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NO SAFE SPACES: INSTITUTIONALLY WASHED OUT

BY

JORDAN KING

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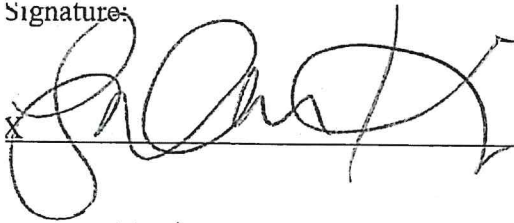


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Date: 4/11/23

NO SAFE SPACES: INSTITUTIONALLY WASHED OUT

BY

JORDAN KING

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

2023

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Abstract

Prior literature has shown that black and brown bodies (BBB) are policed and victimized at higher rates than their white counterparts within the criminal justice system. The criminalization of school discipline is a microcosm of 'big' criminal justice. Criminal justice measures were implemented within schools as a means of maintaining 'safety.' Policing in schools perpetuates punishment disproportionality and maintains similar disproportionalities as the 'big' criminal justice system in terms of for whom and how severely it is applied. Meaning that regardless of the school's demographics or student backgrounds, black and brown bodies are punished at a higher rate than their white counterparts. Prior literature has already shown that black and brown youth are policed at higher rates within schools than their white counterparts and that school demographics also have an effect on racialized school discipline. However, prior research is limited in its ability to take into account the potential interconnectivity of these multilevel findings.

This research uses Wacquant's theory to explain the intentional holes in institutions that are used as a means of maintaining social control and Racial/Ethnic Threat to negate the idea of 'safety.' Based on past research, the purpose of this study is to correlate the disproportional use of punishment on minorities at the individual level and the institutional level. This research controls for prior misconduct and/or prior criminalization, finding that BBBs continue to be punished at higher rates, regardless of the demographics of the school. The findings of this research allude to the reality of these discriminatory practices; they are not to maintain 'safety', but could be interpreted as institutional means of control aimed to preserve and perpetuate systems of marginalization and oppression.

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Introduction

The use of punitive discipline within schools has been suggested to reflect larger responses seen throughout the criminal justice system against racial/ethnic minorities (Kupchik, 2010; Hirschfield, 2008). Given their impact, the individual and educational outcomes associated with these measures have been researched at length. Scholars from a variety of disciplines have identified the issues and adverse effects associated with criminalized disciplinary practices in school settings. Although the negative effects of disproportionate punishment practices have been researched, discussed, and contested, they continue to persist.

While the literature on school discipline is notable, research has yet to fully investigate how interactions between the individual and school influence punishment outcomes. Prior research does not overtly address the interconnected nature of the educational institution. Within schools, individual actors, other institutions, ideologies, and public sentiments all influence and are influenced by educational practices and policies. Similarly, vestiges of conventional thought and behavior influence students' feelings of self-worth, capability, and anxiety. This, in turn, shapes their actions and self-perceptions within educational settings.

This insight suggests that ongoing research should assess individual and school-level factors while enlisting various disciplinary perspectives. Accomplishing this may provide a more holistic examination of racially disproportionate school punishment. Building on this, this study extends prior work by using a multi-level and cross-disciplinary approach to critically examine the notion that school discipline serves as a means of providing 'safety' and 'security.' Such an examination provides a more comprehensive assessment of the meticulously placed holes in the institutional foundations of education that perpetuate the cyclical nature of discriminative school punishment practices.

Setting the theoretical background and empirical groundwork for this study are the United States' marginalizing educational foundations, its recent coupling with the criminal justice system, and the perpetual stigmatization of minority Americans post-

