Civil Rights, the field of social work also owes an active commitment to closing the opportunity gap, as the Code of Ethics obliges its members to work towards social justice. School social workers are, by extension, mandated to work towards creating an educational experience for all students that promotes equity and inclusion. The question then becomes, what is standing in the way of equity and the success of students of color, and particularly Black students? How can school social workers provide more equity in their institutions? And what protective factors are in place to counteract oppressive forces?

Grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), this study aims to address the CRT principle that social inequities (e.g. racism) exist not only amongst individuals but also in institutional settings such as schools. While acts of overt interpersonal racism from

teachers to students are, according to the OCR, illegal, in this study I asked if cases of less noticeable and more insidious forms of discrimination in the forms of microaggressions are prevalent, and how students respond to them. Further, I wonder if school connectedness, or the student's experience of closeness and caring towards teachers and the overall school environment (Wilson, 2004), impacts the frequency and severity of, as well as responses to, experiences of microaggressions in students.

Sue and colleagues (2007) define racial microaggressions as “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group” microaggressions are especially problematic because they are hard to detect and “impair performance in a multitude of settings by sapping the psychic and spiritual energy of recipients and creating inequities” (p. 273). Microaggressions occur in peer-to-peer interactions and also teacher-to-student interactions. I am interested in the latter form of microaggressions. Existing research on experiences of microaggressions at the secondary education level is sparse. Moreover, research on discrimination in schools has focused primarily on tensions within the student body itself, overlooking subtle discrimination carried out by teachers on students.

This mixed-method study aims to uncover some of the mystery by lifting up the voices of 10 high school students or recent graduates through semi-structured interviews, and assessing the participants' school climate and school connectedness via the What's Happening In This School (WHITS) assessment (Aldridge & Ala'I, 2013). I stratified study participants into categories of low and high school connectedness and assessed themes in their narratives of school-based microaggressions from their teachers, the frequency and severities of these microaggressions, as well as the responses to and feelings associated with these microaggressions.

This thesis project is organized into five chapters. In the following chapter, I discuss pertinent literature on the topic of microaggressions, school climate, and school connectedness. Chapter 3 outlines the study's methodology and operational structure. Chapter 4 reveals findings and trends in the data, both qualitative and quantitative, and Chapter 5 provides a discussion section, highlighting the meaning and importance of the findings within the context of relevant literature, examining the study's limitations, and providing suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This chapter will review pertinent literature on the topics of school climate and microaggressions in order to frame my investigation of how school belonging and connectedness interact with the severity and types of microaggressions experienced by high school-aged youth. The review will begin with this study's theoretical framework, grounded in Critical Race Theory. The following section will explore and critique literature on microaggressions in schools, the various forms that microaggressions take, and who is affected by them. I will then highlight existing literature in the field of school climate--specifically school belonging and teacher connectedness--to delineate the contexts in which school climate already serves as a protective factor, and where further research is still necessary. The review will conclude with a brief discussion on the limitations and biases present in the existing literature.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT), was born in the 1970's from influential legal scholars. As with many theoretical models, there are different interpretations and applications of Critical Race Theory. However, the primary guiding tenets of Critical Race Theory, as elucidated by Delgado & Stefancic (2001), are as follows. First, is the assertion that racism exists, is ordinary and not the exception but rather the rule; our society is constructed around a system that privileges and advantages Whites and disadvantages people of color. This also indicates that liberalized

attempts at equality do little to disrupt the core of racism and ignore the more subtle everyday experiences of discrimination, such as microaggressions.

Second, is what Delgado and Stefancic (2001) refer to as “interest convergence” (p. 7), that Whites have a vested interest in maintaining the hierarchical nature of racism in society and only when there is some incentive for Whites to benefit from racial justice will they be motivated to create change. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) provide the example of Derrick Bell’s proposal that *Brown v. Board of Education* was more a result of self-interested White elites than the motivation to help Blacks (p. 7). Milner (2007) writes this of “interest convergence”,

People in power are often, in discourse, supportive of research, policies, and practices that do not oppress and discriminate against others as long as they-those in power-do not have to alter their own systems of privilege; they may not want to give up their own interests to fight against racism, confront injustice, or shed light on hegemony (p. 391).

This tenet also reinforces the idea that whites have little incentive to alter the *status quo* as it would require examination of our own position of privilege.

Third, is that race is a social construction and not biologically based. This principle holds that, while there are phenotypic similarities between people with shared ancestral origins, the *meaning* and significance given to phenotypic similarities is created through social relations not biology. To clarify what has been an adulterated implication by some that if race is a social construction there is no basis for talking about racism, Miller and Garran (2008) write “that *race* is a social construction, and *racism* is a very real, multifaceted, historical, and contemporary force” (p. 15).

The fourth tenet, which draws on the first three, is that race is differentially mobilized based on historical relevance. That is, the meaning given to a certain race at any one given time

will likely fluctuate based on the shifting needs of society. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) point to shifting stereotypes of Japanese Americans during World War II as one example; once needed for labor and agriculture, Japanese Americans came into “intense disfavor and [were] removed to war relocation camps, while society cultivated other groups of color for jobs in war industry” (p. 8).

Fifth is the tenet of anti-essentialism and intersectionality. Informed heavily by Black feminist legal scholarship, particularly Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), this tenet highlights that there is no single identity of a person or race. Crenshaw (1991) first elucidated this concept by examining a legal standing in which the plaintiffs, a group of Black women facing employment discrimination, were compelled by the court to choose whether they were being discriminated against based on their race or based on their gender. This simplification and essentialization of identities incited critique and led Crenshaw, along with other CRT scholars to call for more a more nuanced and *intersectional* understanding of identity.

In recognition of the impact that intersectionality has on the experience of oppression, the final tenet of CRT places value on the subjective experiences of people of color as sources of knowledge (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Mirza, 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This tenet focuses on centering voices of color and acknowledges that people of color have a lived experience, through culture, systems of oppression and history, that is distinct from the experiences of White mainstream knowledge. By centering voices of color, CRT also promotes the post-structuralist idea that there is no one master truth, but that meaning is made through acknowledging many voices and perspectives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Because Critical Race Theory suggests that racism lives not only in individuals, but also in institutional structures (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), schools and universities are not immune

from social forces such as racism and ethnic discrimination, nor from the impacts these have on members of the school community such as students. Using the frame of school climate, we can investigate both the interpersonal as well as the systemic dynamics that contribute to experiences of racism within the confines of a school.

School researchers such as Allen (2012), Allen, Scott & Lewis (2013), and Henfield (2011) have found that racism plays a profound role in the experiences of students and families of color, even when controlled for economic class, academic ability, and demographic makeup of the school. Students who experience oppression because of their marginalized identities, such as students of color, LGBTQ-identified students, and/or students of immigrant status are faced with extra challenges that manifest in the shape of overt discrimination, as well as in the shape of microaggressions.

Critical Race Theory also tells us that individuals do not simply hold one identity that places them in the marginalized or oppressor categories of society; in fact individuals hold multiple intersecting identities and can hold several statuses of varying degrees of vulnerability. A student with female gender expression and white skin privilege lives a different experience than a student with female gender expression and brown skin, who in turn lives a different experience than a student with male privilege and brown skin. We can assume, that the experiences of microaggressions in students will be moderated not only by a student's status as a person of color--detailed in the following microaggressions section--but also by their gender expression, LGBTQI+ identity, English language competency, wealth, religious affiliation, ability, age, and physical health.

Microaggressions

In recent years, a public disavowal of overt forms of racism has pushed many experiences of racism into less-discernable and more covert experiences of *aversive racism* and *microaggressions*. As defined in the introduction, microaggressions are “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group” (Sue et al., 2007) and these slights “impair performance in a multitude of settings by sapping the psychic and spiritual energy of recipients and creating inequities” (p. 273). Sue and colleagues break down these more covert experiences of discrimination into three distinct forms. The first is the “microassault,” or “explicit racial derogation characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions;” the next is a “microinsult” which are subtle “communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person’s racial identity or heritage;” and finally, the “microinvalidation” is a communication in which the recipient’s thoughts, feelings, and experiential reality are negated and nullified (Sue et al., 2007, p. 274).

Racial microaggressions are different from overt forms of racism because they are often subtle insults, both verbal and nonverbal, directed towards people of color and “often carried out automatically or unconsciously” (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012, p. 447). Researchers have emphasized that their “layered” and “cumulative” nature take their toll on people of color, because while in isolation they may not have much meaning or impact, taken together, repeated slights have a profound effect on the victims (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012, p. 447). For example, a comprehensive review of the literature on racial discrimination amongst adults has shown that the stress often resulting from such incidents can have severe and long-lasting psychological and

physical health implications (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson 2003). The review highlights the literature, which demonstrates that perceived racial bias significantly contributes to racial health disparities in the United States (Williams et al., 2003).

Individuals with different intersections of identities experience different types of microaggressions (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Torres-Harding, Andrade, & Romero Diaz (2012), in presenting their Racial Microaggression Scale (RMAS), discussed the different types of stereotypes that tend to follow individuals of certain ethnicities and genders. The white supremacist narrative tells us, for example, that African American men are criminals, aggressive and anti-intellectual--trends that emerged in various articles on microaggressions (Allen, 2012; Chavous, Rivas-Drake, Smalls, Griffin, & Cogburn, 2008; Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). In college setting specifically, African American males are defined as being "out of place" or "fitting the description" for criminal behaviors (Smith et al., 2007). Torres-Harding and colleagues (2012) further highlight the experiences of Asian women as being hyper-sexualized, the culture of African American men and women as being pathologized, Latin American men being seen as aggressive and violent, Latin American and people of Asian descent being viewed as foreigners and not belonging, and African American women to be believed to have antagonistic tendencies. According to Torres-Harding and colleagues (2012) as well as Franklin & Boyd-Franklin (2000), all people of color, and especially African American males are subjected to feeling erased by dominant White culture. In the present study, I hoped to explore if these variations in experienced microaggressions would be mirrored in youth in school settings.

Microaggressions and schools. A plethora of research suggests that adolescents experience "everyday" discriminations outside of school and that there are negative

socioemotional, academic, and mental health outcomes associated with such experiences (Clark, Coleman, & Novack, 2004; Pahl & Way, 2006; Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo & Rivera, 2009). While some studies have examined racial discrimination in schools, they have focused primarily on the different forms of racism—both overt and microaggressions—and less on the outcomes of such experiences (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Research on microaggressions in the educational setting is scant (Allen et al., 2013; Allen, 2012; Benner & Graham, 2011; Henfield, 2011; Kohli & Solórzano, 2012; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015), and most of it focused on discriminatory experiences in general, rather than examining the outcomes associated with who the perpetrator was (i.e., teacher versus peer). Understanding whether or not the perpetrator (the who) matters, as racial and ethnic discrimination occurs not only in peer-to-peer interactions but also between school staff and students (Allen et al., 2013; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Experiences of discrimination from peers, I propose, carry a different weight than experiences of discrimination from adults and authority figures. Existing research can provide a general understanding of the current field of school-based microaggressions, to which this study will add a new perspective.

Suárez-Orozco and colleagues (2015) conducted an exploratory study in which the researchers observed college-level classrooms in real time and found microaggressions present more than 30% of the observed classes. Most interestingly, the team discovered that most microaggressions were perpetrated by instructors rather than peers (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). Most research focuses on peer-to-peer microaggressions or community-based microaggressions rather than teacher to student microaggressions. In fact, little is known about how students respond to microaggressions from peers versus from teachers. This is problematic as any recommendations derived from previous studies would be remiss in addressing bias in the student population, when the real harm is in fact coming from the adult staff. Moreover, when

stereotypes are reaffirmed by educators who hold knowledge and institutional power--not only because they are overwhelmingly White but because of the hierarchical nature of Western schools--the impact of their microaggressions is likely more powerful than if the microaggressions came from other students.

Furthermore, microaggressions in educational settings may be particularly harmful because they “communicate derogatory slights and insults toward individuals of underrepresented status” which creates “invalidating and hostile learning experiences” (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015, p. 151). Negative outcomes of microaggressions have been shown to impact school engagement, as school disidentification can be utilized as a coping strategy to protect one’s self-image in the face of perceived stereotypes, negative academic expectations, and disproportionate discipline practices (Chavous et al., 2008). School disengagement, in turn, has been linked to absenteeism, delinquency and higher levels of drug use in adolescence and early adulthood (Henry, Knight & Thornberry, 2012). Chavous and colleagues (2008) highlights that African American boys are especially susceptible to these challenges as they tend to experience school disengagement at a younger age and more frequent rate than their female peers.

Moreover, much of the literature on microaggressions in school settings thus far has focused on higher education, and how to respond once a microaggression has occurred, rather than examining psychosocial and academic outcomes. For example several studies found that instructors need to facilitate dialogue when microaggressions occur (Boysen, 2012; Sue et al., 2009). However, it is not always clear to the instructor when a microaggression has occurred. Lowe, Okubo, & Reily (2012) explored common responses to experiences of racism through semi-structured interviews. Responses included confiding to other people of color about the experience, feeling an inability to respond to microaggressions in the moment, harboring

fantasies about what could have happened, expressing desires for White allies to intervene, and discussing intergenerational transmission of coping skills (Lowe et al., 2012). This connection is important, because Sue and colleagues (Sue & Constantine, 2007; Sue et al., 2009) found that microaggressions in college classrooms caused powerful cognitive, behavioral, and emotional reactions and often resulted in difficult dialogues about race. This research might imply that experiences of microaggressions at the high school level are also deserving of attention as they likely lead to similar cognitive, behavioral, and emotional reactions in students who are younger and thus more susceptible to interruptions in their identity development.

Some research speaking to the dangers of discrimination in general has focused on high schoolers. Multiple studies show that experiencing racial discrimination at school has detrimental effects on students' mental health and academic success (Allen et al., 2013; Chavous et al., 2008; Donovan et al., 2013; Hearld, Budhwani, Chavez-Yenter, 2015; Huynh, 2012; Huynh & Fuligni, 2010; Levine et al., 2014; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000). For example, in a study of twelfth grade students, Latin American and Asian American students' experiences of discrimination predicted lower grade point averages and self-esteem, and more depressive symptoms, distress, and physical complaints (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010). Researchers in a study of eight different ethnic groups on multiple college campuses found that perceived discrimination was positively associated with depressive symptoms, and found that factors related to identity confusion did not mediate this relationship (Donovan et al., 2013). Another study found that discrimination, alongside alcohol and tobacco use, increased chances of panic attacks amongst minority American adolescents (Hearld et al., 2015). Other research has examined the relationship between discrimination, race-based stress, and sleep problems (Huynh & Gillen-O'Neel, 2016; Levy, Heissel, Richeson, & Adam, 2016). These studies speak to the direct effect

of general discrimination, but fail to differentiate that type of discrimination (e.g. overt or subtle), and do not include discussions on the role of the perpetrator, indicating a gap in the literature that this study attempts to fill.

One of the more widely known impacts that racial bias in authority figures has on students of color, is disproportionality in discipline practices. Skiba et al., (2000) analyzed a densely populated school district's suspension and expulsion records of 19 middle schools for the 1994-1995 school year. The researchers asked the question whether socioeconomic status, and not racial and gender discrimination, could account for the disproportionate representation of African American boys who were referred, suspended or expelled from public schools. This research question emerged out of existing claims that if controlled for SES, the disproportionality in discipline would disappear (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2000). In this study, chi square analysis found that SES did not account for the disproportionality. While male-identified students' behavior differed from female-identified students, which would account for some differences in discipline practices, behaviors did *not* differ between races/ethnicities. The fact that African American boys receive punitive discipline at a higher rate than their White peers indicates that neither socioeconomic status nor differences in behaviors can account for the disproportionality and that racial bias is in fact the most likely culprit.

The aforementioned research focuses more generally on discrimination and fails to examine these outcomes in relation to microaggressions in particular. However, one study investigated the relationship between microaggressions and social anxiety disorder and found that "everyday discrimination," defined as "consistent, less overt forms of intolerance (e.g. being treated with less respect)" predicted social anxiety disorder more than overt and major incidents of discrimination (Levine et al., 2014, p. 224). Additionally, in a theoretical article incorporating

Trauma Theory, Helms, Nicolas, and Green (2012) posit that experiences of racism, including microaggressions and vicarious experiences of ethnoviolence, can cause victims to experience symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This article demonstrates the critical need for further study of the outcomes of microaggressions rather than simply looking at experiences of racial discrimination as a whole.

