Post(racial)-Malone: (Un)conscious Habits of White Iverson

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POST(RACIAL)-MALONE: (UN)CONSCIOUS HABITS OF WHITE IVERSON

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This phenomenological qualitative study explored the gender performativity of protest masculinity in a multi-institutional study of white male-identified fraternity men. The participants expressed sentiments of dispossession, postracial attitudes, and performed cultural appropriation. Participants appropriated Black culture because they considered this synonymous with their own lack of power and privilege, which they believe has been dispossessed. Implications are provided to suggest how campus-based professionals can further disrupt the (un)conscious habits of whiteness in fraternity men and forms of white supremacy through collaborative programming and campus-wide efforts.

Keywords: whiteness, protest masculinity, male hegemony, cultural appropriation, white immunity, fraternity men

Critics have posited music artist Post Malone as popularizing the ubiquitous vernacular colloquialism *White Iverson*. This song associates Persons of Color with drinking, women, and drug use. These behaviors are similar to the *White Boy Wasted* hypermasculine behaviors among white middle-class college men (Sasso, 2015; 2019). Several scholars have suggested his music is a form of cultural appropriation or "culture vulturing" (Green, 2018; Sasso, 2019). The appropriation of Black identity by Post Malone as a cisgender white male is similar to narratives and experiences of other white college men (Cabrera, 2014b; 2019). They hold perceptions of marginalization based on feelings of anger and "dispossession*"* of their privileges caused by college policies and administrative systems (Kimmel, 2017; Sasso et al., 2022). These masculine behaviors and anger by white college men are forms of gender performativity referred to as "protest masculinity."

Protest masculinity favors working class masculine norms in a system of masculine class hegemony as a claim to power when there are no existing resources (Connell, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity, other hypermasculine behaviors, and heavy episodic drinking are all interrelated areas of concern for sorority/fraternity professionals and stakeholders (Biddix et al., 2014; Sasso, 2015, 2019, 2022). However, no current research explores how protest masculinity permeates the fraternity experience as a space of student leadership for white college men.

Therefore, to address this research gap and inform practice, the researchers for the current phenomenological qualitative study sought to explore the complexities and nuances of *White Iverson* in North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) white fraternity men. A greater understanding of *White Iverson* may inform new ways to disrupt white supremacy and cultural appropriation in fraternity men. Post Malone and *White Iverson* are used as participant-identified metaphors within this study to identify how white fraternity men have engaged in protest masculinity as *(un) conscious* habits of whiteness against more

neoliberal approaches they feel dispossessed of their power and privilege. The researchers attempted to nuance ways in which whiteness are consciously reproduced, but use "(un)conscious" to reflect ambiguity in many instances if participants are consciously perpetuating forms of white supremacy

Literature Review

Whiteness as a Racialized Discourse

Whiteness exists as an identity, cultural discourse, and system (Cabrera, 2018, 2019). However, Leonardo (2009) suggested that whiteness exists as a racial discourse and not as a racial category such as "white people. "Whiteness" is often associated with "white people" in which the system obscures the individual identity concept (Leonardo, 2009). The researchers approach whiteness as a racialized discourse and systems concept (Foste, 2020).

Cabrera (2018) argued that whiteness lacked intersectionality because oppression is absent according to the tenets of Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality was also often conflated by student affairs professionals as an identity construct, rather than a system (Harris & Patton, 2018). Intersectionality was originally conceptualized by Crenshaw (1989) which considered multiple, interlocking spheres of oppressions such as white supremacy and hegemony that marginalize people, particularly among communities of Color. White supremacy refers to the system of racial oppression that privileges engagement with white students on college campuses (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Omi & Winant, 2015). This social system inoculates and privileges behaviors and forms of capital that are unconscious to white undergraduate students (Cabrera, 2019).

Mills (1997) described whiteness as an epistemology of ignorance which Sullivan (2006) referred as the "unconscious habits of whiteness." White college students often lack an increased position of consciousness about their own whiteness and participation within a larger system of white supremacy (Applebaum, 2010). However, conscious habits perpetuate forms of white supremacy (Cabrera, 2019). Jones and Okun (2001) identified thirteen behaviors that were damaging or traumatic to Persons of Color and other colleagues across predominantly white spaces which reinforce white supremacy.

Across several qualitative studies, Cabrera (2017) concluded that the privileges of whiteness allowed white college students to not consider race. This allowed white college students to: (1) avoid conversations of race referred to as white agility (Cabrera & Corces-Zimmerman, 2017); (2) exist in a state of relative racial ignorance considered as racial arrested development (Cabrera et al., 2016); (3) advocate for colorblindness which is the ability to treat race as a non-issue (Cabrera, 2012); (4) operate with white immunity, which more accurately describes the systemic nature of white supremacy (Cabrera et al., 2017); and are immune from disparate racial treatment (Cabrera et al., 2017).