slavery. Past research has exhausted resources and time – pointing out practices within criminal and juvenile justice that are inherently discriminatory yet justified as a means of maintaining ‘safety’ (Advancement Project, 2010; Bartley, 1995; Burns & Crawford, 1999; Freeley & Simon, 1992; Newman, 1984; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Simon, 2007; Simson, 2014; Skiba, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 1999; Toby, 1998). Research has also found aspects of race-based discrimination within schools, not only on the individual level (Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards, & Stevenson, 2014; Anand & Krosnick, 2005; Cauffman, et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1997; Lemert, 1951; Novak, 2019; Sealey-Ruiz & Green, 2015; Sampson & Laub, 1992) but also at the institutional level (Level 1→Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards, & Stevenson, 2014; Anand & Krosnick, 2005; Cauffman, et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1997; Lemert, 1951; Novak, 2019; Sampson & Laub, 1992; Sealey-Ruiz & Green, 2015;) (Level 2→Balfanz, Byrnes, & Hornig Fox, 2015; Bowditch, 1993; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010; Ekstorm et al., 1986; Henry, 2009; Kupchik, 2010; Lacoé & Steinberg, 2018b; Losen, 2011; Marchbanks et al., 2015; Peguero & Bracy, 2015; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Rios, 2011; Watts & Erelles, 2004; Way, 2012; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

Current evidence suggests that school discipline and punishment have been experienced disproportionately among racial/ethnic minority youth. The connections through disciplinary research indicate discriminatory school punishment disproportionately affects black and brown bodies from a variety of backgrounds within their different school communities. Logical deductive reasoning led to the application of Wacquant’s theory by investigating the foundations of the institution of education. Based on past research, the purpose of this study is to formally connect the disproportional use of punishment on minorities, individually and institutionally. Informed by prior findings, it is hypothesized and expected that the punitive measures used against black and brown bodies in schools will remain more frequent and severe, regardless of school demographics, than the punishment experienced by white students. Then the research can conclude that these discriminatory practices do not aid in the maintenance of ‘safety,’ but are institutional means of control aimed to preserve and perpetuate systems of marginalization and oppression.

Literature Review

On Schooling and Education: A History of Social Reproduction

When examining the relationship between minorities and school discipline, the first thing is to recognize how this population has been treated throughout history. History illustrates that education has largely served as a tool to perpetuate systems of social reproduction. Educational stimulation sparks imaginative and creative thinking that can lead to increased productivity, invention, and innovation (Goldin, 1999). When European nations came to the Americas, their goal was to increase their wealth and expand their empire. Unbeknownst to the Europeans, they would encounter natives on this land, ensuring that they not only became teachers but also learners. Consider the following from Urban and colleagues (2019:1):

“They (Europeans) and the Native Americans with whom they came in contact engaged in a process of cultural exchange that was educative in the broadest meaning of that term. Two “old worlds” had met, and the inhabitants of neither would be the same again.”

European colonization shaped much of the developed world. Europeans were ‘entitled’ to rule because their white skin indicated purity (Hole, 2000). This idea of superiority fueled the expansion of their empire, resulting in the establishment of schools to indoctrinate people all over the world into assimilating to their ideas. People with pigmented skin were deemed savages. Colonizers demonized their vibrant cultures, languages, and customs. Europeans stripped people of color around the world of their primitive and uncivilized ways to ‘help’ them. In return, all the colonized people had to do was swear allegiance to a king they would never see. Europeans believed this pledge and the unlimited use of these lands' resources for empirical financial gain were the least these colonized people could do in return for the Europeans' ‘kindness.’ Europeans, and eventually Americans, colonized minority lands to ‘save them from themselves,’ claiming that without their intervention, these places would have never known societal or technological advancements similar to those of their colonizers. Although the minorities

on American soil were excluded from this education drenched in white saviorism and instead subjected to hard labor while living in constant fear of violence.

Schools were among the first institutions built by European colonists because they considered education a “critical input to productivity and thus to economic growth.” (Goldin, 1999, p.1) Education is essential for democracy, enhances citizenship, helps people better understand their surroundings, and fosters community when good content is consumed with pure intentions. Meaning that education, as a practice, must not be sullied by content with unchecked biases. The educational institution, however, filters its content to serve multiple communities, religions, and other institutions. Here, the institution of education informs the actors (people) in the institutions they work in, live in, and interact within (Goldin, 1999). European colonial education was motivated by the expansion of their empire and filtered its content to serve that purpose. The foundation of American education was based on the European structure, while simultaneously making changes as a means of making our institution of education fit the country’s foundational needs by filtering the educational content and the way it is consumed (America’s Library, 2021).