Though limited, there has been some research on microaggressions in K-12 educational environments. One such study is Kohli and Solórzano's (2012) examination of students of color experiences of "cultural disrespect" in regards to names in K-12 education. They emphasize that the mispronunciation of names should not be understated, that these incidents are racial microaggressions, which have a lasting impact on students' self-perception and worldview, and that every effort should be made by teachers to recognize their Eurocentric bias and expand cultural limits within the classroom (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). This research is extremely valuable as it specifically assesses the population and experiences that my study aims to highlight; however, here Kohli and Solórzano are presenting data on one specific type of microaggression, leaving out all other kinds of experiences high schoolers might have.

Fleshing out the literature on different types of microaggressions, qualitative studies by Allen (2012) and Henfield (2011) have begun to examine Black male adolescents' experiences of racial microaggressions in schools as well as sources of support for these students in the face of these experiences. Multiple studies have examined the model minority stereotype and its impact upon Asian-American high school students (Kiang, Witkow, & Thompson, 2016; Thompson, Kiang, Witkow, 2016). One study distinguished between the model minority stereotype and racial discrimination and found that while stereotyping increases across

adolescent years, it can be a protective factor against the negative outcomes of racial discrimination (Thompson et al., 2016).

Research examining microaggressions in high school and middle school settings and with students in early and middle adolescence is limited. The focus on higher education leaves out K-12 education, which is compulsory in the United States and therefore affects a larger and more socioeconomically diverse percentage of the population, and thus my research with younger students will address this critical gap in the literature.

School Climate

Researchers agree that every school site has its own institutional climate and that this climate is paramount to the academic, emotional, social and physical well being of its students (Bellmore et al., 2012; Stone & Han, 2005; Wilson, 2004). School climate has been described as the *milieu*, *atmosphere*, or *ecology*, of a school (Anderson, 1982) and although there is no specifically agreed upon definition of school climate, the literature reveals some common themes within school climate research, which include the quality and character, reflected in the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, as well as organizational structures of a school (Cohen et al., 2009).

Researchers also agree on the general definition; however, because research in this area is broad, there are often disagreements amongst researchers who have opposing ideas on what dimensions ought to be included in their study of school climate. When Ramelow, Currie & Felder-Puig (2015) took a closer look at the various measures that had been established to assess a school's climate, they found that while the definitions and dimensions of school climate varied widely, all twelve psychometric measures they explored, had in common a measure on relationships and school connectedness, even when other dimensions, such as safety and physical

facilities were not universally represented in the literature. However, there was one dimension that each study I reviewed included: school connectedness, otherwise known as school belonging. I will first discuss existing research on school climate in general and will then review the literature on school connectedness.

School climate research. Numerous studies attempt to examine how the general climate of a school can either improve or impair student academic and social-emotional development (Benner & Graham, 2011; Eliot et al., 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; Toleson, 2014). Combined, this body of research suggests that a positive school climate may be a protective factor in supporting academic success and emotional well-being for marginalized communities such as students of color, immigrant students, and students who identify as LGBTQ. Although there is little research on school climate with regards to racism and ethnic discrimination specifically, extensive research exists focusing on school climate and the experiences of LGBTQ identified youths (CDC 2009; Eliot et al., 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; McLaren, Schurmann, & Jenkins, 2015; Murdock & Bolch, 2005; Toleson, 2014).

While I would be remiss to assume that the experiences of discrimination on LGBTQ identified youths are the same as those who also hold other marginalized identities, the existing research can provide some insight into the protective factors of school climate on marginalized communities. For example, Eliot and colleagues (2010) found in a study of 7,318 9th grade students, selected indiscriminantly of background and LGBTQ status that a favorable school climate increased students' willingness to seek help against bullying at their schools. Bullying disproportionately affects students with marginalized identities such as belonging to the LGBTQ community (CDC, 2009), or being perceived as "other" due to ethnic minority or immigration status (Allen, 2012; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Smith et al., 2007). The findings of this study

suggest that these vulnerable students are supported by positive school climate in which other (including non-minoritized) members of the school community feel empowered to interrupt bullying. In this process, a positive school climate is maintained not only by adults on campus who work to strengthen the community, but also by the students, who are less likely to allow bullying to occur. If students are willing to seek help against bullying in the general student population, it would follow that students might feel similarly willing to interrupt and seek help for incidents of racism and discrimination.

This was not the only study to report that a positive school climate supported positive peer interactions. Murdock and Bolch (2005), in a study of 101 self-identified LGB students, found that school climate was positively related to school adjustment as measured by grades, school belonging, and disruptive behavior. While this study is limited in the number of its subjects, it highlights the multidimensional impact school climate can have on youth.

Corroborating these findings, Toleson (2014) found that school climate serves as a moderate protective factor for LGBTQ youth who are at risk of discrimination, absenteeism, bullying, higher levels of depression and lower self esteem than straight-identified students. This study contributes to the growing research around school equity, highlighting the ways in which other forms of discrimination (based on ethnicity, race, gender, age, etc.) still pervades our schools, and adding evidence to support the CDC's (2009) findings around the protective power of school belonging. In a similar study, Birkett, Espelage & Koenig (2009), found in analyzing survey responses from 7,376 middle schoolers that LGB youth were more likely to report high levels of bullying and homophobic victimization than heterosexual youth and concluded that a positive school climate was in part able to moderate these negative outcomes. Likewise, Klein, Cornell & Konold (2012) concluded in a study of 3,635 high schoolers, that a positive school climate was

associated with lower levels of student involvement in risky behaviors such as substance use, brandishing weapons, school violence, and suicidality.

The body of research indicates that school climate significantly affects various aspects of a student's social experience and plays an important role in mediating pro-social behaviors and socioemotional well-being. While these studies point to the importance of school climate and its effects on LGBTQ populations, there are presently only a few studies to help us understand the connection between school climate and social interactions of students of color (Benner & Graham, 2011; Bellmore et al., 2012; Stone & Han, 2005; Voight, Hanson, O'Malley & Adekanye, 2015).

Bellmore and colleagues (2012) found in a quantitative longitudinal study of monoethnic 9th-12th grade students, that a positive school climate combined with high proportions of same-ethnicity peers (whether perceived or actual) were associated with less peer-to-peer ethnic discrimination. This study does provide more evidence of the beneficial qualities of a strong school climate; however, the quantitative nature of this study limited the subjects' abilities to define discrimination and express the severity or emotional burden of the experiences of discrimination. Furthermore, the study focused on peer-to-peer discrimination rather than teacher-to-student discrimination, with which the present study concerns itself.

Indicating that perceived school climate might be a function of race, for example, Voight, and colleagues (2015) concluded in a study of 13,460 Black and White middle school aged students, and 109,386 Hispanic and White middle school-aged students, that both African American and Hispanic students reported significantly lower levels of a sense of safety at school, school connectedness, and poorer adult-student relationships than their White peers. These lower levels of connectedness, safety and relationships were, as might be expected, significantly related

with achievement outcomes. This study highlights a significant limitation within school climate research, namely that of aggregation. When school climate is measured as an aggregate, instead of on a level stratified by race and ethnicity, researchers are bound to miss significant gaps in students' experiences when studying schools with diverse student bodies.

Such gaps were examined by Benner & Graham (2011) in a study that measured changes in perceived discrimination in Latinx high-school aged youth and examined the connection between perceived discrimination, subsequent negative regard of school climate, and the ultimate effects on academic achievement. The authors of this study assumed that perceived discrimination would lead students to feel mistrustful of school staff, to believe that rules were unfair, and to feel alienated and academically disengaged. Through a quantitative longitudinal study of 668 Latinx students, the researchers concluded that an indirect positive correlation exists between perceived discrimination and academic outcomes (as measured by grades and absenteeism) vis-à-vis perceived school climate. A similar quantitative study conducted by Stone & Han (2005) found that for 5,262 Mexican-American students, perceived school "quality"--here understood as school climate--was a relevant factor in predicting experiences of discrimination.

The first of these studies is somewhat limited in its assumption that the process of perceiving discrimination, perceiving a negative school climate, and subsequent academic regression follow a linear order rather than a cyclical one. It is, for example possible that poor academic success leads to heightened sensitivity around discrimination and perception of negative school climate. Nevertheless, the results of these studies indicate that there is indeed a connection between perceived ethnic/racial discrimination and school climate. Little is known about whether school climate can protect against specific types of discriminations, such as the different forms microaggressions--microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations.

School connectedness. Wilson (2004) defines school connectedness as “the degree to which a student experiences a sense of caring and closeness to teachers and the overall school environment” (p. 298). In his 2004 study, Wilson connected school climate and school connectedness with student experiences of aggression and victimization, and found that, regardless of perceived school climate, a strong sense of school connectedness yields protective qualities. In other words, school connectedness was a better predictor of aggression and victimization than school climate as a whole. While my study does not aim to measure peer-to-peer aggression and victimization, Wilson’s work approximates my research question to the extent that microaggressions are in fact aggressions perpetrated by an oppressor onto a victim. Wilson’s study falls short in isolating student behaviors from their social context by aggregating school climate data instead of assessing differences between social groups. Further, this study does not provide any insight into victimization of students who were the targets (whether intentional or not) of teachers’ aggression.

The importance of school connectedness is further outlined by the Centers for Disease Control, which report that the two main protective factors for school-aged students and youth are 1) adequate parenting by their caregivers and 2) school belonging (CDC, 2009). In support of Wilson’s argument that school connectedness alone can be responsible for positive outcomes, Bond et al.,(2007) found in a school-based longitudinal study of 2,676 students, that even when general social connection to peers was high, a report of low school connectedness at the middle school level was correlated with depression, anxiety, and higher rates of tobacco and marijuana use later on in life. School connectedness has also been associated with higher grade point averages (Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers & Smith, 2000). Just like most of the research in this field, these studies assume that what students need protection from are low academic

achievement and emotional and developmental stress rather than microaggressions from their teachers.

Summary

Virtually no research has been conducted on students of color's experiences of microaggressions and perception of school climate in the secondary education setting. Educational outcome research tells us that ethnic minority students are still disproportionately disciplined and have lower academic achievement than their White peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), highlighting a strong need for school climate research that, as with the LGBTQ student population, aims to improve outcomes for ethnic minority students. A large number of studies addressed school climate in connection with LGBTQ students (CDC 2009; Eliot et al., 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; McLaren et al., 2015; Murdock & Bolch, 2005; Toleson, 2014). The research also tells us that students of color typically have more negative regard of their school climate (Stone & Han, 2005; Benner & Graham, 2011), but we do not know the effects that a positive school climate and school belonging have on the outcomes of students of color, specifically with regard to their experiences of microaggressions.

The present study aims to fill these gaps by contextualizing school connectedness in the domains of power and oppression, as well as asking students about their experiences of disrespect perpetrated by teachers. The study asks whether the protection of school connectedness extends to discriminatory teacher behavior on marginalized students. I hypothesize that the frequency of disrespect perpetrated by teachers on marginalized students is different depending on whether students perceived high levels or low levels of school connectedness. I also hypothesize that there might be a difference in the way students respond to disrespect from their teachers depending on their perceptions of school connectedness.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The following chapter describes the purpose of this study, as well as the methodology behind the data collection. In order to support past research in defining the conditions under which student health and academic success outcomes are maximized, I hoped to explore the relationship between school connectedness and the type and frequencies of disrespect experienced by youths, as well as students' responses to disrespect.

Specifically, this study asked the questions: (1) What kind of microaggressions do students experience from teachers?, (2) is school connectedness related to the type and frequency of microaggressions experienced by students?, and (3), is school connectedness related to the responses to microaggressions experienced by students?

First, I will present the methodological framework, followed by participant sample, recruitment and data collection, measures, ethics and safeguards, and finally, my data analysis plan.

Methodological Framework

Individual experiences of racism or microaggressions can, some might argue, fall into the category of "subjective knowledge" making its validity difficult to measure. However, I chose to use the lens of Thomas & Thomas (1928), which states: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences' (p. 572)," and thus my method centers on the voices of youth and their experiences, without the need to verify any of their stories. The qualitative approach to this study then attempted to paint a picture of how injustices and disrespect impact youth during a

time of critical development, and, in centering the students' individual stories I hoped to allow youth to be heard from rather than to be talked about.

In addition, I used a Critical Race Theory lens, which highlights intersectionality of oppression and the need to critically engage with the dominant discourse around race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) to analyze whether and how the experiences of disrespect could be understood as microaggressions.

Sample

The research team sampled 21 current high school aged students (14 - 19 years old) from Western Massachusetts, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Southern Germany, who were on track to graduate, as well as young adults who graduated from high school within the past year. The participants varied in gender-identities (male, female, unknown), ethnicities and racial identities (i.e. Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Eritrean, White and African-American, Black, Black American, Black Caribbean, Jamaican, Dominican American, Mexican, Venezuelan, and Native American), and nationalities. Of these 21 students, 9 also completed surveys, which measured school climate via the WHITS assessment, and also mental health status, bystander responses, and racial validation within and outside of their schools. The data collected by these measures was to be used by other researcher on the team.

Recruitment

We the researchers had to approach recruitment with increased sensitivity due to the fact that we were working with minors. The strained post-election political climate of the United States further intensified worries about safeguards to protect our participants and the proposed methods in our Human Subject Review application underwent two full reviews through the Smith College Internal Review Board (Appendix A) before being approved in its final form

(initial full-board approval for this study occurred in 2015, continuation and change of protocol occurred in 2016 and 2017). This delayed data collection significantly, and drastically limited the scope of our sample size.

The inclusion criteria for my specific study within this larger research process required that participants able to read and speak English at an eighth-grade level and be current high school students who were on track to graduate. Students who were not on track to graduate were excluded from the study in order to avoid connotations between low educational attainment and negative feelings towards teachers. After excluding students who had already graduated high school, I was left with a sample of 17 participants. Out of the 17 high school students who completed interviews, 9 also completed surveys, which provided me with a closer look at the level of connectedness the participants felt towards their schools and teachers. One participant did not share any experiences of disrespect. His response was included during the frequency and type of disrespect analysis, but was excluded when analyzing the kinds of responses participants had to disrespect, since the participant shared not stories to respond to.

Prior IRB approval from this research's pilot study exempted the present study from further HSR approval (Appendix A), however the IRB required multiple rounds of approval before giving researchers the okay to collect survey and interview data, due to concerns about the participants' emotional well being while answering sensitive questions.

Individual recruitment procedures. I used convenience sampling and snowball sampling to recruit youths by means of contacting after school programs around the Bay Area and Massachusetts via phone calls and email (Appendix B). I also was able to interview a personal contact who is a current high school student in Germany, adding an international perspective to our data.

I advised participating after school programs that research participants might have strong emotional responses to the survey and interview questions. Thus I asked program directors to provide empathetic guidance to the teens should they need it. With written permission from the directors (Appendix F), confirming that they would provide emotional support, I went to after school programs in person to meet youth, explain the purpose of this research, impart information about the sample criteria, and to distribute consent forms (Appendix E) for youth to take home and have signed by their caregivers. I also told the youths that the interview and surveys would take approximately 60 minutes to complete. Each student who received a consent form was also asked to leave behind a method of contact so that I could follow up with the participants. I also posted flyers (Appendix B) to local businesses and organizations frequented by high school aged youths in the hopes of hearing from youth who might be interested in participating.

Group recruitment procedures. In addition to the purposeful sampling described previously, and snowball sampling and in both Western Massachusetts and the San Francisco Bay area was included because the participants in our study, adolescents of color and immigrant origin adolescents, are a special population and were difficult to locate (Rubin & Babbie, 2013). Both these types of recruitment procedures are common in qualitative research in oppressed populations (Knight, Roosa, Umana-Taylor, 2009).

To recruit high school participants through purposeful sampling, group members identified adolescent youth organizations that targeted youth of color or after school programs that were connected with high schools. Then, they emailed letters of interest to the organizations. These letters included the purpose of the study, information related to the research topic, and inclusion information. Group members followed up with additional emails or phone calls where

appropriate, and coordinated a time to allow for talking to potential participants, tabling recruitment, or posting flyers. Once participants were interviewed, group members used a snowball procedure to encourage participants to tell their friends about this study.