White Student Leaders

White people shift to an individual identity as attempts to deflect conversations about race and racism (Cabrera, 2019). This creates a polemic of "good or bad" white people which represents identifying their privileges or denying them. White student leaders engage in this enlightenment narrative in which they positioned themselves (good) against other uninvolved students (bad) to present as racially conscious and progressive (Foste, 2020). They perceived themselves as racially good and innocent but lacked any meaningful critique of racism and white supremacy (Foste, 2020). They also placed themselves outside of the problem of white supremacy as educators to other white students (Foste, 2020).

The "good whites" hold stereotypical views and paternalistic assumptions about Persons of Color in wanting to "save" them

(Trepagnier, 2006). These are often student leaders who reproduce whiteness by holding distorted perceptions of their institution as inclusive and perceive student activists as an imposition (Foste, 2019). They support the racial status quo by maintaining racially innocent perceptions of themselves and their institution (Foste, 2019).

White college students are often ambivalent toward race in privileged spaces, have little interaction with racial diversity in college, and proliferated sentiments of "reverse racism" in which whites were victims and further entrenched in the hegemony of whiteness (Cabrera & Corces-Zimmerman, 2017; Kimmel, 2017). White college students tend to be frustrated by race, especially when it impacts their positionality of privilege. Students often claim victimization because they felt blamed when their campus became "preoccupied" with inclusion efforts and social justice as performative (Foster, 2020; Foste & Jones, 2020). White student leaders were unable to identify their own racial location within the system of white supremacy and white college students often make claims of awareness, but continually contradict their own understanding with racially ignorant rhetoric (Foste & Jones, 2020). Foste and Jones (2020) described this desire to avoid the label of racist as the ignorant construction of whiteness.

White students also engaged in a "backstage performance" of political correctness referred to as "two-faced racism" (Picca & Feagin, 2007). White college students were more politically correct when Students of Color were present and then used racial epithets such as "racial joking" when they were absent (Cabrera, 2014a; Picca & Feagin, 2007). White students identified these acts as harmless or did not actively label the incidents as racist (Joyce & Cawthon, 2017).

White Fraternity Men

Cabrera (2011) suggested that white college men hold *"racial hyperprivilege"* in which masculinity exists in a patriarchal society to enhance their white privilege. It exists in college environments where white people have cultural ownership, caters to white racial comfort which inoculates the privileges of white fraternity men, and perpetuates racial arrested development. (Cabrera et al., 2016; Gusa, 2010; Harper & Hurtado, 2007). These become excuses for anti-racial minority logics and ideologies among white college men (Cabrera & Corces-Zimmerman, 2017).

White college men minimize racism, socialize in racially homogenous friendship groups, and experience few racial tensions (Cabrera, 2012; 2014b; 2014c; Reason & Evans, 2007). They underestimate levels of racism and racial tension (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Reason & Evans, 2007). White college men are able to frame themselves as victims of racial diversity in their campus environment (Cabrera, 2014b; 2014c). They perceive racism as an issue only when it does not privilege white people at the expense of Students of Color (Reason & Evans, 2007). These reverse racism beliefs were particularly salient in fraternity men (Cabrera, 2014c).

White fraternity members often held stereotypes and a lack of understanding about culturally based fraternities and sororities (Garcia & Shirely, 2020). White fraternity members minimize membership in these organizations as "fun," and ignore how other students viewed these organizations (Ray & Rosow, 2012). They continue to engage in cultural appropriation, particularly with party themes and perceive these actions as unintentional (Clifton, 2015; Joyce & Cawthon, 2017). They use alcohol at parties to reinforce hegemony (Sasso, 2015). This white masculine fraternity hegemony includes expectations of excessive drinking, heterosexual sex, and being athletic (Foste & Davis, 2018). To better conceptualize these spaces of masculine hegemony and fears of dispossession, this study employed several theories to interrogate how masculinities exist in relation

to one another in response to continued gender-role and privilege threats.

Theoretical Framework

The researchers integrated three theories of masculine performativity to better conceptualize how the fraternity men in this study engaged gender performativity. This included hegemonic (Connell, 1995), protest (Parsons, 1954), and dispossessed masculinities (Kimmel, 2017). These theories were integrated into the study to conceptualize the interview guide and axial coding during data analysis. The theories informed the design of questions used in the semi-structured interview guide to explore how students engage with their gender locations and forms of masculine performativity. In the current study, hegemonic masculinity is used to understand the gender locations of white fraternity men and dispossessed masculinity is used to describe how they may engage in different forms of protest masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity describes the social stratification of masculinity and protest masculinity explains how men assume a working-class identity to rationalize what has been dispossessed. Kimmel and Davis (2011) define hegemony as "the process of influence where we learn to earnestly embrace a system of beliefs and practices that essentially harm us, while working to uphold the interests of others who have power over us" (p. 9). Only a limited number of men can achieve this status which is referred to as the "hegemonic male" in which other men are relegated to lower castes (Sasso, 2015).

Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) suggested that these are marginal masculinities of men who do not comply with the normative ideal in which they are positioned into gender locations termed subordinate masculinities. One form of subordinate masculinities is protest masculinity. Protest masculinity can be described as, "a tense [...] facade, making a claim to power where

there are no real resources for power" (Connell, 1995, p. 111). Protest masculinity favors working-class male identities over more mainstream conceptualizations of hegemonic masculinity, which results in socially constructed, individual tension narratives between different classes of white men (Parsons, 1954).

The theory of dispossessed masculinity conceptualizes how men assume a subordinate status within a hegemony and claim marginality through their engagement with a working-class identity. Dispossessed masculinity is a form of protest masculinity which explains how white men claim marginality out of threats to their hegemonic privilege which they feel has been stolen from them. Kimmel (2017) termed this form of masculinity as "angry white men," and described it as, "Entirely unaware of the privileges that they already accrued, just by virtue of being white and male, they focus instead, again, partly correctly in my view – at their dispossession…" (p. 277). Dispossessed masculinity further explains how white men feel they cannot exact their white male privilege and instead, they externalize blame to others because they cannot claim "property of power" (Harris et al., 2019; Sasso, 2019).

Methodology

Research Design

This was a descriptive phenomenological qualitative study which followed the research design of similar previous studies (Cabrera, 2012; 2016; Foste, 2019, 2020; Sasso, 2015). Descriptive phenomenology centers around participant experiences and voice, which allow the researcher(s) to understand how these perceptions and experiences relate to the phenomenon being studied (Giorgi, 2009). Giorgi (2009) suggested that this approach places emphasis on the words expressed by the participants and not their own interpretations. This study was guided by one primary research question: How do white fraternity men conceptualize their own positionality

Table 1

Participant Demographic Information

Participant	Gender Identity	Age	Ethnicity	Affiliation	Initiation	Leadership	Institution
1	Male	18	White	New Member	None		Liberal Arts
2	Male	22	White	4 years	Yes	President	Liberal Arts
3	Male	23	White	4 years	Yes	Vice President	Liberal Arts
4	Male	21	White	2 years	Yes		Liberal Arts
5	Male	19	White	New Member	None		Masters Comprehensive
6	Male	18	White	New Member	None		Masters Comprehensive
7	Male	22	White	2 years	Yes		Masters Comprehensive
8	Male	20	White	1 year	Yes	Secretary	Masters Comprehensive
9	Male	21	White	2 years	Yes		STEM
10	Male	21	White	1 year	Yes	Treasurer	STEM
11	Male	20	White	New Member	None		STEM
12	Male	19	White	New Member	None		STEM
13	Male	22	White	3 years	Yes	Recruitment Chair	Land Grant
14	Male	20	White	1 year	Yes		Land Grant
15	Male	22	White	2 years	Yes	Standards Chair	Land Grant
16	Male	24	White	5 years	Yes	New Member Educator	All Male
17	Male	20	White	1 year	Yes	New Member Educator	All Male
18	Male	19	White	New Member	None		All Male

in college about gender and masculinity to engage in (un)conscious behaviors of whiteness?

Participants

A snowball sampling method was used to recruit participants through email and text messages to construct a homogenous sample (*n*=18). No gatekeepers were used to reduce sampling bias (Patton, 2015). Initial participants identified others to ensure authenticity in congruence with phenomenology as participants must have experience with the phenomenon being studied (Jones et al., 2014). Participant inclusion criteria included: (1) identify as a white cisgender male; (2) active NIC fraternity membership in a recognized chapter; (3) full-time undergraduate status; and (4) must be within the ages of 19-23. They needed no prior experiences with race, class, or diversity as the researchers sought to understand the meanings participants ascribed to masculinity as a consequence of privileged and marginalized social constructions of whiteness (Cabrera, 2016). All the participants were given individual pseudonyms to protect confidentiality (see Table 1).

Positionality

Foste (2020) suggested a process of reflexivity when engaging in research examining systems of whiteness and identities. Therefore, the primary researcher engaged in a process of considering their own positionality in relation to the participants in this study to avoid complicity, invalidate racist beliefs, and avoid cultivating white comfort as suggested by Foste (2020). The researchers consider masculinities through intersecting identities of race, gender, and social class. The researchers also acknowledge the privilege and power we hold due to our dominant identities and the responsibility that comes with those identities to advocate for social justice.

All the researchers identify as male-identified and cisgender across different intersectional identities which include Latinx, white, and Black. Given that systems of oppression constantly reinforce dehumanizing patterns of thought and behavior, we acknowledge our respective positionalities which limit our perspectives and require us to continually deconstruct internalized hegemonies and reconstruct new ways of being that promote justice, healing, and liberation.