The United States was founded on ‘rightful’ racial discrimination, and this has become a fundamental aspect of our state (Cochran et al., 2019). Originally, the institution of education denied access to anyone who was not white and able-bodied. The American South took this frame of thinking one step further; popular culture claimed that slavery was the ‘natural’ order and that minorities, people with disabilities, and women were biologically inferior to their white men (Hole, 2000). Cultural minorities, like people of color and women, were sold and traded as property, dehumanizing them in the eyes of the dominant cultures. Property meant to fill any desire of their owners. The othering of cultural minorities at this time served a greater purpose in society.

During the Colonial Period (1607–1775), also referred to as the Pre-Revolutionary War period, slaves had no legal access to formal education in the United States (Goldin, 1999). Denying slaves access to education served as a mechanism for the ruling class to continue to profit from the massive amounts of free labor slaves provided. By denying slaves education, it ensures the continued control of minorities for generations because “education directly enhances productivity, and thus the incomes of those who receive schooling, by providing individuals with useful skills.” (Goldin, 1999.

p.1) The exclusivity of our nation during this era shaped our foundations and, subsequently, the foundations of all our prosocial institutions. American foundations were peculiar in ensuring the social production of systems that continue to handicap minorities to privilege the powerful.

Minorities had been cast as incapable of education, yet developed literacy during the colonial era. The 75 years between the confirmation of the U.S. Constitution (1787) and the Emancipation Proclamation (1862) marked the formation of our nation as well as the expansion of power for individual states. The southern states passed legislation to ensure that enslaved people were never taught to read or write. For example, various pieces of Louisiana legislation passed in 1830 prohibited teaching slaves to read. To that effect, the law passed in Louisiana inspired similar laws throughout the South: Georgia and Virginia in 1831, Alabama in 1832, South Carolina in 1834, and North Carolina in 1835—all of which limit educational opportunities for minorities. In that same vein, the Missouri Anti-Literacy Law (1847) prohibited enslaved people from assembling in any capacity without law enforcement being present. Southern legislation during this time targeted minorities, ensuring that they could not come together to read and/or write. The institution of school at this time consists of students assembling in classrooms to learn and perfect their reading, writing, and problem-solving skills. These southern laws effectively made education illegal for black and brown bodies. Historians discovered that even black and brown bodies found ways to educate themselves, gaining literacy and knowledge despite being denied formal education. For minorities, these overt and covert approaches to education operated simultaneously with the underground railroad. Freeing slaves, giving them literacy skills, and educating them as a means of protesting human bondage (United States, 1995; Urban, Wagoner, & Gaither, 2019). Lincoln's 1862 emancipation proclamation freed the slaves. In the northern states, slaves who had been freed legally then had the opportunity to attend segregated schools. However, in the South, the legislation from earlier years aided in the continuation of *De Jure* segregation, defying the overall legislation of the nation. This *de jure*, or intentional, segregation of minorities from schools in the south continued because of the earlier legislation even after the Civil Rights Movement's official ending in 1865.

At the start of the 20th century, things were changing slowly but surely for black and brown students. Post-Civil War, racial and ethnic minorities were deemed separate but equal, and the Great Migration had racial and ethnic minorities moving to the Midwest and North from the segregated, discriminatory violence of the South. Booker T. Washington, a freed slave and the first black educator at Tuskegee University, and the Great Migration gave black and brown bodies hope: hope for upward social mobility, better opportunities, and more freedoms and protection. Unfortunately, moving didn't stop racism, and one positive role model did not stop systematic racism. De jure segregation continued even after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* verdict, which deemed such laws unconstitutional. Not to mention *de facto* segregation, which prolonged integration efforts in schools and negated legalities by separating people due to their apparent characteristics (like race, immigration status, language, and income) (Goldin, 1999).

The treatment of black and brown youth in schools during this time was a microcosm of their treatment within society. De facto segregation in the South was fueled by the othering or demonization of black and brown people's observable characteristics; examples of the characteristics used to other people in our society are skin color, spoken language, hair, and socio-economic status. Martindale (1996: 21), for instance, writes: "Negative stereotypes of African Americans have been deeply ingrained in Anglo Americans since Africans were first brought to this country in chains."