Emerging adult populations were located by contacting local colleges and organizations that work with youth and either asking the organization to tell potential participants about this study and hand out assent forms, or email students who might be interested in participating in the study. Interested participants responded via email or a consent form (Appendix D) indicating their interest worked with the interviewer to coordinate a time to be interviewed.

In order to provide ethical support for our participants, before we collected data at each adolescent after school organization the host site signed an agreement that they understood the purpose of our study and that they gave us permission to interview participants on their site. Each organization also provided us with a point contact person in case any youth experienced difficulties during the interview or had questions regarding the nature of the interview questions or concerns following their reflection of injustice in schools.

Ethics and Safeguards

In order to maintain the confidentiality of our research participants, we de-identified our data with the following procedure: participant data were assigned a number at the time of the first data collection, whether that be the interview or the survey, and the name that corresponds with each number was kept only for purposes of participant withdrawal. The list of names associated with numbers was kept in hard copy form in a secure, locked location by the principal investigator, Shannon Audley. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed at a later date by rev.com. If individuals were named in participants' narratives we de-identified them during transcription using fake names.

Risks and Benefits of Participation

There were several risks to consider for this study. The participants may have felt uncomfortable when discussing their views on respect or disrespect in the classroom. Participants were reminded that they could stop the interview at any time, or choose to not answer a question in the interview. It is possible that the participants might feel uncomfortable or distressed with the questions concerning the microaggressions. Participants were reminded that they could skip questions at any time or stop the survey at any time. The order of the questions and the inclusion of positive questions have been purposively arranged to diminish distress, so that participants end thinking about a positive school experience. In addition, all participants were debriefed, reminded about the positive impact of the study, and given a general resource sheet on discrimination resources (Appendix G).

There was also a chance that the researchers themselves were complicit in inadvertently committing a microaggression during the interviews themselves. To minimize this risk, researchers were asked to stick strictly to the structure and script of the interview questions; however, this risk could not be avoided perfectly even with ample knowledge about what microaggressions can look like and when they occur, despite the researchers' self-reflective attitudes.

As mandatory reporters, the social work student researchers of this study were required to report any accounts of child abuse to appropriate partners. If a research participant shared an incident that raised suspicion around child abuse that occurred at the participant's school, the researchers were prepared to report this information to the participant's after school program so that appropriate measures around protecting the safety of the students could be taken. The

research participants were told of the researcher's status as mandatory reporters, and that their safety was paramount.

Although this study had risks, it also provides important benefits. Participants may have enjoyed sharing their opinions and experiences with others. Additionally, participants may have benefited from a self-reflection about their own behaviors and their experience with respect and disrespect in the classroom. There was compensation for participants' time as well. For the survey, if a participant fill out at least one question, we entered those wishing to participate in a drawing for a \$25 gift card. In addition, participants who completed the interview were given a \$5 gift card to Amazon.

We feel that there are additional potential benefits for society from this research. This research provides a more nuanced picture of youth's experiences in schools, both positive and negative experiences. Likewise, we can also compare the school experiences form White students and students of color to document and expose any differences. This will allow parents, teacher, school administrators, and teacher education to be more informed about microaggressions and their impacts on both the academic and psychosocial functioning of adolescents in high school. This research may also inform school interventions at all levels--the individual, the classroom, and the school itself. More so, by understanding the protective factors that some youth use to navigate both disrespectful and microaggressive experiences, we can inform parents, teachers, school administrators, and the youth themselves of steps that they can take to make the school experience a more harmonious one for everyone.

By understanding how youth successfully navigate disrespectful experiences, and by highlighting what they see as respectful experiences, we can teach children how to effectively deal with feeling disrespected in a way that promotes social harmony, rather than discord, and

identify children early on that are experiencing difficulties and provide interventions and classroom solutions. We can also help teachers and social workers identify unintentional behaviors that their students deem disrespectful as a way to promote social harmony in the classroom.

Data Collection Procedure

Once I gathered participants, we scheduled individual meetings at a time and location most comfortable to the youths. I then explained the process of the interview and survey to the participants, giving them the chance to ask any questions, and to fill out assent forms to be interviewed, surveyed and voice recorded (Appendix C). Before they began, the youths were informed of their right to stop participating in the interview, of their right to not answer any question given them, and of their right to be completely withdrawn from this study without any penalty to them.

Since these participants were minors, their guardians signed consent forms and the youths signed assent. With these safeguards in place, the participants were asked to complete a 10-minute demographic survey (Appendix H), which included basic identifiers such as age, self-identified, gender, race and ethnic identity and how others view the students' identities, which are questions in line with a CRT paradigm. The demographic survey was followed by around 45 minutes of semi-structured interview questions (Appendix I) around the participants' experiences of disrespect in school, their reactions to the incident, and how they feel about it now. The interview also featured questions on positive affirmations from teachers and adults, as well as open-ended questions asking participants to express what they would like their teachers to know about respect and disrespect. These interviews were voice recorded and transcribed later.

Following the interviews, several participants were asked to complete a set of surveys, which took about 40 minutes to complete. The first section of the survey asked participants to provide information around depression, resilience and resourcefulness (Roeser, Lord & Eccles, 1994), self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965), as well as stress, using the subscale of the short form of the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scales (DASS-21) (Henry & Crawford, 2005), which had been slightly reduced from seven to five questions. Following these measures, the participants answered questions around racial affirmations and microaggressions in their communities outside of school in order to test for variants that might impact the participants' well-being but not, in fact, be caused by school-based events. Participants also completed the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al., 1992) questions on school demographics, as well as bystander behaviors as related to racial microaggressions. The measures pertinent to the present study followed in the form of the WHITS assessment to measure school climate (Aldridge & Ala'l 2013), which was used to stratify students into high or low school connectedness levels (Appendix J). Finally, students were debriefed and given resources about racial discrimination (Appendix G).

Measures

I used the data from the WHITS assessment, which was assessed for validity both by its authors Aldrige & Ala'l (2013), as well as an independent literature review on school climate measures by Ramelow et al., (2015). This particular measure was chosen because the language used in it was school-aged student friendly, more concise than other measures, internally valid, and focused on relationships between the individuals who comprise the school.

The WHITS assessment is organized into six subsections, each containing eight items: I - Teacher Support, II - Peer Connectedness, III - School Connectedness, IV - Affirming Diversity,

V - Rule Clarity, VI - Reporting and Seeking Help. These subsections loosely correspond with the dimensions of school climate (i.e. relationships, safety, teaching/learning etc.), which school climate researchers have been working to finalize over the years (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey & Higgins-D'Alessandra, 2013). The WHITS assessment asks participants to rate on a Likert scale whether the statement in each item applied to them 1= Almost Never; 2= Not Often; 3= Sometimes; 4= Often; 5= Almost Always.

The WHITS assessment centers relationships between teachers and students, and students in their peers (Ramelow et al., 2015), which made this measure particularly useful for the present study. Teacher and school connectedness were of primary interest in the questions I asked, so the items most salient to this study were those around teacher support and school connectedness. The results from this measure were then compared to applicable questions from the semi-structured interviews given to the participants.

Because the aim of this study was to assess how students experience and respond to microaggressions in their schools, the researchers initially used the word “microaggressions” in the structured survey responses. Pilot interviews and teen focus groups assessing the interview questions for readability, however, illuminated the fact that the word “microaggressions” would have to be defined by the researchers before the interview and that the general word “disrespect” would be adequate in replacing the word microaggression in subsequent interviews. Indeed, the pilot samples indicated that when attempting to capture all negative experiences by asking participants about disrespect, all of the students did in fact talk about microaggressions during their interviews.

Data Analysis

Coding narratives. I used a mixed method approach to answer my guiding questions, which were: (1) What kind of microaggressions do students experience from teachers?, (2) is school connectedness related to the type and frequency of microaggressions experienced by students?, and (3), is school connectedness related to the responses to microaggressions experienced by students?

I analyzed the narratives of disrespect for markers that would indicate that these experiences were in fact microaggressions, and coded them by the types of assumptions that were reflected in the narratives (e.g. assumptions of criminality, assumption of subordination, color blindness etc.). Despite being asked to only share one experience, several participants shared multiple accounts of disrespect during their interview. I organized separate accounts as different narratives, however, I grouped the accounts together if the disrespect was perpetrated by the same adult over a period of time. Numerous answers were coded for multiple codes or themes that were not mutually exclusive, for example a story could include both racial stereotyping and students being sexualized, which, according to intersectionality as outlined by CRT, is to be expected.

I also reviewed the narratives for the participants' responses to disrespect and discovered that participants both had felt internal responses, as well as actionable external responses. I coded these responses according to whether the responses connected students to or further disconnected them from their school contexts or teachers.

I coded the participants' disrespect experiences following Braun & Clarke's (2008) inductive and deductive content analysis process. Utilizing this thematic analysis model, I first familiarized myself with the data by reading and rereading each of the narrative interview

transcripts. From these readings, I then generated initial codes, which were strictly aligned with the actual language of the interviews and were very specific to each of the participants' narratives. Following this, I reviewed all of these codes and devised larger themes into which I then categorized these individual codes. I reviewed the themes in order to define and refine them into useful categories. For the purposes of increasing reliability, a fellow researcher independently completed the same process and we worked together in corroborating each other's findings before producing our final report.

Creating groups via school connectedness measures. I analyzed the quantitative survey data on school climate gathered by the WHITS assessment which allowed me to tease out in greater detail how connected some participants felt to their teachers and schools. The WHITS assessment asks participants to rank how frequently they experience various elements of positive school climate. I used the two elements, which focus on teacher support (e.g. teachers listen to me, teachers treat me fairly) and school connectedness (e.g. I feel included at school, I am part of a community). The responses to these statements were measured on Likert scales (1 Almost never - 5 Almost always), where low scores indicating low teacher support/school connectedness, and high scores indicating high teacher support/school connectedness.

The first element posed eight statements in total and the second element posed seven. From these 15 statements, participants could have scored between 15 and 75 points in total. I created a composite score combining the results of both elements (teacher support and school connectedness) together for each participant. I then calculated the mean and median of the composite scores to see if the responses could be divided neatly into two groups. I found a natural break and determined that scores less than 52 points indicated low teacher support/school connectedness, and scores greater or equal to 52 points indicated high teacher support/school

connectedness. I then compared the results of the qualitative findings to the two separate groups to see if any of the coded themes that emerged from the interview responses occurred more frequently in the high or low school connectedness groups.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

In order to assess if school and teacher connectedness is related to the frequency and type of and response to microaggressions experienced by current high school students, current high school students were sampled through convenience and snowball sampling both in California, Massachusetts and Germany, to participate in semi-structured interviews about experiences of teacher disrespect. In total, 17 current high schoolers were interviewed. In order to get a more accurate understanding of their level of school connectedness, 9 of the 17 high schoolers also completed a quantitative assessment, measuring school and teacher connectedness via the What Is Happening In This School (WHITS) assessment. First, I will present the demographic data gathered about the participants. Then, I will highlight findings from the qualitative data assessment, separated into three parts: 1) The type of disrespect the participants experienced, 2) the internal responses to disrespect, and 3) the external responses to disrespect. I will then summarize the quantitative findings, and note the connections between levels of teacher support/school connectedness and any of the three aforementioned qualitative responses.

Demographic Data

In completing a demographics survey, participants were asked to self-identify with their racial and ethnic identity, as well as the identity most often ascribed to them by strangers. Three participants self-identified as Black, three students self-identified as White, and one each as Korean, Mixed White/African American, Black Jamaican/Caribbean, Filipino/Spanish,

German/Black, Vietnamese, Chinese/Vietnamese, Indian (Asian), Jewish, Venezuelan/Native American. One participant did not fill out this section in the demographics sheet, but during the interview disclosed that her recent ancestors came from Ethiopia and Eritrea. When asked how other people viewed them, six participants responded that they were viewed as Black, five participants viewed as Asian, four participants viewed as White, one participant viewed as White or Black, and one participant viewed as White or Latina.

Out of the 17 students sampled, 11 self-identified as female and 6 as male, none as gender non-binary or trans. Most participants did not know the socioeconomic income bracket of their families, though the five that did know, responded within a range from \$30,000-\$49,000 to over \$120,000 per year, indicating that a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds were sampled. The participants' ages ranged from 15 to 19 years old.

Qualitative Data Assessment

When asked to share experiences in which the participants felt disrespected by a teacher or adult at school, the accounts student shared varied in frequency, despite only being asked about one experience. One participant reported never feeling disrespected by teachers, whereas a different participant recounted six different incidents of disrespect, explaining that she could have shared more if it had not been for time constraints. Out of the 17 sampled participants, 6 participants shared two stories of teacher disrespect, and 2 participants shared three separate stories. 7 participants shared one story each. 2 separate participants also shared multiple connected accounts of disrespect all from the same teacher. These were counted as one incident.

The type of disrespect the participant experienced. I used descriptive analysis to code participants' responses into specific categories and then grouped these codes into major themes. In response to the first question: "Tell me about a time when a teacher or another adult at your

high school disrespected you or made you feel disrespected,” I interpreted major themes of types of disrespect the participants received. The disrespect themes I coded for in the responses were: (1) stereotyping, (2) color blindness/erasure, (3) singling out/calling out difference, and (4) minimizing student concerns. In addition to racial microaggressive themes, students described microaggressions that I interpreted as ageist and/or sexist.

One participant, a male, second generation Chinese/Vietnamese American student reported never having experienced any kind of disrespect from a teacher. As an outlier, his lack of responses is important to include. His narrative was included in the analysis of the frequency and type of disrespect experienced by participants. However, since he shared no experiences of disrespect, his answer was excluded from the analysis of responses to disrespect. In order to accurately portray the frequency of the types of microaggressions, his response to this particular question was excluded from this portion of the analysis.

Stereotyping. I gathered 32 narratives of disrespect from the remaining participants. Out of these 32 accounts, 26 (81%) were coded as stereotyping. Stereotyping narratives included teachers not seeing students as individuals by assuming criminality in Black students and enacting unfair discipline, hypersexualizing female students, and treating students of color as second-class citizen. Some stories included examples of favoritism, assumptions of subordination, and pathologizing cultural values and communication styles. It is important to know that not all forms of microaggressions recounted were based in racial or ethnic stereotypes. Some White female participants experienced sexist microaggressions, for example.

Following are quotes taken from the participants’ interviews and some of my analyses of the microaggression(s) represented in them, based on the formulation of microaggressions by Sue et al. (2007).

Teachers assuming criminality in Black students. Kandace, a Black female junior recounts this story of a Black female acquaintance, Yasmin. Yasmin had previously heard a rumor about another girl having betrayed her trust significantly, and felt a strong urge to find out if the rumor was true or not and decided to visit her friend's class, when the teacher reacted inappropriately, assuming criminality in Yasmin:

Kandace:

Yasmin wasn't going to yell at her [friend], she just wanted to know because she heard people saying rumors. And she asked the teacher in there, could she speak with [her friend] and [her friend] said "yeah." Then [the teacher] called security on her and said she was going to jump [her friend], she was going to beat her up... and the teacher was White.

This is one example of several, in which a teacher jumped to conclusions about a student's intentions on the basis of race. In this case, the teacher assumed that Yasmin was going to "jump" her friend without any supportive evidence leading him to this conclusion. Whether the teacher knew it or not, he ascribed criminality onto Yasmin and confirmed this assumption by calling campus security even though no rules were broken. Not only was the teacher unprovoked in utilizing law enforcement to quell his fears based in stereotypes of Black violence; he perpetuated the stereotype in front of a whole class, and, perhaps worst of all, promulgated the established reality that law enforcement is used to subdue, intimidate, and often kill Black bodies.

Another story was provided by Riya, a female senior who identifies as Black American. Here, a White female teacher similarly escalates a situation based on assumptions of defiance. Riya explained how her teacher at first was attempting to help Riya but completely misread Riya's question, and assumed that Riya was giving her attitude.

Riya:

I asked her and she was standing like right next to me. She was like, "If this is that, then what is this?" It was a math class. I said, "What?" I was confused. I didn't say anything other than "what." She looks at me weird. She was like, "If you're going to give me an attitude and be rude and be disrespectful, then I'm not helping you with your work." Then she like threw my pencil.