Data Collection

The data collection methods utilized were in-depth, 60–120-minute interviews using a semi-structured interview guide (Interview Protocol Questions are available from the researchers upon request). A specific number of interviews were not established, rather an emergent approach was facilitated, and interviews continued until a point of saturation was reached. The interview guide was developed with members of the research team who were subject-matter experts. An informed consent agreement and a demographic sheet were distributed to participants. All participants were interviewed in predetermined safe spaces that included fraternity housing and on-campus residential housing. All interview transcripts were professionally transcribed to prepare for data analysis.

Data Analysis

In congruence with phenomenology, the interpretive relativist ontology paradigm was used for data analysis. The interpretive paradigm posits that reality cannot be separate from previous and existing knowledge and the researchers' positionalities are inherent across all phases of the research process (Angen, 2000). Relativist ontology holds that reality as we know it is subjectively constructed through socially and experientially developed understandings and meanings (Angen, 2000). Interpretive approaches rely on naturalistic methods such as interviewing in which data is negotiated through dialogue of the interview process (Patton, 2015).

The researchers followed Moustakas' (1999) guidelines for conducting phenom-

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enological research. The first phase is epoche in which the researchers located their previous assumptions. The researchers assumed that the privileges of whiteness are frequently invisible to the beneficiaries of the system (Cabrera, 2015; 2016; Omi & Winant, 2015). These assumptions were acknowledged through reflexive journaling in which they described their own experiences with the study phenomenon. These presuppositions were bracketed from informing this research to remain open to new ways of seeing the phenomenon.

Themes were generated through phases of coding. The researchers developed a list of initial open codes which Moustakas (1994) referred to as "horizons of experience" (p. 121). This open coding included line-by-line reading in which initial codes were developed through textural and structural descriptions. The researchers used textural descriptions as specific language from the participants to show how they were discussing the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Structural descriptions were based on researcher interpretations of the participants' language. Then, the researcher utilized axial coding in which open codes were grouped into more abstract and complex categories (Saldana, 2021). This is what Moustakas (1994) describes as "thematizing the invariant constituents" (p. 121).

Finally, selective coding was applied by, "selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (Jones et al., 2014, p. 45; Saldana, 2021). This is a form of imaginative variation which Moustakas (1994) describes as "approach[ing] the phenomenon from divergent perspectives" to narrow the ways in which white fraternity men engage in (un)conscious habits of whiteness (p. 85). Final collapsed themes were organized using code mapping validated by an external auditor as part of trustworthiness strategies (Saldana, 2021). The researchers continu-

ously reflected on their subjectivities to remain aware of how they influence data analysis.

Trustworthiness

To meet trustworthiness criteria in this research, the researchers addressed the standards of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as defined by Jones et al. (2014). Credibility involves the "use of others to confirm findings" (Jones et al., 2014, p. 37). Member-checking was used, and participants were provided their interview transcript and the preliminary analysis by the researchers during the imaginative variation phase of data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Foste (2020) noted this is a powerful opportunity to educate white college students, although it ultimately may only be superficial due to their lack of understanding of whiteness. The participants checked for errors but did not ask to clarify any statements. Second, transferability was met by providing long and rich quotes so that readers can engage in their own interpretation from their interactions with white male students.

Third, dependability was met by keeping an audit log of research activities and documents (Jones et al., 2014). Lastly, confirmability was used to "tie findings with data and analysis" through keeping a reflexive journal and using an external auditor who validated the themes (Jones et al., 2014, p. 37). The external auditor was a student affairs/higher education researcher who examined the veracity of the theme and the researchers accepted necessary feedback. The auditor and journal allowed noting of any inconsistencies between what was said and the effect on the participant (Foste, 2020). The journaling and external auditor also provided opportunities to reflect on the data and ensure congruence with phenomenology. There were still acknowledged limitations to this study although the researchers adhered to these standards of trustworthiness.

Findings

The white fraternity men in this study engaged in three different forms of protest masculinity which included: (1) cultural appropriation of Black culture (White Iverson); (2) colorblindness (Postracial Malone); and (3) sentiments of dispossession (angry white men). The themes below are summarized for this study.

White Iverson

The participants engaged in the appropriation of Black culture in private spaces such as parties or with other fraternity brothers. They also held specific postracial logics which they felt granted them license to perform Black culture. Participants were not prompted to clarify this rationale but were simply asked to share more. The fraternity men in this study shared narratives and perspectives which provided validity to this notion of a right to cultural appropriation. For example, one participant suggested this is what he called "White Iverson:"

> I think what you mean is, like, Post Malone. He is a white dude from the 'burbs of Houston tryna act Black. His song white Iverson is where he wants to be a Black basketball player. Yeah, all of us do act Black sometimes because I think we are just like them. We all are the same. We all got into college. Just because you are white does not mean you are any lesser than some Black dude. They are poor and I grew up in a trailer, kinda like Eminem and most of my experiences are like him or Post-Malone. I am poor, white-trash and like him and other Black guys I went to high school with. We are all the same trying to better ourselves, so why the fuck do people think I am racist for liking the music? This white kid can spit.