In various ways, minorities have challenged, adapted to, and stood counter to social oppression. These adaptations have been continually met with policies that perpetuate systems of oppression and disadvantage by limiting avenues for socio-cultural, political, and economic mobility. Black and brown people have constantly fought against the hierarchical system that our nation's foundations established. Some examples of these movements towards change for the Hispanic community include the ever-changing immigration laws for access to cheap Mexican and Latinx labor, the unfair deportation of 3.8 million people during "Operation Wetback" (1953–1958), and the establishment of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund. Movements towards equality for the Black/American American community include

the signing of the Civil Rights Act, the Montgomery bus boycotts, the Freedom Rides, Martin Luther King Jr. launching the demonstrations in Birmingham, the March on Washington, and *Loving v. Virginia*.

Echoing structures ensuring the oppression of minorities within society, schools too have created oppressive conditions that limit the advancement of the marginalized. The history of minorities fighting for their rights also applies to their rights within schools; examples include *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Little Rock Nine, the Greensboro Four, Ruby Bridges, and Latin students walking out of their Los Angeles schools for language discrimination. Institutional practices often nest within larger social norms that reflect dominant social scripts, meaning that institutional practices and policies often criminalize and demonize those with a minority or marginalized status (Sleeter, 1996).

The means to effectively change the American school system and its peculiar foundations as a pro-social institution has been researched. The Civil Rights Data Collection of 2013-2014 and an overview of what we, as a discipline, do and do not know about school discipline reform were published by Steinberg and Lacroe in 2017. Although the negative effects of these policies have been researched, discussed, and combated, they persist (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2021). Past research has pointed out that practices that perpetuate discrimination outcomes are often justified as providing the means of maintaining ‘safety.’ Regardless of the resources and time put into finding solutions for this peculiar institution, it persists. Some believe this is because past research has underestimated the cyclical nature of discrimination in that the institution of education is built (Skiba et al., 2011).

The ‘Holes’ in American Educational Institutions

Beyond the educational system, research has examined the discrimination and criminalization of black and brown bodies within society. Russell (1998) has connected the development and operation of the criminal justice system to the historically negative role of race. Russell (1998) found that the criminal justice system lacks checks and balances when it comes to racial discrimination. Yet, regardless of any regulation that prohibits racial discrimination, it persists. The same can be said about the experiences of

black and brown bodies within American educational institutions. To understand these institutional holes and apply them to this body of research, by using sociologist Loïc Wacquant's theory.

First, the instrumental functions that institutions serve for society must be unpacked. Institutions were created to establish overarching rules and norms for the standards of individual behaviors. This mold ensures that all individual actors are cast into set roles and guarantees limitations in their conduct. Institutions can be identified by their endurance and persistence over time. Institutions highlight practices, conflicts, identities, power dynamics, and aversions to change (Martin, 2004). To simplify, institutions are like cookie cutters, and individuals are a sheet of cookie dough. Regardless of the characteristics of the cookie dough, it can be assumed that the cookies are all going to be similar to each other because the same cookie cutter was used.

Wacquant argued that "*Peculiar Institutions*" are institutions that operate (almost cyclically) to define, maintain, and control the sociocultural, economic, and political positioning minorities have in society (Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2003). Wacquant presents four specific peculiar institutions, each of which ensures the continued oppression of minority groups. The incorporation of Wacquant's theory is important to note because the oppression of minorities as a whole is exacerbated at the school level. These include chattel slavery, the Jim Crow system, the ghetto, and the dark ghetto (2000). Wacquant's theory of peculiar institutions used the 'abrupt' end of slavery and the immediate installation of mass incarceration practices to aid in defining and describing "peculiar institutions" as a whole. In 1865, the United States of America abolished slavery, but it was immediately replaced with mass incarceration, which has also been called modern slavery (Alexander, 2020; Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2000). Chattel slavery allowed for the continuation of racial divisions post-slavery to maintain the racial domination of popular culture (white people) by racializing the prison system. Once the 13th Amendment abolished slavery, the Jim Crow system, another peculiar institution, was almost immediately implemented within the American South (Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2002), allowing racial segregation and discrimination.

The Jim Crow system provided dominant classes the opportunity to continue to profit from minority work by paying their newly freed slaves next to nothing and divided

the South into factions by restricting where black and brown people could live, congregate, go to school, and even where they could use the restroom. Not being able to buy land or gain wealth effectively through the Jim Crow system is still adversely affecting black and brown people and communities to this day (Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2002).