Riya was confused by the teacher's attempt to help her. Instead of reading confusion in Riya, the teacher assumed that her question came out of a place of defiance. The teacher, it seemed, may have attempted to connect with Riya with her defenses already up. The moment Riya asked "what?" the teacher deployed these defenses and reprimanded Riya for giving an attitude, creating a further riff between the two and deepening the disconnection.

Teachers assuming hyper-sexuality in female students. In a few examples, female students shared accounts of being sexualized by male teachers. Some examples included male teachers laughing at rape-jokes that male students were sharing during class; and telling female students to sit in a certain way that was more "ladylike." The most egregious account of female students being hyper-sexualized, however, comes from Amy, a White female senior:

Amy:

I had this one teacher last year who got fired who was kinda creepy to girls. The lines are little blurred but he made some inappropriate comments and I guess that counts as disrespect.... I was just walking and then he put his hand like ... I don't know if it was an accident or not but he touched my butt ... I know other people who've had experiences with teachers saying inappropriate things.

While Amy's social identity as a White person protects her from experiencing racial microaggressions herself, her status as a female-identified individual in this case was what victimized her. The male teacher in this scenario was hypersexualizing girls and young women through his words and actions, leaving them with feeling severely uncomfortable, and in Amy's case, victims of sexual assault. Amy explained that "the lines were blurry" and expressed uncertainty around the intent of this teacher. It is possible, of course that this incident was merely an accident. Regardless of his intent during the moment in the hallway, the teacher's previous inappropriate comments in class were cause enough to leave Amy to wonder and feel hypervigilant whenever she was near him.

Students of color as second-class citizens. Another example of stereotyping is highlighted in the following account by Annette, a first-generation Vietnamese-American, female sophomore. Annette, who had recently joined the school badminton team found herself in an uncomfortable situation, during which she and another Vietnamese-American girl beat their opposing team of White students during a match.

Annette:

Me and a friend of mine we played doubles against other students and [the coach] thought we weren't going to win but we won and the coach came and was like "What?" and she was very surprised and this made me and my partner feel sad because she thinks that me and her can't do well in that match.

In this case, the White students were given preferential treatment in the form of an assumption of superiority over Annette and her friend. While the coach may have been surprised by the fact that two students won the match because they were relatively new to the team, she was insensitive to the fact that her exclamation of surprise left Annette feeling "sad," that

Annette perhaps did not belong to the team, and that she was inferior to her White peers. Annette was then left to wonder if this ascription of inferiority was a function of race or not.

These two accounts give a glimpse into both the overt microaggressions, as well as subtle insults that, because they were directed at a student of color, were received as exclusionary to the dominant culture.

Color blindness/erasure. Another form of microaggression participants shared was one of erasure and color blindness. Sue et al. (2007) describe color blindness as “statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race” (p. 276). This type of erasure of race occurred both on the individual level as well as on the environmental level, such as through school curriculum. Participants shared a total of 17 out of 32 (53%) accounts that included a narrative around color blindness/erasure.

Environmental color blindness. One account of color blindness on an environmental level was related by Suzanna, a female senior who identifies as mixed race White and African American. She told the story of an older White, female history teacher who repeatedly insisted on erasing the brutality of American chattel slavery by likening it to western misogyny and comparing the abolition movement with the White feminist movement:

Suzanna:

But [the teacher] said that women in the 60's [...] who were always at the house doing all the home whatever things, she compared it to ... She literally said, "That was their slavery. They were slaves." I don't even remember what she said, I tried to block it out of my memory honestly. But she was basically saying the equivalent of, women in the home

were as oppressed as slaves in that they didn't have the rights that they should've. And it was just like, "Why? Why would you say that?"

With this statement, the teacher dismissed the violence and subsequent intergenerational trauma that White supremacy has, and still is causing African American people. Just like with Annette's coach, there was likely no mal-intent, yet this teacher caused Suzanna--and likely other Black students in the class--to want to "block it out of her memory" and leaving to ask the questions "why would you say that?" Suzanna asks a good question. Here was a White woman who, perhaps wanting to connect with her students by sharing her own struggle as a marginalized person, completely missed the mark. She failed to understand or at least to convey intersectionality and, instead of creating connection to her students of color, further alienated herself from them through her comment.

Another vivid example of erasure on the environmental level was described by a junior named Fatima, who identifies as a Black, female Eritrean-American. She explained how her White male history teacher went about teaching African history.

Fatima:

When we learned about Africa it was always Imperialism. Even the map in the text book ... the way it was shaded for Imperialism it would be "French colonies in the west, Italian in the east" and he was "Look at all these countries and how many they had." I was like "Can we get a map of Africa in a textbook that is labeled each country name? Come on." It was ... there was two pages ... I remember two pages front to back ... one page technically on East Africa and it was about Ethiopia and Eritrea and I was "that's me" so I was "Yeah, I'm excited!" ...and he was just "Oh we're going to skip that page" and I was like "Why?" Because he kept on going to the Renaissance or something.

Fatima is attuned to the erasure of her identity in the content of the textbook pages. Already, Whiteness and European history are centered in the curriculum through omitting African country names and focusing on imperialism rather than pre-colonial African history or history presented from the perspective of those who have authority on the matter of African history. To make matters worse, part of Fatima's identity as Eritrean, at last somewhat represented in the book, is then intentionally skipped over to make yet more space for European history. The teacher in this case glorified the violence of imperialism, and perpetuated it by telling Fatima that this part of her identity is not important, and that it can be co-opted by more White narratives. Like Suzanna's, a salient part of Fatima's identity was erased and displaced.

Individual color blindness. Rohan, a male Indian-American student shared a story of erasure on the individual level. Here, a baseball coach on the school baseball team consistently failed to see Rohan as an individual.

Rohan:

On the baseball team, there are two Indians on the team, me and my friend, we're in the same grade. He often times confuses our names when we do not look alike at all...It's just like, I don't think he would have done it to any White person. It kind of made us feel like to him, we all look the same like we're one person, we're not equal to other people on the team or something. ...He was categorizing people of the same ethnicity as like one person, there's no difference between them like he can call them whatever they want [*sic*].

The coach in this case failed to know Rohan and his friend as individuals and seemed to only see them as their ethnicity. This erased Rohan as a person and left him to exist only as an Indian boy, not as a complex human with a history, interests, personality, talents, etc. The hurt this caused is evident in Rohan's final despondent words "like he can call them whatever they

want,” indicating that the power of naming--and therefore to actualize existence--lies in the hands of the powerful, White male.

Teachers singling out/calling out difference Seventeen out of the 32 (53%) of the stories shared by participants contained themes of teachers singling out or calling out students for not fitting in the dominant culture. Sue et al. (2007) provide a description of this phenomenon, calling it “The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture area ideal” (p. 282). The following examples of being singled out also contain messages that told the participants that they were aliens in their own land, which is yet another type of racial microaggression, as Sue et al. (2007) point out.

Kim recounted two stories at two different schools, in which her teachers tokenized her in front of the class. The first of these stories took place at the beginning of the school year, where an Asian-American female teacher asked a few people of color in the class to explain their culture and experiences to the rest of the class. The teacher did not ask the White students in the class to do so.

Kim:

The teacher kind of singled out people, you know, to ask them about their culture or their experiences. I was very, very uncomfortable because she assumed that I was Chinese, which isn't a bad assumption. It's just that it's complicated for me because I'm adopted and my parents are different ethnicities, right?

In this scenario, Kim's teacher held power not because of Whiteness, but because of her age and status as an authority figure and teacher. In the teacher's decision to ask students to share their experiences, she may have attempted to give voice to students of color, or maybe she wanted to make known that she did not ascribe to a color blind narrative; however this attempt to

connect left Kim feeling othered and uncomfortable and even more disconnected. The teacher's assumption that Kim was Chinese instead of Korean carried even more weight since she was adopted, and like Rohan, caused a sense of erasure on the interpersonal level.

Kim also shared a story of a time in middle school in which her White English teacher decided to use Kim as an instructional aide while the class was reading a book authored by a Korean writer.

Kim:

And she had a whole, I think it was unnecessary, thing where she stopped the class and she was like, "Oh, my gosh. Your classmate is actually Korean." And she pulled up a bunch of things about Korea and like, "Can you point out like, oh, where were you born on this map? Do you know what this landmark is?" And things like that.

Just like with other examples, the teacher in this scenario was likely trying to connect to Kim but did so in a way that was microaggressive and offensive. She saw Kim as an expert on all things Korea and assumed that Kim would want to discuss a part of her identity in order to help White people to understand. While Kim was left to sit in the discomfort of being tokenized and othered, the White teacher and students around her were going to benefit from Kim's marginalization.

Yet another example of singling students out, and in this case also shaming students, was shared by Kandace, the young Black woman student who had also shared Yasmin's story. In this case, a White female math teacher called Kandace out in class and eventually disciplined her for her communication style. Kandace explained that her teacher had asked her privately on multiple occasions to come up to the front of the class to demonstrate a math problem on the board. Kandace, not feeling confident in math, refused each time until the teacher publicly shamed her:

Kandace:

She wanted me to go up to the board and do a question and it was something stupid, because I can't do math. And she said ... I told her no, I didn't want to do it. And she said, "Well maybe if you paid attention more, you'd know how to do it." And automatically I was like, "well maybe if you were a good teacher you would know how to teach and I would know how to do it." So then she got mad, and was like, "You need to go to buddy room" (discipline policy at this particular school).

In Kandace's story we see examples of pathologizing communication style, an assumption of criminality, and singling out students. Instead of demonstrating humanity and sensitivity to Kandace's insecurity about math, the teacher assumed that Kandace was being lazy and inattentive. The teacher escalated a situation that did not need to be an issue. She could have offered support, asked another student to help Kandace figure out the problem, or attuned to the fact that Kandace refused to demonstrate math in front of the class not because she was defiant, but because she was insecure.

Minimizing student concerns. A theme that emerged in 24 of 32 interviews, (47%), was that of teachers minimizing students and their concerns. In the words of Sue et al. (2007), this phenomenon arose in the context of "pathologizing cultural values and centering White culture as the ideal" (p. 276), as well as treating students of color as second-class citizen. Moments in which students or their concerns were minimized appeared in 14 out of 32 (44%) stories.

A few students who all had the same White, male history teacher, shared an account of an assignment that left several students' identities invisibilized and their concerns minimized. This teacher asked students to interview their family members about their past, stipulating that their stories had to be limited to time spent in the United States. For many students whose families

share an immigrant history, this meant that they were forced to write about struggle, strife, oppression, and loss of power, when what the students really wanted to talk about were stories of their families' successes and rich histories from their countries of origin. Amani, a female senior who identifies as Black Caribbean and Jamaican explained it this way:

The thing is, you have to relate the things back to American History. So you just set me up so I can't talk about what happened when my grandma was living in Jamaica and her life around that. I have to talk about slavery or her immigrating to America and how it turned into a sob story about how no one ever really achieves the American dream and stuff like that.

In discussing this same problem with this particular teacher, another female African American senior named Jackie shared the futility of trying to intervene:

Jackie:

So there was always push-back but it wasn't effective push-back. Nobody ever ... we would speak up and be "Yo, let's do this" even with the project everybody hated it was ... we can be compliant but he was "You're still going to do it, don't question my authority."

Here, Jackie recounts that she and her classmates were willing to show flexibility and compromise. The assignment was problematic in its conception because, in only talking about U.S. history, students were forced to concede their family history to stories of victimization and oppression. Students of color lost out on the opportunity to discuss stories of success, joy, and beauty. Despite hating this project, Jackie and other students offered suggestions of making it more accessible and meaningful for the students in the class whose families do not have positive histories in the United States. The teacher, exerting his dominance both as an authority figure and as a White male, insisted that students comply with his demands. The students in this class

whose identities were erased through environmental/curricular microaggressions were further ignored and overlooked during their attempt to reclaim the erased parts of their identities.

Another account of teachers minimizing students and their agency was presented by Margot, a female senior who identifies as Venezuelan and Native American. Margot was one of two students present in the day's class, since the rest of the students were on a field trip that day. Margot remembers the teacher dismissing her ideas and erasing her agency.

Margot:

The teacher told the kids in the classroom that, our opinions don't matter because we're not equals 'cause they're older than us and they have ... Apparently, because they have a degree they're superior to us. Yeah ... So, we got told we're not equal and our opinions aren't as important.

While most of the students in Margot's school present as White, the teacher in this scenario used her power as a White authority figure to minimize the voices and power of the students. This was particularly painful to Margot who identifies as Native American, because historically speaking the voices, opinions, and desires of Native American people has been relegated to be "unimportant" by the dominant cultural narrative. The teach

Internal responses to disrespect. Follow up questions around forgiving teachers for their aggressions revealed several common feelings that arose in the participants as a result of the disrespect they experienced. These responses differed from the external responses--i.e. what they did--in that they related to how the participants *felt*. The themes of these responses were coded in the following ways: feelings of sympathy towards the teachers and their behaviors; feelings of loneliness and disconnection; feelings of fear and vulnerability; and indignation towards teacher behavior. In order to stick with the theme of school connection, I categorized these themes into

responses of connection or disconnection. Sympathy towards teachers was coded as connective, and loneliness, fear, and indignation were coded as disconnective.

Internal responses of connection. Out of the 32 responses participants shared, 12 (38%) included feelings of sympathy and understanding towards teachers' behaviors, such as a desire to help teachers understand why what they did was disrespectful, protecting the teachers' feelings after understanding their motivations, and excusing the teacher's actions because the teacher needed to maintain control over the classroom. On four occasions, for example students shared a sentiment similar to Annette's: "I think that maybe she didn't mean to...", implying that the intent was not to do harm and that it therefore could be forgiven. Amy, in sharing a story about a teacher shutting down a student's concern in class shared that the teacher "probably... wanted to keep control over the conversation." A similar sentiment was shared by six other participants.

Internal responses of disconnection. More frequent than moments of connection were responses of disconnection. Twenty-nine of the 32 responses (91%) of responses featured at least one internal response that indicated that students disconnected or disengaged from their teachers in some way. The types of disconnections that were shared were: feeling unaware and unsure what to do, feeling alone, feeling like the disrespect was "not a big enough deal," feeling that the classroom atmosphere was really uncomfortable, feeling misunderstood or not believed, and feeling confused in the moment. More visceral emotional responses were feeling "creeped out," and feeling scared. The more indignant responses shared by students were feelings that teachers were implicitly condoning peer disrespect, and that teachers have a responsibility to be good role models.

Kim's internal response to her teacher singling her out and asking her to share her culture was: "I feel like I kind of let it slide in that way and hope she didn't do it again." This type of

response speaks to a sense of lack of agency and a sense of fear and resignation about teachers. Instead of supporting Kim's development, her teacher forced Kim to put up barriers and walls to protect herself from further harm.

Kandace, feeling a righteous sense of anger described the unprofessional nature in which some teachers present themselves: "Our teacher was arguing with another student. Like, you're a grown adult arguing with a teenager and you can't even handle the situation." Kandace is implying here that adults, and particularly *grown* adults need to be trusted not to get into power struggles with students, to remain professionals who are in charge and able to contain difficult situations with grace.

Speaking to a sense of betrayal in the teacher's job as a role model, Mason, a Black male senior expressed: "you can't excuse racism in any kind of way. And I think especially when you are in an authoritative position." In this situation, the teacher had told Mason that the racial tension that existed between him and the rest of the entirely White class, rested within him, and not the other students. She suggested that Mason join a Capoeira class to learn about his ethnicity. To Mason, the first injustice lived in the teacher's statement, and the second injustice in the fact that she was a teacher. Participants and especially Mason demonstrated that they hold a certain set of expectations for how teachers should act. This includes maintaining dignity and humility while also being an authority figure. The participants sampled understand power and often inherently respect that the power teachers hold is accompanied with the responsibility to yield this power fairly.

Some participants felt that the power held by their teachers was not only held irresponsibly, but also presented them with fear-inducing threat. When asked why he did not retaliate against his coach repeatedly calling him by his friend's name, Rohan simply described

his coach as “a scary man” without further elaborating what he was scared about happening. In describing a situation in which a male teacher complimented a student on her leggings, a White female participant expressed feeling “creeped out” and stating not wanting to “deal with all that” because it felt uncomfortable, implying that speaking up would create more harm than good. These stories point to an image of teachers as unsafe, unapproachable, and hostile. To these students, asserting their needs and desires for equity and fairness was seen as a threat to their wellbeing. The danger here lies in the fact that some students might internalize these messages of helplessness and develop a sense of futility and lack of agency that follows them into adulthood.