This concept of White Iverson was colorfully identified by this student and occurred when white fraternity men attempted to mirror Black culture because they felt these experiences were more authentic to their own. Participants shared this postracial logic and claimed a right to appropriate Black culture that they did not see as culture vulturing. They felt it was their right to freely use elements of Black culture because they identified as a social class minority or may have been oppressed in some way similar to their Black college peers. Participants resolved that their privileges had been taken away by others, and so they were oppressed and marginalized just like "all Black people" as another white participant noted.

Participants considered Black culture as monolithic and consistently referred to Black students as poor and oppressed. There was no mention of past historical social oppression or inequalities, and participants perceived their identities as equal to the struggles of Black college students. They drew most of their conclusions from hip-hop culture and music and emulated Black culture when they engaged in binge drinking at parties. Participants associated partying with Black culture, often directing comments towards Black and Latino men. Although they selectively and consciously performed elements, they were also perplexed about Black culture:

> I don't understand the other Black fraternities when they come over to the house. Like, we do not want to seem racist and not let them come over, but they do their steps and yells. It makes me think of them as [racial epithet removed]. I love the music when they do that stuff, but I cannot do the same dances because I would be embarrassed by that shit.

They did not notice race when they found opportunities to appropriate Black culture, but instead centered race when they felt threatened. These were contradictions to their White Iverson performances. White fraternity men often used racist epithets with little acknowledgement, but their racism was conscious to them. One participant used an Italian racist epithet to suggest that all EOP students are Black:

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One time we had a group of fucking [epithet removed] into the house. They are not allowed ever. These EOP [Equal Opportunity Program] students are always lazy and on some free school money. I have to pay my way here and they are here for free. Like all they want to fuck some white girl and drink my beer.

The fraternity men in this study consciously adopted Black culture as a defense because they internalized the feeling that their white male privilege had been dispossessed from them. They wanted to emulate Black culture, but still freely used racial epithets and engaged in other racist language because they still felt threatened. They felt entitled to Black culture and because they identified with marginalized social classes or their own lower socioeconomic status as synonymous with Blackness. These habits of White Iverson and positionalities within whiteness were (un)conscious and were a form of gender performativity that revealed more complex perspectives about race.

Post (Racial) Malone

White fraternity men expressed colorblind or postracial attitudes about societal issues and in reference to other Students of Color as a performative facade. White fraternity men suggested that they did not inherently see color because they were "cool with Blacks and Hispanics." However, participants often used phases such as, "I am not racist, but…" when they wanted to absolve themselves of a statement they knew could be considered as racist. These statements were inherent to white fraternity men because they revealed they were coached, trained, and socialized to engage a postracial, colorblind paradigm. There was passive resistance and resentment about what they felt was a diversity mandate because they feared it would end their right to party or close their chapter.

Fraternity members noted overlap and redundancy of diversity training and programming from student affairs professionals and their inter/national headquarters.

The significant distinction between the two sources was that the inter/national fraternity staff members told them what language was inappropriate and how to appear to be non-racist and campus-based programming was usually mandatory which they perceived was intrusive. They suggested these training made them feel "pressures to act a certain way," but they complied because they felt it would keep them out of trouble by learning to "say the right thing." White fraternity men were taught to perform diversity by learning vernacular and correct phrases to avoid seeming racist, but did not necessarily change their attitudes about it. One chapter leader clarified by adding:

National staff came down and instructed our executive board about public relations training. But like, it was really how to talk to college administrators about diversity and women. I attended the training and I just sat in the back and did not say anything. It is just politically correct bullshit. It is not like we actually believe it, we just use it to get what we want. I do not know why we need to do this when race is not even a thing. I think we have passed it.

They used their training from their campus and inter/national organizations to appear nonracist. Just as identified by this chapter leader, white fraternity men engaged in conscious colorblind perspectives, except when they felt threatened in which they had contradictory opinions about issues of diversity compared to their nonracist performances:

I mean why do you think race is a thing? That is some generational bullshit that our parents and grandparents caused. All I see are my brothers. I have dated Black and Mexican chicks since I think variety is a spice of life. So, I do not think race is a barrier like it was in the past. That is history, bro.

The use of colorblindness provided white fraternity members the opportunity to use racial epithets. Their rationale was that because white rappers "integrated"

Black culture or spaces and allowed them to engage in use of the "n-word." Another student stated:

Like my older brothers had Korn and Limp Bizkit. But like, look, there are so many white rappers like G Eazy, Eminem, and even look at Post Malone now. Maclemore and Post Malone rap about being white. So, damn right I can say [racial epithet removed] in the rap songs. I am like them too or even [racial epithet removed]. That word does not mean what it used to, it's a sign of respect now.