Leading to Wacquant's next peculiar institution – the ghetto. The ghetto is formally defined as having “a particular racial component, and as being defined by social isolation, residential segregation, gross inequality, consistent poverty, and crime” (Oxford Bibliography, 2021). The inner city was created to keep marginalized and oppressed groups locked into their social positions. Refusing access to minorities for upward mobility by denying them the resources needed to succeed. Dominant classes migrated to the suburbs, taking their money, property values, and taxes with them. The creation of ghettos stagnated minorities further by denying the schools within the ghettos federal aid for qualified teachers and resources, while also ignoring other prosocial programs that aided minority communities like welfare (Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2002).

Wacquant describes the ghetto as an ‘ethno-critical prison’ that encases minorities and denies them material goods and opportunities. Ghettos are similar to prisons because they are both institutions of forced confinement, but the ghetto is a social prison, whereas prisons are judicial (Wacquant, 2000). Modern examples of this peculiar institution can include subtle but decisively exclusionary actions like hiring based on perceptions of names, microaggressions, racialized stop and searches, no-knock warrants, stand-your-ground laws, cultural appropriation, and disproportionate punishment in schools. These types of discriminatory actions are artfully woven into all our pro-social and peculiar institutions, allowing these institutions to regulate and continue to use overt discriminatory actions while also simultaneously incorporating covert methods.

Finally, the last institution discussed within Wacquant’s theory is the dark ghetto and carceral apparatus, an era that followed the 1960s when minorities faced mass incarceration. As ghettos started to disappear, prisons started to appear and disproportionately target black and brown bodies. Wacquant asserted that slavery and mass imprisonment are ‘genealogically linked’ and that prisons are used as a means of

controlling minorities (Alsagga, 2022; Wacquant, 2002). Examples of the racialization of the carceral apparatus include mass incarceration, ice detention of immigrants, police brutality, and nationalism. The discrimination in schools against minorities is a microcosm of minority treatment in the criminal justice system. The incorporation of Wacquant's theory is a useful stepping stone from the criminal justice system to minorities in schools. Disproportionate minority discrimination within the institution of education shows that even the institution that houses our greatest resource, children, seeks to maintain the established power dynamic just like the other institutions.

Other 'Peculiar Institutions' Influence on American Schools

Wacquant's theory alludes to the actors of the popular or dominant culture justifying their mistreatment of minorities through the pre-Civil Rights established social hierarchy. Other 'peculiar institutions' or means of formal control have also informed the discrimination black and brown bodies feel in schools.

The association of criminality with pigmented skin has existed since the creation of our nation; it is a popular stereotype that evolved in the 1970s (Mauer, 1999) that shifted young black men from committing petty crimes to becoming ominous criminal predators. Russell (2002) explained this shift as a widely recognized transition to the 'criminal black man.' However, the association of black and brown bodies as 'animal-like' made a consistent and uniform shift to associating black and brown bodies with deviance and crime in 1970. 1970 was the year when television programs went from 15 minutes to 30 minutes and the media's focus turned to "action" and "eyewitness" news. The media's new format for news presentation relied on captivating their viewers with copious amounts of short, fast-paced news stories. This revamping of the news format is still popular today and allows the media to define rather than reflect what is happening within society (Barak, 1994; Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1978). The media accounts for 95 percent of the public's primary source of information (Graber, 1980; Surette, 1992). Research suggests that the media is the main source of public knowledge on crime and justice (Hans & Dee, 1991; Roberts & Doob, 1990; Russell, 1998; Surette, 1998). Also, higher reliance on the media (without questioning or researching) when it comes to

criminal justice and punishment is commonly found among people with lower intelligence (Pickett et al., 2015).

Robert Young made an even deeper connection to race in the media, coupling the racial prejudice that the prevailing media presented (through continual imagery of minorities associated with criminal activity) with aggressive attitudes towards criminals and criminal justice. Young concluded that concerns about crime increase the likelihood of gun ownership among white males who are prejudiced (1985). The media's portrait of black and brown bodies is a pedagogical tool to ratify racial threats. Teaching people about who commits crimes and the people who keep the dominant white race safe from them. The criminal justice system within the media is a system that works for viewers by inflating the severity and frequency of criminal activity, subsequently ending all news stories in a manner that positively highlights the system and its actors for maintaining the dominant culture's safety (Olga Tsoudis, 2000).