External responses to disrespect. Following the account of the disrespectful incident, participants were asked what they or others did in response to the disrespect they received. I coded the participant’s responses with four themes: seeking outside support, addressing concerns in the moment, active retaliation, and disengagement from teacher or school environment. As with the internal responses to disrespect, I categorized these four themes into two larger categories of connection and disconnection, with seeking support and addressing situations in the moment as forms of connection, and active retaliation and disengagement as forms of disconnection.

External responses of connection. Out of 32 responses, 21 participants (65%) shared at least one external response that indicated that they were attempting to reconnect to their teachers on some level. This includes stories like Fatima’s, in which she tries to productively challenge her teacher in changing his curriculum choice of skipping over East Africa. Similarly was Jackie’s attempt at asking the teacher to adapt his project to fit the needs of students who had immigrant backgrounds. These were attempts of trying to connect with teachers by speaking up for themselves, but the response these students faced typically resulted in further disconnection

because teachers remained inflexible in their stances or even went as far as disciplining them for their “challenging of authority.”

In one singular experience, Courtney, a Black female student shared that after spending an entire class period addressing and resolving the disrespectful incident, she found some resolution. In this scenario, a middle-aged White male teacher told Courtney to change her body posture and sit more “ladylike.” The two engaged in a heated argument about sexism and men trying to control women’s bodies that lasted the entire class period. In reflecting about this, Courtney said: “I know that I definitely changed something in the way that he thinks about how girls can behave in his class. I’m still cool with him.” This was the only incident in which a moment of disrespect was actually resolved and it seemed to only have happened because Courtney had a pre-existing positive relationship with this teacher and because she possessed the knowledge, courage, and vitriol to continue to challenge him. In her statement “I’m still cool with him,” she acknowledges the mutual respect that Courtney and her teacher have for each other, which enabled the two to have a relationship that could withstand serious strain.

Another form of engaging and seeking connection was present in the accounts of students who sought emotional support from peers and other adults on campus. In 19 out of the 32 stories (59%), students used peers or adults to help regulate their emotional responses and to process the precipitating events. These students had enough of a connection to their peers or adults to feel safe to vent their frustrations instead of disengaging.

External responses of disconnection, In response to disrespect, participants also shared stories in which they distanced or fully disconnected themselves from their teachers, peers or schools. As opposed to the 65% of stories that included stories of connections, 26 out of 32 (81%) of narratives included stories of disconnection.

As a result of being tokenized as the Korean expert in her English class, Kim remembers: “That was the instance that made me stop willingly participating in class.” Instead of being offered the opportunity to actively learn from and engage with her teachers and peers, Kim understood that the only way out of this situation was to proverbially disappear into the background. In response to her teacher refusing to change the divisive history assignment that was biased towards White students, Carina, a Filipino/Spanish female senior who was in the same class with Jackie and Amani said: “I just hated the teacher for the rest of the year.” Attempts to engage this teacher failed and students gave up on trying to connect with him. In yet another account of disrespect shared by Kandace, she explained her response to a math aide who would help Kandace’s friend in math, but not her. Kandace disengaged from him after a while, saying “I stopped listening to him because I figured out that he wasn't helping me.” Neither Carina nor Kandace found any value in holding their teachers in high regard or to try to re-engage them on any level.

Seven accounts (23%) featured messages of futility: reporting the incident felt unnecessary because it happened so often that a report would not change anything. This points to more helplessness, despondency and complete loss of trust in the school’s support for the students.

There are also several examples of participants actively retaliating against their teachers. The interview data revealed seven examples of active retaliation ranging from a Voodoo hex cast on a teacher, to revenging themselves by being successful. Annette who was underestimated by her badminton coach, for example, explained: “Me and my friend always practice (*sic*) hard, like in front of her. Then we listen (*sic*) to any advice they give (*sic*) us and then we won all the matches..yeah...like we don’t want to seem weak, we aren’t.” Here, Annette’s statement of “we

don't want to seem weak" could refer to two motivations. She might not want to seem like a weak badminton player, and she might not want to seem like a person who would give up trying because of one disrespectful experience from a coach. Mason, who was scapegoated by his teacher for causing racial discord in his class remembered: "I switched schools to a Gymnasium (higher level school in Germany). I think this was my stab in the back for the teacher, now doing my Abitur (college entrance exams)." In both of these examples, Annette and Mason shared retaliations in the form of succeeding; in line with the adage *success is the sweetest revenge*.

Quantitative Analysis

Due to the limitations we experienced in the data collection, not all participants were able to fill out surveys in time of this project's timeline. I was able to examine in greater detail the responses of the nine participants who completed the school climate survey along with their interview. The two elements of the WHITS assessment of importance to me were the teacher support and school connectedness. I call the combined scores of these two elements "school/teacher connectedness" or simply "connectedness" from here on out. The elements are measured using a 1 (almost never) - 5 (almost always) Likert scale. I added the scores of each element and then combined the two element scores and ascribed this total to each survey participant. When sorting the scores in ascending order, the scores distribute as follows: 33, 43, 45, 47, 53, 55, 55, 60, 67 out of a total score of 75. The mean and median were approximately the same (50.3 and 53 respectively) allowing me to separate the group fairly neatly into two groups, those with low (below 52) school/teacher connectedness scores and those with high (above 52) school/teacher connectedness scores. Five participants ranked in the high connectedness groups, and four participants ranked in the low connectedness groups.

At first glance, it was interesting to note that the five students in the high connectedness group shared a total of 6 experiences, while the four students in the low connectedness group shared a total of 12 stories of disrespect. This is not surprising as it can be assumed that those students who experience disrespect at a higher rate are likely less connected to their schools and teachers than those who do not experience as much disrespect.

The qualitative data provided further insight into the connection between school climate, the type of disrespect students experienced, and how they responded both internally and externally to these forms of disrespect. One participant did not have any stories of disrespect to share with the researcher. This was significant and therefore his (lack of) response was included in the analysis of the frequency and type of disrespect experienced. However, since there was no disrespect to which to respond, his answers were excluded in the analysis of responses to disrespect. The reader might therefore notice that in the following section, I used all seven responses from participants, while in the subsequent sections on responses I only used six responses from participants.

School climate and type of disrespect. Students in the high connectedness group expressed overall lower rates of microaggressions from their teachers than students in the low connectedness group. To break this down further, five out of seven (71%) accounts included examples of stereotyping, four out of seven (57%) included accounts of color blindness, three out of seven (43%) accounts included examples of singling out/calling out difference, and two of the seven (29%) accounts included examples of minimizing student concerns.

In contrast, accounts of students who experience low school/teacher connectedness all (100%) included examples of stereotyping. Captured within these accounts of stereotyping are stories in which students encountered unfair disrespect as a result of stereotyping. None of the

stories of disrespect in the high connectedness group indicated unfair discipline practices whereas 8 out of 12 (66%) of stories in the low connectedness group indicated unfair discipline practices. Further, 8 out of 12 (66%) accounts included accounts of color blindness, 7 out of 12 (58%) included accounts of calling out differences, and 8 out of 12 (66%) accounts included examples of minimizing student concerns. These findings are summarized in Table 1. Notable is how few of the experiences shared by students in the high connectedness group included examples of minimizing student concerns. Students with low school connectedness reported incidents of teachers minimizing student concerns at more than twice the rate of students in the high school connectedness group.

Table 1
Teacher Support/School Connectedness and Types of Microaggressions Students Experience

Type of Microaggression	High Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %	Low Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %
Stereotyping	71	100
<i>Unfair discipline</i>	0	66
Color Blindness	57	66
Calling out differences	43	58
Minimizing student concerns	29	66

Connectedness and internal responses. An interesting phenomenon occurred when comparing the internal and external responses students had to disrespect by their teachers. In the high connectedness group, five out of six (83%) narratives included responses of connection. Stories that included responses of disconnection in this group were represented at the same rate. In the group of low connectedness, 9 of the 12 (75%) responses included internal responses of

connection. Notable, is that 100% of the students in the low connectedness group responded internally by further disengaging. Students who felt low connectedness to their schools and teachers also had lower levels of feeling connected than their high connectedness peers. This is also not surprising as it would be expected that students who already feel disconnected to their schools would not change their feelings as a response to further disrespect. These findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Teacher Support/School Connectedness and Internal Responses to Microaggressions

Internal Responses	High Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %	Low Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %
Connection	83	75
Disconnection	83	100

Connectedness and external responses. Six out of six (100%) of the accounts by students in the high connectedness group demonstrated an attempt to connect to their teachers or schools following the disrespect. In contrast, only 8 out of 12 (67%) of the accounts shared by students in the low connectedness group demonstrated the same external reaction. This indicates that students who experience high connectedness to their schools have more capacity or willingness to attempt to maintain their connection to their schools or teachers. Somewhat surprising were the findings around disconnection. Narratives of students with high connectedness scores also included slightly higher disconnection rates than their low connected counterparts. In the high connectedness group, five out of six (83%) narratives included stories of disconnection. In the low connectedness group, 9 out of 12 (75%) included stories of

disconnection. This might indicate that disrespectful experiences in the high connectedness group are experienced as more severe and less common place and therefore receive greater negative and disconnecting external responses. These findings are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Teacher Support/School Connectedness and External Responses to Microaggressions

External Responses	High Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %	Low Teacher Support/ School Connectedness Responses in %
Connection	100	67
Disconnection	83	75

Summary

These data illuminate both the wide-ranging experiences and various degrees of microaggressions students in high school contend with, as well as the commonalities seen in those experiences, across the United States and even reaching as far as Germany. It appears that school climate, despite never having been connected to race-based microaggressions in high schoolers, is indeed in some way linked with the feelings and emotions associated with the experienced microaggressions. As Critical Race Theory suggests, schools do not live outside the realm of oppression and students are not immune from daily challenges of microaggressions, invalidations, insults and even sexual assault. Prior research has so far failed to illuminate how teachers can often be the perpetrators of these microaggressions, nor have researchers attempted to establish a link between the experiences of these microaggressions, and how connected students feels to their teachers and schools. The following chapter will further discuss these results, their limitations, and their implications for the field of social work and educational equity.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

The importance of school climate research has been stressed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2009), the U.S. Department of Education (2015) and a growing number of State Departments (Thapa et al., 2013). School climate researchers have found that school climate has significant effects on students' academic achievement and social-emotional well-being (Benner & Graham, 2011; Eliot et al., 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; Toleson, 2014). Although school climate researchers do not fully agree on which dimensions of a school's environment are encapsulated in school climate, all agree that school connectedness is a significant part of a school's climate. More so, there is research consensus that school connectedness can serve as a protective factor for students with marginalized identities such as LGBTQ students and students of color (CDC 2009; Eliot et al., 2010; Kosciw et al., 2012; McLaren et al., 2015; Murdock and Bolch, 2005; Toleson, 2014). Yet, very little research exists on the experiences of students of color at the high school level and even less research focuses especially on the experiences of microaggressions experienced by high school students from their teachers.

The link between school climate and experiences of microaggression in K-12 students has not been represented in research literature prior to this study. The present study attempts to shed some light onto the accounts of disrespect and microaggressions from the perspective of high school students and connects these accounts to school climate by focusing on three research questions: 1) What kind of microaggressions do students experience from teachers?, (2) is school

connectedness related to the type and frequency of microaggressions experienced by students? and (3), is school connectedness related to the responses to microaggressions experienced by students?

In this chapter I will first discuss the findings in response to these two research questions and connect them back to the literature reviewed in the second chapter. I will present the responses to the research questions in two parts: the frequency and types of microaggressions experienced, followed by internal and external responses to the microaggressions. Following this discussion, I will highlight the limitations presented in this research, share the implications these findings have on the fields of education, and school social work, and make suggestions for areas of future research.

What Kind of Microaggressions do Students experience from Teachers?

The findings of my study add to the growing research that look at discriminatory practices of school teachers towards their students and supports this finding. Suárez-Orozco and colleagues (2015) found that in college settings, the instructors enacted microaggressions towards their students more frequently than students did towards each other. In the present study as well, all but one of the sampled high schoolers and recent graduates were able to provide examples of teachers enacting microaggressions on them or other students. Students experienced the following types of microaggressions: teachers stereotyping, teachers making students feel erased and adopting color blind narratives, teachers singling out students and calling out differences and teachers minimizing student concerns. This indicates that teachers and professors alike have a responsibility to educate themselves on microaggressions and reflect on their implicit biases.

Is School Connectedness Related to the Type and Frequency of Microaggressions Experienced by Students?

Following Wilson's (2004) findings that indicate that school connectedness is a better predictor of aggression and victimization than school climate as a whole, I used school connectedness measures and teacher support measures to organize students into high and low levels of school connectedness. Despite only being asked to share one example, several students who were interviewed shared multiple accounts of disrespect by their teachers.

Based on these findings, it appears that there is in fact a relationship between school connectedness and the frequency of microaggressions experienced by high schoolers. Students who feel more connected to their schools report fewer microaggressions from teachers than students who feel less connected to their school. This result aligns with Voight and colleagues' (2015) findings, which posit that ethnic minority students experience low levels of school connectedness, as well as with Stone & Han's (2005) findings that Mexican-American students perceived school climate as a relevant factor in predicting experiences of discrimination. Assessing these data through a lens of intersectionality as outlined by Critical Race Theory, further strengthens these findings. Students who hold multiple marginalized identities because of their ethnicity, race and gender are likely to experience more microaggressions than students who hold privileged identities.

My findings do not indicate causality and the question remains: do students feel less connected to their schools because they experience more microaggressions, or do students report more microaggressions because they feel less connected to their schools? This is potentially a cyclical phenomenon, in which students experiencing disconnection as a result of microaggressions, and also report more microaggressions due to their disconnection.

No relevant literature exists on the different types of microaggressions students experience as they relate to their levels of school connectedness. Due to the small size of my sample I hesitate to make sweeping conclusions, but I do want to point to three interesting findings: a) All of the narratives in the low connectedness group shared stories that demonstrated a form of stereotyping as opposed to 71% of the stories in the high connectedness group, b) 66% of the narratives in the low connectedness group shared stories that demonstrated a form of teacher minimizing student concerns, whereas only 29% of the stories in the high connectedness shared this characteristic; and c) within the stereotyping category, none of the stories in the high connectedness group included narratives of teachers enacting unfair discipline, while 66% of the narratives in the low connectedness group indicated that unfair discipline was a part of the problematic interaction.

This research tells us that students who feel disconnected from school are more likely to also experience stereotyping and minimization from their teachers and that stereotyping especially is connected to unfair disciplining. Previous research indicates that disproportionate discipline policies are a function of bias against students of color, especially for Black male students (Skiba et al., 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). My findings would suggest that students who are disproportionately and unfairly disciplined also experience lower levels of school connection. In this sense, school connection is a privilege relegated to be held by White students who would be unlikely to experience stereotyping. Further, stereotyping, minimizing, and unfair discipline often occurred all within the same story, highlighting that a teacher's implicit bias is likely the root of minimizing concerns and unfair discipline practices. In fact, in several accounts unfair discipline occurred as a result of students speaking up but being

minimized by their teachers. This speaks to the need for teachers to practice attentive and compassionate listening before assuming that students are being defiant.

Is School Connectedness Related to the Responses to Microaggressions Experienced by Students?

Internal responses to disrespect. The present study assessed students' internal responses to experiences of disrespect and categorized them into responses of connection or disconnection. Existing literature on this topic does not compare experiences of disrespect, school connectedness and internal responses; however, several studies have found that microaggressions have negative impact on school engagement (Chavous et al., 2008), and that experiences of discrimination predict lower self-esteem and more depressive symptoms, distress, and physical complaints in Latin American and Asian American students (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010).

In my research I found that most students in both the high and the low connectedness groups experience a sense of disconnection as a result of a teacher disrespect. Students who feel disconnected from their schools are slightly more likely to have internal responses that further disconnect them, than to have internal responses that attempt to rebuild connections. This implies that poor school connection can start a vicious cycle of disconnection, experiencing disrespect, and further disconnecting. While I did not code responses for signs of depression or distress, disconnection can be understood as an early stage of isolation, with depression not far behind. Add to this a disinclination to attempt to reconnect after a disrespectful incident, and students who experience low levels of school connectedness without intervention are ever more likely to remain increasingly disengaged. This suggestion is supported by research such as Millings,

Buck, Montgomery, Spears & Stallard (2012) who found that school connectedness, peer attachment, and self-esteem are predictors of adolescent depression.