White fraternity members seemed frustrated by the consistent pressure they felt to be politically correct or appear nonracist, especially when this was in conflict with their own values or sociopolitical ideologies. They often used postracial logics to describe issues of equity that bothered them. One student, in particular, had very strong feelings drawing from the "Protestant work ethic" concept:

Why the hell do I always have to have a fucking opinion about race? I am tired of that bullshit and seeing it on social media. What, I am supposed to feel guilty about my own success? There are rich and poor Blacks and Asians just like white people, but like they get more benefits from our government. We shouldn't consider race and it should be about how hard you work.

The white fraternity men in this study remained hidden behind post-racial concept to mask a larger sentiment of dispossession or they used "hard work" logics in which race should not matter, rather than recognizing equity as a construct. This was a consistent rhetoric in which these white college men as fraternity members felt that race should not be a qualifier for any benefits or supports. This was also true for fraternity recruitment efforts. One member added:

We already have some Black, gay, and Asian members in my chapters, so we are not racist, so why the fuck we have to do this is so ignorant. We obviously

do not see their race and instead see the dude for themselves, ya know. That should be enough that we have minorities and we are meeting our obligations that people tell us.

White fraternity men felt that new member recruitment was centered on racial compliance. They described recruiting diversity into their chapter as a physical material achievement in addressing this compliance of race. Many white fraternity men felt mandated or obligated to "do the right thing" if they recruited Students of Color. Some participants consciously referred to themselves as a "white knight" because they were saving Students of Color from a boring college experience. They believed that minimal diversity would attract more if their brothers as Students of Color found others like them. Participants did not feel responsible to protect or support their members of Color because they had others "just like them" in the chapter.

Many of the students described mandatory campus diversity training in which they were passive attendants. They learned the performative language of diversity and engaged in selective recruitment of Men of Color to appear nonracist which they thought of as social appeasement. Yet, they performed these actions out of compliance. To avoid being identified as racist, they used colorblind or postracial logics.

Angry White Men

Building on the right to appropriate Black culture using the mask of postracialism, there was an anger and tension that undergirded white fraternity men's discussions about race. These white fraternity men felt dispossessed of privilege. They were frustrated about being subjected to more diversity training and felt blamed. They were afraid of losing their privileges to exist and continue their "right" to party. When this was threatened, they became angry and defensive. This was a response to what they believed was their dispossession of privilege. These beliefs further reinforced their feelings of marginality

and anger. There was an affective sentiment of anger in these white fraternity men which one participant described as a "hamburgler" of their positionality in reference to the 1980s McDonald's character who stole cheeseburgers:

Bruh, the way my dad talks about getting a job...it was just so much easier. He got hired because he was just a dude. Now we just stand in line behind women and other minorities. They get the preferences we used to own. I bet all I can get is a job at McDonald's as a manager supervising high school girls. It is like our benefits were hamburglered by all this equal rights bullshit.

White fraternity men were also unable to articulate or direct their discontent. Without any identifiable persons to blame and because their own whiteness is (un) conscious to them, these white men engaged in disengagement in which they performed white silence. One chapter leader explained this disengagement:

Everyone looks at us like we are the problem. My fraternity has a few Black members and even some gay ones. We have some Hispanics too. How is that racism then? We accept everyone for who they want to be, rather than who they are. I know people change. We have all these stupid diversity trainings. I attended once because I had to as the recruitment chair. I sat in the back, and just watched porn on my phone because I was bored. All I hear is what white men are to blame because of something someone else did 200 years ago. My great grandparents were immigrants and worked hard so I could go to college one day and the Greek Life office shouts at us that we need to change. I just sit down and shut up because if I say anything I am racist or I am afraid my fraternity will not be able to host parties anymore or even exist. It's like we are being policed for being white college men and because we joined a fraternity.

All participants expressed concern about having privileges revoked, such as the ability to have social events or access to their chapter house, or even being "shut down." White fraternity men felt like they are being policed and they feel excluded, a result they suggest is from their dispossession. Fraternity men have constructed their own private white spaces such as online where participants indicated they consciously share racist artwork or memes. When asked to describe it more, one member graphically described their private event:

We kinda recreate like a Black barbershop environment and joke around about everything. Ya know, we all know it's racist as fuck. However, we see it as comedy. We watch old BET shows and then other websites to make fun of them, women, or other people. Everything now is so PC and it's bullshit. Everyone is racist and so we have to do it in private. We have fun wid it and that is all that matters to us.

These white fraternity men participate and intentionally co-construct a space of backstage racism. This dispossessed perspective held by many white college men leads them to feel resentment and anger, which they display in offensive and harmful behaviors. They considered backstage racism ironic comedy and simply as "joking." The white fraternity men in this study also constructed such private spaces to experience authenticity.