Then, this false sense of reality that people have, thanks to their over-reliance on the media, is used as a population indicator (through voting) for the development of the criminal justice system. Haney-López (2014) deemed this aspect of manipulating racial affairs 'Dog Whistle Politics.' Dog Whistle Politicians use their wealth to manipulate society's perceptions, usually on race, to win elections. Garnering support for regressive and counterproductive policies by pandering to uneducated white voters that base their decisions on skewed media sources. The policies weaken the middle class, make the rich richer, maintain social divides, and further the cyclicity of racial discrimination. Post-racial ideology and support of more punitive measures are held by people who do not have fear or experience being victimized, like white men (Beckett, 1999; Tesler, 2016; Haney-López, 2014). Politicians pander because it works; the policies they strategically promote continue to limit minority social power and status, maintain stratification among Americans, and make them even richer. Haney-López, author of *Dog whistle politics: How coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class* (2014). Haney-López explains that "Conservatives cannot simply walk away from racial pandering, as they've been too successful... Nine out of ten of its (the Republican Party's) voters are white, as are 98% of its elected officials across the country. More than one in every three residents of the United States today is nonwhite. In that context, the level of

homogeneity achieved by Republicans just doesn't happen by accident; it has taken tremendous effort to transmogrify (meaning to transform something surprisingly or magically) the GOP into the 'white man's party'." (p.212) This demographic is the same one that put all the peculiar institutions and their measures to maintain racial hierarchy into play. Haney-López's (2014) idea of an effort to create a political party that seeks to maintain 'traditional' values validates Wacquant's theory (2002) of institutions intentionally creating holes in their foundations as a means of maintaining their social control.

Pandering through small victories and publicized 'steps in the right direction' also affects minority voters. Haney-López (2014) stated that "short-lived victories slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance... Racial patterns adapt. Or, to switch from the passive voice, strategic individuals adapt race." (p.xii) This quote lacks the cross-disciplinary understanding that it isn't the fault of the individuals that adapt racial understanding, but the institutional holes that allow for this type of pacification and then regression to the mean to go on unchecked. Since Obama's time in office, people have used his presidency to negate the existence of institutionalized racism and racism in general. People who consider themselves colorblind or live in a post-racism world do so by claiming that racism doesn't exist anymore solely because of Obama's presidency. Americans' ideas about race and political beliefs are significantly more polarized than before our first black president (Tesler, 2016). To that effect, Wacquant's definition of peculiar institutions can apply to the intuitions of mass media, criminal justice, and the electoral and government systems, which have also played a role in covertly maintaining the racial hierarchy established with our nation's foundations. These peculiar institutions can continue racialized punishment in schools by influencing the actors within the educational institution. The influence of these peculiar institutions on educational institutions affects individual actors (students, teachers, and police) and the social environment. Schools foster the discriminative use of punitive punishment on black and brown bodies within them.

America's foundation affecting Prosocial Institutions– Schools

The educational institutions' discriminatory nature has been studied at length (Skiba et al., 2011). Although the research surrounding the cyclical nature of the racialized and discriminatory usage of punitive measures in schools has yet to yield lasting results, peculiar institutions explain the othering and belittling of minorities as a process where black and brown bodies, rather than their behaviors, are criminalized. The ruling class uses this criminalization to maintain social control over black and brown bodies. “It is important to note that the perception of the black male, as he exists in the collective mindset, is a socially constructed abstraction” (Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015). Many social institutions have peculiar foundations, working in covert and overt ways to crystallize black and brown bodies within our society as the deviant or criminal ‘other.’ The peculiar social institutions unconsciously influence the individual actors within them, solidifying their perception of black and brown bodies within all American social institutions as a means of formal control.