External responses to disrespect. Very little literature exists on school climate and students' external responses to disrespect. Eliot et al., (2010) did find that school climate increases students' willingness to report and seek help to experiences of bullying. This is corroborated by Aldridge & Ala'I (2013), who found that reporting and help-seeking are functions of school climate. I found in my analysis that students who felt more connected to their schools all shared attempts to reconnect to their teachers after a disrespectful event, inviting the possibility for repair. Connection in the form of reporting and help-seeking were slightly less frequent in experiences shared by students in the low connectedness group, but because of the mixed-method nature of this study I could not ascertain whether or not they were statistically significant. Although further research in this area is needed, school connectedness may be a protective factor in how students handle disrespect and microaggressions from teachers.

I also found that students who did not feel connected to their schools were less likely to re-engage with their teachers, at times actively avoiding participating in class. Disengagement was a common theme among low connected students. Henry et al., (2012) found that school disconnection is linked to absenteeism, delinquency and higher levels of drug use in adolescents. My findings about the external responses to disrespect do not directly align with these findings, but do so tangentially. Absenteeism is the ultimate form of disengaging and might be in the participants' futures if no other protective factors or interventions are put in place.

Limitations and Strengths

This project used the voices of minors to capture narratives that spoke to their lived experiences. It was important to the researchers in this team to reflect the students' voices

directly rather than making assumptions based on prior research at the college level. While this provided us rich and enlightening information, we had to proceed with caution and sensitivity in order to work with this vulnerable population. This also led to the rather small sample size of this study. Instead of providing broad strokes of insight, I was able to connect to the students' narratives more deeply in order to make meaning out of their stories.

In organizing the various narratives, I ran into difficulty accurately portraying the level of school connectedness of each person and connecting it with their narratives. Despite only being asked about one account of teacher disrespect, several students shared multiple stories. Their voices carried more weight when calculating how frequently examples of microaggressions and responses to them occurred. Despite the fact that the researchers in this study used semi-structured interviews, when a participant shared multiple stories, some researchers did not ask all of the follow-up questions to these stories, somewhat limiting the reliability of the response findings. Nonetheless, the fact that students were able to freely share as many accounts of microaggressions as they desired provided the research team with a rich account of the various types of microaggressions students have to cope with, as well as a chance for students to feel heard by adults and to potentially relieve some of the accompanying stress.

In this research, we asked participants to share accounts of disrespect although we were ultimately focusing in on experiences of microaggressions. We decided to change the language from microaggressions to disrespect for multiple reasons. The data collection was preceded by pilot studies and focus groups with high schoolers, which revealed that the word microaggressions is not accessible to most high schoolers. Further, we were interested in interviewing both students of color as well as White students and to then compare their experiences of teachers. White students, who are less likely to be recipients of microaggressions

on account of their social identity, would be even less likely to connect to the language of microaggressions than their peers of color. By using the word “disrespect” instead of “microaggressions,” we strengthened internal validity before proceeding with the large-scale research.

Another limitation to this study is the approach of snowball sampling used to recruit students. Students who wanted to participate in this study likely already had stories of disrespect in mind before coming to the interview. Students without concrete stories of disrespect from a teacher were possibly less likely to want to sign up. Further, because of this sampling technique, several students who had the same teacher shared the same disrespect narrative as their peers, though steps were taken to glean other narratives from participants that did not overlap in this way.

My own bias in analyzing and coding the stories of microaggressions from teachers could not be excluded. I identify as a White, cis woman and I have spent four years working as a middle school teacher in a racially and socioeconomically diverse school. My own awareness of having been the perpetrator of microaggressions in the classroom is in part what inspired me to take on this project, and I am aware that I am not as well versed in picking up the subtleties in accounts of microaggressions or responses to them as a person of color with this lived experience might be. Further, all of the graduate-level researchers on this team identify as White women, which meant that subtle slights or microaggressive interactions could have flavored their interviews and that the researchers’ social identities might have inhibited some of the participants from frankly and openly sharing their experiences.

In order to prevent microaggressions from occurring, researchers stuck closely to the text of the semi-structured interviews and maintained a stance of bearing witness and holding space

for the participants rather than evaluating their stories. To further increase the reliability of my conclusions about these experiences of disrespect, I worked with a fellow researcher in coding each of the participants' narratives. This strengthened the reliability of these findings.

Implications

School is compulsory for all young people in the United States and education is a major determinant of upward mobility. Inequities in the educational sector have long-lasting and serious effects on the social status and well-being of whole generations of people. Because every American resident is ostensibly afforded the same right to an equitable education, efforts must be made to counteract the social forces of oppression that exist in every domain of social life in the United States and beyond. White supremacy has a way of insidiously inhabiting space in all people unless intentional and effective strategies are deployed to make space for anti-oppressive interactions. This research has demonstrated overwhelmingly that teachers, despite their good intentions of wanting to support children in their development, can cause significant harm in students' identity formation, their academic achievement, emotional states, sense of connection to school, and subsequent behaviors. This harm is most often not a result of overt discrimination, rather the result of deep-seated unconscious biases and learned mannerisms manifested in subtle slights and insults that reinforce the current power system that has upheld itself and benefited from the oppression of marginalized populations since the founding of this nation.

School climate seems to serve as a protection against the harms caused by these unconscious biases. Besides doing the work around looking deeply into their own implicit biases, I invite teachers, coaches, and future educators to develop practices that would allow students to feel more connected to their schools and to feel more supported by their teachers. Teachers should take care to know their students, at the very least being able to remember and pronounce

their names correctly, but further getting to know students for their out of school lives and interests. Educators ought to create an environment in which each student can feel represented and seen, in which their identity is not merely glossed over but mirrored in the curriculum--without having the students speak for their own race/ethnicity/nationality etc.

It is imperative that teachers work to intentionally value their students and care for them on an individual level. Adults at school should recognize that they hold power and can demand respect, but that respect works both ways and that students expect and deserve equal amounts of respect from adults. This means listening to students' concerns rather than acting defensively, asserting power when necessary and not insisting on holding authority all the time. This work requires time, flexibility, self-reflection, and a certain level of comfort with content delivery. However, I cannot stress enough the importance that teachers' attitudes can have on the lives of students.

Particularly concerning are the findings that support the existing research that school discipline practices have always favored White identified students and further marginalized students of color. The rationalities informing these disproportionate discipline practices are still deployed in this day and age, and reinforce a system in which law enforcement and the criminal justice system are used to kill people of color, violently rip apart families, enslave Black men in the bail system and prison-industrial complex, and maintain the status quo of White supremacy. In deploying punitive discipline systems, schools are merely mirroring the stream of injustices taking place in greater society. I suggest that systemic changes that stand in the way of this stream need to be enacted in order to provide real and substantial equity in the education system.

Instead of punitive justice systems, which uphold the school to prison pipeline, I suggest that schools invest time and resources in establishing themselves as restorative justice schools.

Restorative justice is not a program to be used alongside traditional punitive measures, rather it demands a thorough cultural shift in all domains of the school. Educational institutions should be a place for all students to feel welcome, seen as a whole individuals who are valuable, and worthy of respect. This research indicates that for many students, their schools' climates do not reflect these principles and are therefore not safe learning environments.

School social workers are in a unique position to enact change in schools. By building solid relationships with administration, teachers, and students alike, school social workers can influence the beliefs and narratives that adults in schools hold of their students. Social workers can use data on their school's discipline practices, school climate reports, and academic achievement markers to inform teachers and administrators of the ways in which their practices maintain the oppressive status quo of other institutions in this country.

Social workers also hold a responsibility to be advocates for the students with whom they interact by listening to their narratives, maintaining a race-conscious and culturally humble stance, and engaging adult staff on campus in conversations about school climate, teacher support, school connectedness, and race and oppression. Along side teachers, a school social worker can be another person that connects students and families to their schools and thus carries the responsibility to be present and bear witness to their stories, to believe students, and make their voices matter.

In answering the question "what would you like your teacher to know about disrespect and respect?" participants of this study provided insight that educators might find useful. Students want their teachers to show humanity, professionalism, and fairness. Students want their teachers to know that respect works both ways, and those teachers who demand respect from their students are also expected to demonstrate respect to them in return. Students want

their teachers to demonstrate empathy and to care about students as full humans, understanding that they have lives outside of school and basic needs that need to be fulfilled before a youth can show up as an active student. Students want their teachers to be professionals, who can hold boundaries and do not get sucked into power struggles with students, and appropriately manage disrespect amongst peers so that students can feel safe within these boundaries. Students want their teachers to be fair, to understand the power structures that maintain the systems of oppression, and to actively counteract them by building positive relationships with students, showing up as humans who make mistakes, own them and apologize for them. Students want teachers who can be relied upon as role models and who demonstrate fairness and flexibility.

Future Research

The scope of this research was limited in its sample size. Future research on the topic of experiences of microaggressions in high schoolers and school climate could benefit from larger sample sizes, as well as larger time constraint. I would be interested in seeing longitudinal studies that sample a group of high school freshmen and follow them throughout their high school years to see how school connectedness levels varied and how experiences of microaggressions played into their development.

The research field could also benefit from studies that compare experiences of microaggressions in students from ethnically diverse and monoethnic schools to see what the impacts of environmental and peer pressure might be. The data in this study could also be reanalyzed to look for the protective effects that peer connectedness might have on school connectedness and experiences of microaggressions.

Conclusion

Adults in school hold responsibilities to not only provide academic content to students, but also to deliver content in a way that is equitable and connective to students of all backgrounds. This requires adults at school to show up as empathetic and caring humans who understand the forces of oppression that contribute to inequality in students' academic outcomes. High school students experience microaggressions from teachers. Teachers might not harbor any ill intentions against their students and think that they are acting out of a neutral stance but their actions (and inaction) can have significant outcomes in the lives of students.

This research challenges the belief that educators are able to remain neutral or outside the forces of oppression, and highlights the need for teachers and other school adults to check in with their implicit biases, and ask themselves in which ways their daily practices either implicitly reify the White supremacist narrative, or challenge it in a way that is anti-oppressive and supportive of marginalized students. Further, this research highlights the need for educators to intentionally create positive relationships and connections to their students. School connectedness and teacher support aides students in multiple dimensions of their school experience. I hope that educators see themselves in this study just like I saw myself in the students' narratives, and that readers feel inspired to act in ways that truly connect, rather than blindly carry on with the traditional methods that continue to cause division.

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Appendix A: HSR and IRB Approval and Continuation Forms



NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

TO: SHANNON AUDLEY-PIOTROWSKI
FROM: PHILIP PEAKE, CHAIR, INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, SMITH COLLEGE
SUBJECT: HUMAN SUBJECTS PROPOSAL
DATE: MAY 29, 2015

PROPOSAL TITLE: RESPECT INTERVIEWS WITH URBAN YOUTH AND TEACHERS
REVIEW TYPE: FULL REVIEW
PROJECT NUMBER: 1415-131
APPROVAL DATE: 5-21-15

The Institutional Review Board at Smith College has reviewed and approved the research protocol referenced above. **Please note the following requirements:**

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), you must submit these changes to the IRB by filling out and submitting a Change of Protocol form.

Adverse Event Reporting/Deviations from Approved Procedures: Should any adverse events occur during the conduct of your research, you should report them immediately to the chair of the IRB. Additionally, any procedural deviations from your approved proposal must be reported. Explanations of these events and related forms can be found on the IRB website.

Completion: When you have completed your study (i.e. data collection is finished), you are required to inform the IRB by submitting a signed Research Project Continuation Form with appropriate box checked.

Additional Requirements: None.

Be sure to use the project number provided above in all subsequent correspondence to the Institutional Review Board at Smith College. Please contact me at 413-585-3914 or ppeake@smith.edu if you have any questions.

For Committee Use Only:
Any and all requirements completed, final approval given:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. K. Peake'.

Philip K. Peake, PhD
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix A: HSR and IRB Approval and Continuation Forms



NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL FOR CHANGE OF PROTOCOL

TO: SHANNON AUDLEY
FROM: NNAMDI POLE, CHAIR, INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, SMITH COLLEGE
SUBJECT: HUMAN SUBJECTS PROPOSAL
DATE: JULY 21, 2016

PROPOSAL TITLE: RESPECT INTERVIEWS WITH URBAN YOUTH AND TEACHERS
REVIEW TYPE: FULL
PROJECT NUMBER: 1415-131
APPROVAL DATE: 21-JUL-2016 **ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:** 21-MAY-2015

The Institutional Review Board at Smith College has reviewed and approved the research protocol referenced above. **Please note the following requirements:**

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), you must submit these changes to the IRB by filling out and submitting a Change of Protocol form.

Adverse Event Reporting/Deviations from Approved Procedures: Should any adverse events occur during the conduct of your research, you should report them immediately to the chair of the IRB. Additionally, any procedural deviations from your approved proposal must be reported. Explanations of these events and related forms can be found on the IRB website.

Renewal: You must promptly return annual Research Project Continuation Forms sent by the IRB in order to continue to be authorized to conduct research.

Completion: When you have completed your study (i.e. data collection is finished), you are required inform the IRB by submitting a signed Research Project Continuation Form with appropriate box checked.

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form. If signed consent is to be collected, as noted in your proposal, you must retain signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity.

Additional Requirements: None.

Be sure to use the project number provided above in all subsequent correspondence to the Institutional Review Board at Smith College. Please contact me at 413-585-3914 or ppeake@smith.edu, if you have any questions.

For Committee Use Only:
Any and all requirements completed, final approval given:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nnamdi Pole', written over a horizontal line.

Nnamdi Pole, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix A: HSR and IRB Approval and Continuation Forms



NOTICE OF IRB CONTINGENT APPROVAL – CHANGE OF PROTOCOL

TO: SHANNON AUDLEY
FROM: NNAMDI POLE, CHAIR, INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, SMITH COLLEGE
SUBJECT: HUMAN SUBJECTS PROPOSAL
DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2017

PROPOSAL TITLE: RESPECT INTERVIEWS WITH URBAN YOUTH AND TEACHERS
REVIEW TYPE: CHANGE OF PROTOCOL - EXPEDITED
DATE OF CONTINGENT APPROVAL: 21-FEB-2017
ORIGINAL REVIEW: FULL REVIEW AND APPROVAL ON 21-JUL-2016

Dear Shannon Audley,

The Smith Institutional Review Board has reviewed your Change of Protocol proposal and decided to approve it **contingent upon the following revisions:**

- This approval is contingent upon you obtaining signed letters from the after school programs and submitting them to the IRB. That is, you may begin collecting data from a specific site once the IRB is in possession of signed letters indicating that the specific after school program is aware of your procedures and supportive of you recruiting students from their site and conducting your study there.
- Please remove the following from the signature prompt of the parental consent document: "Please which part of the research study you consent to have your child participate in."

Please note: This is for the amended Change of Protocol request that was submitted on February 16, 2017. A full review of the Change of Protocol request that was submitted on February 2, 2017 will be conducted on March 2, 2017.

- We reserve the right to reconsider elements of this approval once the full board has had a chance to consider the larger project and the new elements that you are proposing to carry out. In other words, we may ask for changes in procedures that are currently approved based on feedback from the full board.

Again, approval of this proposal is contingent upon the request above. Once requested revisions are made, we will review your documents, and you will be contacted for clarification and/or confirmation of approval.

We are available to discuss any aspect of this response and to assist with your revised proposal. Feel free to contact me at npole@smith.edu, or the IRB office at irb@smith.edu, or 413-585-3562.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nnamdi Pole'.

Nnamdi Pole, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix A: HSR and IRB Approval and Continuation Forms



NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

TO: SHANNON AUDLEY
FROM: NNAMDI POLE, CHAIR, INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, SMITH COLLEGE
SUBJECT: HUMAN SUBJECTS PROPOSAL
DATE: MARCH 10, 2017

PROPOSAL TITLE: THE RETROSPECTIVE EXPLORATION OF (DIS)RESPECT AND SUBTLE RACISM IN US HIGH SCHOOLS
REVIEW TYPE: EXPEDITED
PROJECT NUMBER: 1617-047
APPROVAL DATE: 8-MAR-2017

The Institutional Review Board at Smith College has reviewed and approved the research protocol referenced above. **Please note the following requirements:**

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), you must submit these changes to the IRB by filling out and submitting a Change of Protocol form.