Most participants were unable to conceptualize any portrait of white college men or describe whiteness because they felt it has been dispossessed. Their whiteness was (un)consciousness to them again. One student portrayed this disorientation and confusion:

What does it mean to be a white dude? It is just white claw, boat shoes, and golf? They [racist language removed] all have a culture that we do not have and they get benefits that have been taken away from us. All we get is bullshit memes about avocado and basic white chicks named Karen which tell us how

racist and fucked up we are and on meth. It pisses me off that white people no longer have anything special about us because we give it away to others like our scholarships and then we want to borrow it back, they call us racist for rapping to a Lil Baby song or throwing a Ghetto N Gangsta's party. How the hell did this happen that white people felt guilty for allowing others to participate in our privileges?

The white fraternity men in this study felt dispossessed. The previous privileges afforded to their fathers no longer existed. White fraternity men felt blamed and attacked for issues such as racism they sensed were not issues or concerns, they needed to address. They disengaged during diversity training as passive protest or as a behavior of compliance because they feared losing their chapter to closure. They continued to co-construct their own spaces in which they engaged in backstage racism. These compensatory masculinities underlie a larger confusion about what it means to be white which they associated with a privileged status.

Discussion

This study identified various (un)conscious behaviors of whiteness among white fraternity men as forms of protest masculinity. These behaviors included cultural appropriation, colorblindness as a postracial perspective, and sentiments of dispossession. These findings contribute to existing research and directly addressed the research questions which asked how white fraternity men conceptualize their own positionality about gender and masculinity as they engage in (un)conscious habits of whiteness.

These findings further the phenomenon of "White Boy Wasted" (Sasso 2015; 2016; 2019). However, this study identified the phenomenon of "White Iverson" which is the amalgamation of (un)conscious habits of whiteness in fraternity men as forms

of protest masculinity because they feel dispossessed of participation in hegemonic masculinity. As a response, they culturally appropriated Black culture just like the artist Post Malone in his "blue-eyed soul," but instead as an auto-tune discoloration. The notion itself weaves a complex narrative of male gender performativity in which race is relegated to class status among these cisgendered white men as a form of protest masculinity.

White fraternity men conceptualized their positionality as dispossessed and therefore engaged in protest masculinity in their claims to nonparticipation in hegemony. They blamed Persons of Color and diversity training for their stolen privilege, but others perpetuated an enlightenment narrative (Foste, 2019; 2020). The participants felt disrupted from hegemonic masculinity and assumed a marginalized identity through performativity of White Iverson in which they inauthentically culturally appropriated Black culture when they partied with alcohol (Joyce & Cawthon, 2017).

These same men engaged in appropriation of Black culture in which further embedded white supremacy, de-legitimized, or invalidated the experiences of other students of Color. White fraternity men felt justified to identify as "class minority" because they were on the same positional plane as Black college students (Cabrera, 2007; Harper, 2007, 2009). They conflated being poor or working-class as synonymous with Blackness, not just with Post Malone. These men engaged in performative working class-behaviors in which they did not believe themselves to be of lower socioeconomic status but marginalized in which they place external blame for their positionality in the social structure (Sasso, 2019). However, this rhetoric appeared to simply be victimization and self-righteousness as they rationalized the acceptability of this because they suggested everyone "hates" or blames them and they no longer possessed power or privilege (Cabrera,

2014a; 2014b). Participants shared they were coached to engage by national staff in the performativity of inclusion to appease others to avoid getting into trouble.

White fraternity men saw members from diverse backgrounds as property in which they used their membership to engage in a "diversity defense" to absolve themselves from any participation in white supremacy or racism (Cabrera, 2012). Their descriptions of recruitment of diversity assumed a degree of ownership over their material membership which functions as whiteness as property (Harris et al., 2019; Hughey, 2010). This continues underrepresentation, involuntary or forced race representation, as well as white students' possession of deficit views of Black men (Harper, 2007; 2009). Their perception of Blackness as a material culture to be performed only reinforces white supremacy in the ways they approached student communities of Color. Their conscious habits of whiteness perpetuated systems of oppression that facilitate marginality for other Black undergraduate student leaders (Harper et al., 2011; Harper & Nichols, 2008).

Limitations

The researchers have extensive "a priori" knowledge and experience with the college fraternity experience, but not with the individual lived experiences of the participants. This "a priori" knowledge may have influenced participants to provide socially desirable responses during the individual semi-structured interviews. The esoteric nature of fraternities may have also negatively impacted the full disclosure of information (Sasso, 2015). Another limitation is the amount of variation in the personal narratives of fraternity members. There are individual differences in the purpose and meaning of the racialized narratives and perspectives. Thus, the transferability of this study is limited to white fraternity at predominantly white institutions, or the four institutional types represented in this study.

Despite these limitations, it is the an-

ticipation of the researchers that the data collected can be used to provide insight into the expressions of protest masculinity by white fraternity members. The researchers also recognize that this research may perpetuate a continued focus on NIC fraternities and whiteness. The researchers of this study recognized the importance of the voice of historically marginalized communities within research as there is little representation in research among members of other national organizations. Future research should explore their perceptions and experiences with racism.