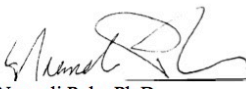
Adverse Event Reporting/Deviations from Approved Procedures: Should any adverse events occur during the conduct of your research, you should report them immediately to the chair of the IRB. Additionally, any procedural deviations from your approved proposal must be reported. Explanations of these events and related forms can be found on the IRB website.

Completion: When you have completed your study (i.e. data collection is finished), you are required to inform the IRB by submitting a signed Research Project Continuation Form with appropriate box checked.

Additional Requirements: None.

Be sure to use the project number provided above in all subsequent correspondence to the Institutional Review Board at Smith College. Please contact the IRB office at 413-585-3562 or irb@smith.edu if you have any questions.

For Committee Use Only:
Any and all requirements completed, final approval given:


Nnamdi Pole, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix A: HSR Waiver



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

October 27, 2016

Laura Wesely

Dear Laura:

The Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee approves your request for exemption from Smith School for Social Work HSR Committee review based on your study's use of secondary data. This researcher's study was approved by the Smith College Internal Review Board. We wish you the best with your research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Shannon Audley, Research Advisor

Appendix B – Recruitment Flyer

THIS RESEARCH HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY SMITH COLLEGE SSW IRB

**SEEKING STUDENTS
TO SHARE THEIR
STORIES OF
DISRESPECT
AT SCHOOL**

BE PART OF RESEARCH THAT COULD
MAKE SCHOOLS BETTER FOR STUDENTS

YOU MUST BE IN
MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOL
TO PARTICIPATE IN A 20-30 MIN.
INTERVIEW

EARN A \$5 GIFTCARD TO AMAZON FOR
YOUR TIME.

Appendix B – Recruitment Email

Subject: Looking to recruit teens: Uplifting youth voices - Thesis project

Hi,

My name is Laura Wesely. I'm an Oakland resident and graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work. I am currently working on a thesis project centering the voices of youths. In this thesis project, I am working with a team to find out what experiences of racial discrimination (in the form of microaggressions) teens are dealing with at their High Schools and how schools can help reduce these experiences.

In order uplift youth voices, I am hoping to recruit teens in programs such as (Agency Name) and would like to know if you would allow me to recruit students from your site.

You can reach me via this e-mail address or via phone: (000) XXX-0000

Warm wishes,
Laura Wesely

Appendix C – Assent Forms for Minors - Survey



Youth Assent to Participate in a Survey Research Study
Smith College • Northampton, MA

.....
Title of Study: *Everyday Injustice In Schools*
Investigator(s): Shannon Audley, Department of Education and Child Study, 413-585-3257
.....

We are doing a study to understand how students think about respect, disrespect, social identity (which includes ethnicity and heritage), school climate, and subtle or unintentional racism in the classroom.

We are asking you to help because we don't know very much about how youth experience respect, disrespect, and subtle or unintentional racism in the classroom. What we learn in this research may help teachers promote respect in their classrooms.

Your parent/guardian has said it is OK for you to participate, but it is up to you to decide if you want to or not. If you agree to be in our study, you will be asked to answer survey questions about how you think about respect and disrespect at school, school climate, and your experiences or witnessing your classmates experiences of subtle or unintentional racism in the school setting. The survey will take you approximately 40 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you will be debriefed about your participation and be given a chance to ask any questions that may have resulted from your participation in the study.

You might feel tired after answering the survey questions. If you feel tired you can take a break or stop completely. You may be worried that you will feel bad after answering these questions. If you feel bad you can stop, talk about it with the researcher or with someone at home. Some youth find it empowering to share their experiences with researchers.

You may ask us questions if you don't understand. You may ask us questions at any time. You may ask to skip a question, or to stop at any time. No one will be upset. The questions we ask are only about what you think. There are no right or wrong answers.

No information about you or anything else will be made available to any teacher or administrator. Our information will be kept completely confidential.

For completing at least one question of the survey, you will be given a chance to enter a drawing for a \$25 Amazon gift card.

If you sign this paper, it means you have read and have been told about our study and you want to be in it. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you don't sign the paper, or if you change your mind later.

.....

Appendix C – Assent Forms for Minors - Survey

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

We also want to interview about your experiences at school involving respect and disrespect from your classmates and teachers. **We will give you a \$5 dollar amazon gift card for your time.**

If you are interested in please leave us with your name and a way to contact you (email or phone number). This is not a promise to participate in the interview process. This only gives us information to contact you at a later time about a follow-up interview.

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Preferred contact (circle one): email call text

Appendix C – Assent Forms for Minors - Interview



**Assent to Participate in an Interview Research Study
Smith College • Northampton, MA**

.....
Title of Study: *Everyday Injustice In Schools*

Investigator(s): Shannon Audley, Department of Education and Child Study, 413-585-3257
.....

We are doing a study to understand how students think about respect, disrespect, and social identity, which includes ethnicity and heritage, in the classroom.

We are asking you to help because we don't know very much about how youth experience respect and disrespect, in the classroom. What we learn in this research may help teachers promote respect in their classrooms.

Your parent/guardian has said it is OK for you to participate, but it is up to you to decide if you want to or not. If you agree to be in our study, we will ask you to answer questions about how you think about respect and disrespect at school, and your experiences with respect and disrespect among your classmates and teachers. At the end of the survey, you will be debriefed about your participation and be given a chance to ask any questions that may have resulted from your participation in the study.

You will be interviewed once for approximately 30 minutes. You might feel tired after answering the questions. If you feel tired you can take a break or stop completely. You may be worried that you will feel bad after answering these questions. If you feel bad you can stop, talk about it with the researcher or with someone at home. Some youth find it empowering to share their experiences with researchers.

You may ask us questions if you don't understand. You may ask us questions at any time. You may ask to skip a question, or to stop at any time. No one will be upset. The questions we ask are only about what you think. There are no right or wrong answers.

No information about you or anything else will be made available to any teacher or administrator. Our information will be kept completely confidential.

For completing at least one interview question you will be given a \$5 Amazon gift card.

If you sign this paper, it means you have read and have been told about our study and you want to be in it. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you don't sign the paper, or if you change your mind later.

1.) I agree to be audio recorded for this interview.

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

2.) I agree to be interviewed, but I do not want the interview to be taped.

Appendix C – Assent Forms for Minors - Interview

Name of Participant (print): _____
Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

Appendix D –Consent Form for Emerging Adults



SMITH COLLEGE

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Smith College • Northampton, MA

.....
Title of Study: A Retrospective Exploration of (Dis)Respect and Subtle Racism in US High Schools
Investigator(s): Shannon Audley, Education and Child Study, (413) 585-3257
.....

Introduction

- School is a very important setting for social interactions. Two important aspects of social interaction are (dis)respect and social identity, which includes ethnicity and heritage.
- You are being asked to be a participant in a research study about your high school experiences about respect, disrespect, and social and personal identity.
- We ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Purpose of Study

- A goal of the study is to understand how respect, disrespect, and social identity influence the school experience. This will help teachers better promote positive interactions among students in the school setting.
- Ultimately, this research may be published as a paper or used to facilitate teacher training.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to participate in one audio-recorded 45-minute interview that encourages you to discuss the ways in which you perceived your teachers in high school, or your peers, to be both respectful and disrespectful in the classroom. We will also ask about whether you experienced or witnessed subtle racism in your high school.
- In addition you will fill out a brief demographic survey asking general information about yourself your high school.
- The interview will occur in a private space on your college campus.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- We believe there are minimal physical and psychological risks involved for participation in this study. People often talk about their experiences with fellow students and teachers as part of the normal, everyday classroom experience. However, we do acknowledge that you might become upset after talking to the researchers.
- You will receive a list of resources that offers guidance about dealing with disrespect and subtle racism in schools. In addition, we will also debrief with you after the interview to address any further questions or concerns that you may have.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- Sometimes people feel empowered telling researchers about their own experiences in school.

Confidentiality

- All information will be kept completely confidential. No real names, schools, or locations will be used. If writing styles requires quotations, a pseudonym will be given and identifying information will be changed. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would

Appendix D –Consent Form for Emerging Adults

make it possible to identify you.

- The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. Research records will be kept in a

Appendix C Consent forms continued

- locked file, and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file. Audio recordings will be transcribed verbatim, and once transcribed, the audio file will be deleted from the hard drive of the computer.

Payments

- For completing at least one interview question you will be given a \$5 Amazon gift card.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study *at any time* without affecting your relationship with the your college, the researcher, or Smith College.
- Your decision to refuse will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the study at any point during the process; additionally, you have the right to request that the researcher not use any of your study material.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right and are welcome to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during, or after the research.
- If you have any questions about the study, feel free to contact me, Shannon Audley at saudley@smith.edu or by telephone at 413-585-3257.
- If you have any problems or concerns that occur as a result of your participation, you can report them to Nnamdi Pole, the Smith College Institutional Research Board (IRB) Chairperson, (413-585-3936).
- Alternatively, concerns can be reported by completing a Participant Complaint Form, which can be found on the IRB website at www.smith.edu/irb/compliance.htm

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigators.

1. I agree to be audio taped for this interview:

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator(s): _____ Date: _____

2. I agree to be interviewed, but I do not want the interview to be taped:

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator(s): _____ Date: _____

Appendix E - Parental Consent Forms for Minors



Parent Consent to Participate in a Research Study Smith College • Northampton, MA

.....
Title of Study: *Everyday Injustice In Schools*

Investigator(s): Shannon Audley, Education and Child Study, (413) 585-3257
.....

Introduction

- School is a very important setting for social interactions. Two important aspects of social interaction are (dis)respect and social identity, which includes ethnicity and heritage.
- Your child is being asked to be in a research study about his or her experiences about respect, disrespect, social and personal identity, school climate, and subtle or unintentional racism in school.

Purpose of Study

- A goal of the study is to understand how respect, disrespect, and social identity influence the school experience. This will help teachers better promote positive interactions among students in the school setting.
- If you agree to allow your youth to participate, your child will also be asked for his or her written consent.

Description of the Study Procedures

- Your child will be asked to complete a survey that will take approximately 40 minutes to complete. The survey will ask them about their experiences of subtle or unintentional racism, also known as microaggressions, in the school setting. It will also include questions about school climate, school motivation, and levels of general depression and stress, as well as self-esteem and self-respect.
- We will also ask your child to participate in one audio-recorded 45-minute interview that encourages him or her to discuss the ways in which they perceive teachers, their fellow students to be both respectful and disrespectful in the classroom.
- Children will not be asked for teachers' names.
- Participants will be told that they do not have to complete any part of the survey or interview that they do not wish to complete. They will be assured that there will be no consequences should they decide not to participate.
- Both the survey and interview will occur in a location that is comfortable to your child.
- You can choose to have your child participate in the interview, survey, or both.

At the end of both the interview and the survey, your child will be debriefed about the survey/interview and will be given a chance to ask any questions that may have resulted from your participation in the study.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- We believe there are minimal physical and psychological risks involved for children who participate in this study. Children often talk about their experiences with fellow students and teachers as part of the normal, everyday classroom experience. They may feel tired after completing the written survey.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- Sometimes children feel empowered telling researchers about their own experiences in school. Your child will be encouraged to talk about their answers or concerns with the researcher or with you.

Appendix E - Parental Consent Forms for Minors

Confidentiality

- No one affiliated with the school will read any child's responses.
- No information about any individual child will be made available to any teacher or administrator. Our information will be kept completely confidential. No real names, schools, or locations will be used. If writing styles requires quotes, a pseudonym will be given and identifying information will be changed.
- Again, no individual participant will ever be identified by name.

Payments

- For completing at least one question of the survey, the child can choose to be entered in a drawing for a \$25 Amazon gift card.
- For completing at least one interview question the child will be given a \$5 Amazon gift card.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to have your child participate in this study is entirely up to you and your child. Declining to have your child participate in this study will not affect your relationship with the [afterschool program], the researcher, or Smith College.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right and are welcome to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during, or after the research.
- If you have any questions about the study, feel free to contact me, Shannon Audley at saudley@smith.edu or by telephone at 413-585-3257.
- If you have any problems or concerns that occur as a result of your participation, you can report them to Nnamdi Pole, the Smith College Institutional Research Board (IRB) Chairperson, (413-585-3936).
- Alternatively, concerns can be reported by completing a Participant Complaint Form, which can be found on the IRB website at www.smith.edu/irb/compliance.htm

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you consent to having your child participate in this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. A copy of this form is enclosed for you to keep for your records.

1.) Please which part of the research study you consent to have your child participate in.

I give my consent for my child to participate in the

_____ research survey

_____ interview

_____ both

Name of Youth : _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (print): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator(s): _____ Date: _____

To the Smith College IRB,

Appendix F – Letter of Consent for Participating Agencies



As a representative of the <<insert afterschool program/school name >>, I confirm that the afterschool program/school grants permission for the proposed research to use our site to recruit participants once IRB approval has been obtained. In addition we <<will/will not >> allow the research to take place on our premises and <<name of contact person >> will be this studies point of contact person should an participant or other student want to talk about issues relating to the study.

We will send home consent form with our afterschool/high school students, <<including or we will not include >> a letter to accompany the consent form.

Printed Name of Afterschool Official

Title of Afterschool program

Printed Name of Afterschool Official

Date

Appendix G – Debrief Form for California

Debriefing Form for Participation in a Research Study Smith College

Thank you for your participation in our study! Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Purpose of the Study:

We previously informed you that the purpose of the study is to understand how respect, disrespect, and social identity influence the school experience, including witnessing or experiencing microaggressions. The goal of our research is help teachers and other school administration understand the ways in which teachers can promote positive student teacher interactions and the ways in which teachers may unknowingly promote subtle racism in their classrooms. We hope to use this information to shape teacher education and help schools rethink how they approach racial and ethnic diversity in their schools.

We realize that some of the questions asked may have provoked strong emotional reactions. As researchers, we do not provide mental health services and we will not be following up with you after the study. However, we want to provide every participant in this study with a comprehensive and accurate list of clinical resources that are available, should you decide you need assistance at any time. Please see information pertaining to local resources at the end of this form.

Confidentiality:

You may decide that you do not want your data used in this research. If you would like your data removed from the study and permanently deleted please email Shannon Audley [saudley@smith.edu] and let her know that you do not want your data used in this research. Because this research will be used for research presentations and papers, requests to have data removed from the study must occur by June 1st, 2017.

Whether you agree or do not agree to have your data used for this study, you will still receive a \$5 amazon gift card for your participation.

Final Report:

If you would like to receive a copy of the final report of this study (or a summary of the findings) when it is completed, please feel free to contact us.

Useful Contact Information:

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, its purpose or procedures, or if you have a research-related problem, please feel free to contact the researcher(s), **Shannon Audley**, saudley@smith.edu, 413-585-3257

Appendix G – Debrief Form for California

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Smith College Institutional Research Board (IRB) Chairperson, Nnamdi Pole (413-585-3936) or irb@smith.edu

If you feel upset after having completed the study or find that some questions or aspects of the study triggered distress, talking with a qualified clinician may help. If you feel you would like assistance please contact **Berkeley Mental Health Division Family, Youth, and Children's Services** 3282 Adeline Berkeley 94703 510-981-5280 www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/mentalhealth
In a serious emergency, remember that you can also call 911 for immediate assistance.

The following websites may also connect you with others who have had similar experiences.

Spaces of Solidarity

Microaggressions.com

A tumblr that posts anonymous microaggression experiences.

Speakyourstory.net

A webpage that collects and shares stories about microaggressions against women in STEM.

International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)

<http://imadr.org/>

This international non-profit, non-governmental human rights organization devoted to eliminating discrimination and racism, forging international solidarity among discriminated minorities and advancing the international human rights system

Hotlines

Discrimination and Anti-Hate Line

1-800-649-0404

Minority Health Resource Center

800-444-6472

www.omhrc.gov

An informative public health site which focuses on issues affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, Black/African Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos.

Further Reading(s):

If you would like to learn more about *microaggressions* please see the following references:
Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation, by Derald Wing Sue. (Wiley, 2010)

Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics, and Impact, edited by Derald Wing Sue (Wiley, 2010)

***Please keep a copy of this form for your future reference. Once again, thank you for your participation in

this study!***

Appendix G – Resource Form for California

East Bay Area

RYSE Youth Center

205 41st St, Richmond, CA 94805

Phone: 510/374-3401

Website: www.rysecenter.org

RYSE is a safe and welcoming center for diverse (including LGBT) youth that builds youth power and leadership towards personal and community health and transformation.

Grounded in social justice, RYSE provides comprehensive and holistic programming and promotes multi-racial, cross-cultural relationships. Weekly LGBTQI2-S Youth Support Group. Virtual Youth Center at: RYSE Portal.

Pacific Center for Human Growth

2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705

Phone: 510/548-8283

Website: www.pacificcenter.org

Email: info@pacificcenter.org

Youth social and education activities plus peer groups – youth programs (13-23 years): Drop-in social activities, support, art, activism, education, food, friends, movies, video games, writing and fun; Queer Youth Movie Night; Safer Schools Project Youth Activist Trainings; Gay-Straight Alliance Club supports; Youth Speaker’s Bureau; Mental Health Counseling; LOUD Youth Group Expressions (arts/crafts/writing/music); LOUD Youth Group Voices (youth leadership). Also – Express 20’s Discussion Group for Gay, Bisexual or Questioning Men in their 20’s.

Through the Looking Glass

Provides support for youth and parents with disabilities, including in-home counseling and social work support.

Ed Roberts Campus: 3075 Adeline St., Suite 120 Berkeley, CA 94703

Phone: (510) 848-1112, Ext. 169

Toll Free: (800) 644-2666

TTY: (800) 804-1616

Monday - Friday; 9 am - 5pm

Berkeley Mental Health Division Family, Youth, and Children’s Services

3282 Adeline Berkeley 94703

510-981-5280

<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/mentalhealth>

M-F 9am-5pm (evenings by arrangement)

Outpatient psychotherapy, consultation, education, and other information to Berkeley and Albany children and their families. Sliding scale.

Appendix G – Resource Form for California

Berkeley Drop-in Center

3234 Adeline St. Berkeley 94703

510-653-3808

M-Th 9am-4pm F 9am-2pm

Client-run, multi-purpose community center for past and present mental health clients and persons undergoing significant emotional stress. Free

Ann Martin Center

3664 Grand Ave. Oakland 94610

510-655-7880 <http://www.annmartin.org>

M-F 9am-5pm

Child and **family** psychotherapy, academic tutoring and remediation, educational and psychological diagnostic testing.

Asian Community Mental Health Services

310 8th St. Oakland 94607

510-451-6729 <http://www.acmhs.org>

M-F 9am-noon, 1pm-5pm

Human services to **Asian Pacific** special-needs populations: mental health clients, developmentally disabled clients, and at-risk children, youth, and families.

East Bay Agency for Children (EBAC)

303 Van Buren Ave. Oakland 94610

510-268-3770 <http://www.ebac.org>

Intensive day treatment programs to help **children** suffering from severe emotional difficulties, school-based prevention programs to assist at-risk children at public school sites with Circle of Care (supporting children and families coping with loss, serious illness and trauma).

Contra Costa Crisis Center

Phone: 925/939-1916

Suicide hotline: 800/SUICIDE

School Violence Tipline: 800/863-7600

Website: www.crisis-center.org

Provides a school violence tipline is a safe place for students and parents to report weapons on campus, homicidal or suicidal threats, or other behavior possibly leading to violence.

Appendix H - Demographic Survey

Section A. Background Information

The items in this section include questions about your background.
Please read each question carefully and thoughtfully.

A1. Age (✓) 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 Other: _____

A2. Class year (circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

A3. How would you describe your High School grades? Circle one:

Mostly A's Mostly B's Mostly C's Mostly D's Mostly F's
A's and B's B's and C's C's and D's D's and F's

A4. How many times have you gotten into trouble for your behavior during this school year (i.e., sent to the office, detention, suspension, etc?)

none 1-2 3-4 5 or more

A5 Gender (write in) _____

A6. Where were you born? State: _____ Country: _____

A7. Where did you grow up? State: _____ Country: _____

A8. If you were born outside the US, how many years have you lived in the US? _____

A9. When thinking about your family, check all that apply:

- at least one parent was born outside of the U.S.
- at least one grandparent was born outside of the U.S.
- at least one great-grandparent was born outside of the U.S.
- none of the above

A10. What language(s) do you speak at home? _____

A11. What language(s) do you speak with friends? (e.g., English, Spanish, etc.)

A12. Please select the category that best describes your family's average annual income (before taxes)? I don't know

Less than \$6,000 \$6,000-\$8,999 \$9,000-\$11,999 \$12,000-\$15,999 \$16,000-\$19,999

\$20,000-\$24,999 \$25,000-\$29,999 \$30,000-\$49,999 \$50,000-\$69,999 \$70,000-\$99,999

\$100,000-\$119,999 \$120,000 or more

A13: Think about the parent or guardian you spend the most time with: which of the following best describes their relationship status?

Married or living together Separated Divorced Never married Widowed

Appendix H - Demographic Survey

A14: Parent(s) Educational Level: At least ONE parent or guardian has the equivalent of (US or abroad schooling):

Completed some high school or less Completed some college Completed some graduate work
Graduated High school Has a bachelor's degree Has a graduate degree

In the United States, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe ethnicities or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of ethnicity are Dominican, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Black, Chinese, White, and many others.

A15: What is your ethnic group or ethnicity (you may write in more than one)?

A16: What is the race or ethnicity that OTHER PEOPLE most often see you as?

White Black Latino/a American Indian Asian

For the next few questions, think about the school that you currently attend, and answer to the best of your knowledge.

A17. In my school (✓) most students are people of color
 there are about equal numbers of students who are people of color and white
 most students are white

A18. In my school (✓) most teachers are people of color
 there are about equal numbers of teachers who are persons of color and white
 most teachers are white

A19. In my school, my ethnicity is well represented within the student body (✓) yes no

Please circle the number that BEST corresponds to how you feel right now
1 = Not Proud at all and 5 = Extremely Proud

A20. How much pride do you feel about you/your family's country of origin?	1	2	3	4	5
A21. How much pride do you feel about being American?	1	2	3	4	5
A22. How much pride do you feel about your race or ethnicity?	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Youth INTERVIEWS

Version A

1. **Make sure you have consent form or a sheet with the consent form checked off.**
- 2.
3. **Go over the assent form with the youth. Make sure they sign before continuing. Check yes or no. No assent means NO INTERVIEW.**
4. **Make sure that the youth signs whether not they want to be audio recorded.**
 - If okay, start recording and check to make sure recording is on.
 - If not okay, take very detailed, clear notes.
5. **TURN ON THE AUDIO DEVICE (Make sure Audio is on).**
6. **MAKE SURE YOU ARE TAKING NOTES.**
7. **State the date, the time, your name, and the person you are interviewing.**
8. Next, tell the participant:
 - “We’re going to ask about your experiences with teachers and peers during the interview and we may ask you for their genders and ethnicities, but we won’t ask for names. So if you could, give them a fake name. However, if you give us a name, we’ll change it so their identity remains confidential. Please make sure to also not disclose any other information, such as undocumented status, about those you talk about in the interview.

DURING THE INTERVIEW, MAKE SURE TO ENCOURAGE THE STORY ALONG BY SAYING...UH-HUH.. OR Directly repeating what was just said, “so she told you...”

DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS DURING THE STORY!!!!

(EXCEPT: You may ask for gender and ethnicity of the other people in the story if those attributes are not stated).

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

PART I:

1. [Teacher disrespect]

Tell me about a time when a teacher or another adult at school disrespected you or made you feel disrespected. Pick a time you remember really well and tell me everything you can remember. [If you have never experienced this, tell me about a time you saw a teacher or another adult at school disrespect another student].

- a. Is there anything else you remember about that time?

- b. Did anyone witness this event? If so who? What did they do (i.e., walk away, intervene?) Why do you think they responded the way that they did?

- c. Did you report the incident to other adults[parents/teachers/administrators] or other peers [friends/classmates]? Why/Why not?

- d. Did you get back [retaliate] (or try to get back) at the [teacher/other adult] for [behavior/incident]? Why/why not?

- e. Did you forgive the [teacher/other adult] for [behavior/incident]? Why/why not?

- f. "Do you think it was okay or not okay for [teacher/other adult] to do [behavior/incident]?"

- g. Why do you think it was [okay/not okay] for [teacher/other adult] to do that?"

- h. When the [teacher/other adult] did [behavior/incident], why do you think [he/she] did that??"

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

- i. Do you think this was a good reason, or not a good reason? Why was it a good reason/not a good reason?

- j. Why do you think [behavior] was disrespectful?

- k. On a scale from 1 (little bit) to 4 (A lot) how disrespectful was the experience?
0 1 2 3 4

- l. *Now I am going to ask you how you felt at the time of the experience, using the same scale as before. If you did not experience the emotion, then say zero.*
How... did you feel at the time?

- i. angry 0 1 2 3 4
- ii. hurt 0 1 2 3 4
- iii. humiliated 0 1 2 3 4
- iv. sad 0 1 2 3 4
- v. confused 0 1 2 3 4
- vi. ashamed 0 1 2 3 4

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)

- m. I want you think about how you FEEL NOW about the experience.
How... do you feel now about the experience?

- i. angry 0 1 2 3 4
- ii. hurt 0 1 2 3 4
- iii. humiliated 0 1 2 3 4
- iv. sad 0 1 2 3 4
- v. confused 0 1 2 3 4
- vi. ashamed 0 1 2 3 4

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)?

2. [peer disrespect]

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Tell me about a time when a classmate or another kid at school disrespected you or made you feel disrespected. Pick a time you remember really well and tell me everything you can remember. (If you have never experienced this, tell me about a time you saw a classmate or another kids at school disrespect another student).

- n. Is there anything else you remember about that time?

- o. Did anyone witness this event? If so who? What did they do? (i.e., walk away, intervene) Why do you think they responded the way that they did?

- p. Did you report the incident to other adults [parents/teachers/administrators] or other peers [friends/classmates]? Why/Why not?

- q. Did you get back [retaliate] (or try to get back) at the [classmate] for [behavior/incident?]? Why/why not?

- r. Did you forgive the [classmate] for [behavior/incident]? Why/why not?

- s. "Do you think it was okay or not okay for [classmate/kid] to do [behavior]?"

- t. Why do you think it was [okay/not okay] for [classmate/kid] to do that?

- u. When the [classmate/kid] teacher did [behavior], why do you think [he/she] did that?

- v. Do you think this was a good reason, or not a good reason? Why was it a good reason/not a good reason?

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

- w. Why do you think [behavior] was disrespectful?
- x. On a scale from 1 (little bit) to 4 (a lot) how disrespectful was the experience? 0
1 2 3 4
- y. *Now I am going to ask you how you felt at the time of the experience, using the same scale as before. If you did not experience the emotion, then say zero.*

How... did you feel at the time.

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| i. angry | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ii. hurt | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| iii. humiliated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| iv. sad | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| v. confused | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| vi. ashamed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)?

- z. I want to you think about how you FEEL NOW about the experience.
How... do you feel now about the experience?

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| i. angry | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ii. hurt | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| iii. humiliated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| iv. sad | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| v. confused | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| vi. ashamed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)?

3. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about those experiences that I hadn't asked?

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

PART II.

1. Tell me about a time when a teacher or another adult at school earned your respect. Pick a time you remember really well and tell me everything you can remember.

- a. Is there anything else you remember about that time?
- b. Did you share this experience to other adults [parents/teachers/administrators] or other peers [friends/classmates]? Why/Why not?
- c. Did you make it a special point to show this teacher respect after [he/she] [behavior]? Why/why not?
- d. When the [teacher/other adult] teacher did [behavior], why do you think [he/she] did that?
- e. Do you think this was a good reason, or not a good reason? Why was it a good reason/not a good reason?
- f. What specifically about [behavior] made it respectful or earned your respect?
- g. On a scale from 1 (little bit) to 4 (a lot) how much respect did the teacher earn?
1 2 3 4
- h. *Now I am going to ask you how you felt at the time of the experience, using the same scale as before. If you did not experience the emotion, then say zero.*

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

How... did you feel at the time?

vii. proud	0	1	2	3	4
viii. surprised	0	1	2	3	4
ix. happy	0	1	2	3	4
x. grateful	0	1	2	3	4

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)?

K. I want to you think about how you FEEL NOW about the experience.
How... do you feel now about the experience?

i. proud	0	1	2	3	4
ii. surprised	0	1	2	3	4
iii. happy	0	1	2	3	4
iv. grateful	0	1	2	3	4

Were there any other emotions that you felt that I didn't ask about (*if so, ask how much, and have them describe*)?

PART III. General Questions

1. **What is one thing you wish your teachers knew about how to earn students' respect?**
2. **What is one thing you wish your teachers knew about disrespect in the classroom?**
3. **In what ways, do you think your teachers, either in the present or the past, are sensitive and thoughtful about their treatment of race and ethnicity in the classroom?**
4. **Is there anything else you would like to tell me about respect or disrespect in the classroom or school that I hadn't asked?**

Other notes:

Appendix I - Semi-Structured Interview Guide

IF THERE WAS PHYSICAL HARM MENTIONED IN THE STORY...

[In any story where there was physical harm involved, if the participant did not report the incident to the school authorities, then at the very end of the interview, after the participant is asked if there is anything else he or she would like to add, the participant will be asked "Is there any incident that you told us about today that you would like for us to report to the school counselor?" If the participant says yes, then we will ask if we can provide identifying information to the school counselor, and with participant consent, we will report the incident to the school counselor within five days.]

THANK THE PARTICIPANT FOR PARTICIPATING!!!

SHOW LOTS OF GRATITUDE!!!!!!



Appendix J – WHITS Assessment

Section D. School Climate

*The items in this section ask about your perceptions of how often certain things happen at your school. Please think about the most recent school year when you answer these questions, and **circle the number** that most resembles your experiences at your school.*

At my school...	Almost Never	Not Often	Some times	Often	Almost Always
Teacher Support					
1 Teachers know my name	1	2	3	4	5
2 Teachers try to understand my problems	1	2	3	4	5
3 Teachers listen to me	1	2	3	4	5
4 Teachers take an interest in my background	1	2	3	4	5
5 Teachers treat me fairly	1	2	3	4	5
6 Teachers support me when I have problems	1	2	3	4	5
7 Teachers go out of their way to address my needs	1	2	3	4	5
8 Teachers are willing to listen to my problems	1	2	3	4	5
Peer Connectedness					
9 I get along with other students	1	2	3	4	5
10 I belong to a group of friends	1	2	3	4	5
11 I make friends with students from different backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
12 I socialize with students from different cultures	1	2	3	4	5
13 Students talk to me	1	2	3	4	5
14 Students support me	1	2	3	4	5
15 Students help me	1	2	3	4	5
16 I feel accepted by other students	1	2	3	4	5
Rule Clarity					
17 The rules at this school are clear to me	1	2	3	4	5
18 The school rules help me to feel safe	1	2	3	4	5
19 School rules protect me	1	2	3	4	5
20 The rules make it clear to me that certain behaviors are unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5
School Connectedness					
21 I look forward to coming to school	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix J – WHITS Assessment

22	I enjoy being at school	1	2	3	4	5
23	I feel included at school	1	2	3	4	5
24	I feel welcome	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am part of a community	1	2	3	4	5
26	I am respected	1	2	3	4	5
27	I am valued	1	2	3	4	5
Affirming Diversity						
28	My cultural background is valued	1	2	3	4	5
29	Days that are important to my culture are recognized	1	2	3	4	5
30	I am encouraged to understand the culture of others	1	2	3	4	5
31	My background is known by student and teachers	1	2	3	4	5
32	I am taught about the backgrounds of others	1	2	3	4	5
Reporting and Seeking Help						
33	I can report bad behaviors to school officials	1	2	3	4	5
34	I am encouraged to report incidents	1	2	3	4	5
35	I am confident to talk to a teacher if I am bullied	1	2	3	4	5
36	I am encouraged to report bullying	1	2	3	4	5
37	I know how to report problems	1	2	3	4	5
38	I can report incidents without others finding out	1	2	3	4	5
39	It is okay to tell a teacher if I feel unsafe	1	2	3	4	5