Implications

There are a number of direct ways to disrupt the various forms of problematic protest masculinity and whiteness which are identified in this study. Foste & Davis (2018) suggested that all men are challenged to break away from external script and engage in passive, reactionary, and proactive styles. Moreover, not all fraternity men perform traditional masculine gender scripts (Anderson, 2008; Harris & Harper, 2014; McCready, 2018). Thus, a more inclusive, broader approach needs to be assumed where fraternity/sorority professionals partner with others across campus to address each of the forms of protest masculinity identified in this study.

Challenging Whiteness & Protest Masculinity

To address the challenges of White Iverson where white fraternity men selectively appropriate Black culture, campus-based professionals should understand the limitations of what is curricularly taught at their institution. These efforts should be coupled with a shift away from current mandatory diversity education which has mixed efficacy (Kulik & Roberson, 2008). The participants demonstrated they did not engage with mandatory programming very well either. Fraternity men need opportunities to achieve a more progressive understanding of their own whiteness (Zuñiga et

al., 2002).

In addressing Post(racial) Malone where white fraternity men assume colorblindness to hide their racist perspectives, campus-based professionals should attempt to coordinate collaboration for diversity and inclusion training between inter/national headquarters and campus. Findings from this study suggest their individual efforts conflicted and were redundant. Programming should transition away from white privilege pedagogy or bad-dogging approaches which allow fraternity men allow men to claim marginality which they use to absolve them from being racist, homophobic, or sexist (Ashlee et al., 2020). These typically include "privilege walks" or "tunnel of oppression" in which white students learn at the expense of working-class or students of Color in which they use to check a box of "understanding" (Ashlee et al., 2020). Training should focus on increasing white racial consciousness to model the ways in which fraternity members can serve as advocates to better support a deeper understanding of how they may contribute to systems that cause oppression. Peer educator programming has been effective in addressing hypermasculinity and could be replicated using a sustained dialogue approach (Zuniga et al., 2002).

To challenge angry white men where fraternity men feel dispossessed and frustrated, there should be programming that will promote more inclusive gender norm climates. These reduce the pressure on members to engage in troubling behaviors or adopt problematic attitudes to prove their status as men (McCready, 2018). Adopting tenets of productive (Anderson, 2008) and inclusive masculinities (Harris & Harper, 2014) will better help white fraternity men develop within a less competitive hegemony and reduce the need for masculine protest performativity. This can be implemented as "healthy masculinities" programs at annual new member summits and through chapter new member educa-

tion programs. Male chapter leaders should also be encouraged to participate in other campus-wide service learning and emerging leaders programs which may broaden their perspectives about diversity and humanize the experiences of other students from diverse backgrounds (Ashlee et al., 2020).

Campus-Wide Approaches

Campus-based professionals should also ensure that the fraternity/sorority experience has a significant voice in broader, campus wide diversity and inclusion efforts. The participants held implicit biases of anti-Blackness and were clearly systemic in nature. Efforts to increase White racial consciousness among NIC members as well as facilitate greater inclusion of its chapters could follow efforts to culture change as with similar social issues as sexual assault and hazing (Ashlee et al, 2019). A campus-wide orientation is an approach utilized in other campus culture change efforts to contextualize institutional history, traditions, and culture. Whiteness permeates more than traditionally white fraternities and should be treated as a campus-wide approach.

Efforts to educate white students about race issues also can require a disproportionate amount of time and draw resources away from the needs of Students of Color and recenter whiteness by allowing them to control cocurricular spaces or programming (Applebaum, 2010). Instead, fraternity/sorority professionals can disrupt the white institutional presence by centering diverse voices through inclusion of culturally-based organizations (Cabrera et al., 2016; Gusa, 2010). Fraternity/sorority professionals should clearly communicate all of the leadership and involvement opportunities for membership across all councils to include culturally-based organizations, so that students are aware of timelines and membership processes to have more accurate information.

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Conclusion

The behaviors described in this study were (un)conscious to white fraternity men as were their own positionality within whiteness. It is more likely that the behaviors and language presented in this study continue to perpetuate the "post-racial" discourse and further entrenches white supremacy. To the white fraternity men in this study, race was a convenient and visible identity which they appropriated to assume marginality in their fears of dispossession as *White Iverson*. There was a complete lack of recognition of the different ways in which students develop their racial identities and white fraternity men fail to recognize the power and privilege their identity has over other student Communities of Color. Their claims to be "colorblind" does not acknowledge the complexity and nuances of whiteness, which is ultimately assumed to be an individual student experience. Yet, the tenets of white supremacy are conscious and ubiquitous in the male protest masculinity within this study. Since many campus advisors are also fraternity/sorority affiliated, it is particularly important to support and direct them in unpacking and questioning their own experiences to avoid replicating or reinforcing problematic practices. If we do not, we will continue to perpetuate White Iverson in fraternity men.

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