Formally Defining Racial/Ethnic Threat

To assess the racialization and discriminatory nature of punitive discipline in schools, the theories that informed our definition of Racial/Ethnic Threat and how these theories expanded over many fields must be understood. This research uses a formal definition of Racial/Ethnic Threat to create a connection and a universally consumable definition for all disciplines. The idea of our institutional foundations being corrupt has been expressed in many different ways over time and has been called multiple names. Hubert Blalock argued (1967) that at a macro-social level, the presumed threat to the white majority by blacks (and browns) was both economic and political; he called this *Power Threat*. Michel Foucault (1997) saw schools as institutions of social control and believed that they have been since their establishment, social control being fundamental to sociology (Conrad, 1992; Durkheim, 1893; Medina & McCraine, 2011). *Theoretical Minority Threat* claims that the need for social control will grow as the population of minorities grows, concerning whites (Welch, 2018). Operationalizing *Minority Threat* for study incorporates high arrest rates (Mosher, 2001), expansive policing capabilities (Kent & Jacobs, 2004), and high incarceration rates (Jacobs & Carmichael, 2001) for

minorities, implying an implicit connection within the policymakers or actors minds that race equals' crime (Kupchik, 2009; Payne & Welch, 2010; Peguero & Shekarkhar, 2011; Rocque & Paternoster, 2011; Welch & Payne, 2010; Welch & Payne, 2012). Liska's (1992) findings on *Social Threat* proposed that "increases in social threat generate increases in social control but decreases in social threat do not generate a decrease in social control, particularly in organizational forms of control. Once established, internal processes of organizations maintain them." (p.188)

Ethnic Threat suggests that when an increase of out-group members in an in-group community is perceived by community members, it makes them uneasy. The in-group members become hyper-focused on the out-group actions that coincide with their negative stereotypes, increasing prejudice towards the out-group members and, in turn, undermining social cohesion (Phinney, Chavira, & Tate, 1993). Research shows that the presentation of negative stimuli regarding your in-group (*Ethnic Threat*) during adolescence causes an overall decrease in ethnic group concepts and self-esteem (Laurence, Schmid, & Hewstone, 2019). *Racial Threat* heightens the perception of risk, which punitive measures try to counteract (Chiricos, Welch, & Gertz, 2004; Welch Payne, Chiricos, & Gertz, 2011; Welch & Payne, 2010; Welch & Payne, 2012; Welch, 2018). *Power Threat*, *Minority Threat*, *Social Threat*, *Ethnic Threat*, and *Racial Threat* are all synonyms; theories that go hand-in-hand with peculiar institutions, asserting that all minorities are criminals and that 'criminality' needs to be socially controlled (Blalock, 1967; Blumer, 1958; Crawford, Chiricos, & Kleck, 1998; Liska, 1992; Stewart, Martinez, Baumer, & Gertz, 2015; Wacquant, 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; Welch, 2018.)

Critical Race Theory also coincides with Wacquant's peculiar institutions because it proposes that white supremacy and hierarchical systems have indefinitely marginalized communities of color, despite legal recourse and reform (Crenshaw, 1995; Bell, 1980). *Critical Race Theory* was developed by scholars of color in the 1980s who sought to understand the intersectionality of law, race, racism, and social power, taking an interdisciplinary approach to improving the modern oppression of black and brown bodies (Crenshaw, 1995; Carbado, 2011; Crenshaw, 2011; Crenshaw et al., 2011; Matsuda et al., 1993). The core ideologies of *Critical Race Theory* are that race is socially constructed and performative; racism is institutionalized in society; to understand racial

issues, social and historical context is needed; and finally, to gain clarity of the realities of racial discrimination, there is a need to “look to the bottom” to understand the problems within our society that racial discrimination creates and to develop solutions (Carbado, 2011).

Most importantly, *Critical Race Theory* claims that race is a social concept rather than a matter of biology (Carbado, 2011; Lopez, 1994), exposing the legal construction of race (Lopez, 2006; Gomez, 2010). Race has been depicted throughout American history as a powerful tool used to maintain the superiority of whiteness by keeping people of color down (Harris, 1993; Larbado, 2011; Lopez, 2006; Kang, 2000). “This thing we call *race*” (Adelman, 2013) is understood through complex processes—influenced by racial stigma, stereotypes, and implicit bias brought on by differences in perception and what constitutes normative behavior (Jeffries, 2006; Dovidio et al., 2000; Lenhardt, 2004; Jordan, 1968; Harris, 1993; Marshall, 1987; Ozawa v. United States, 1922; Gomez, 2007; Moran & Carbado, 2008; Foner, 1988; Woodward, 1974; Tolnay & Beck, 1995; Loving v. Virginia, 1967; Kang, 2005; Greenwald et al., 2009; Duncan, 1976; Sagar & Schofield, 1980; Hing et al., 2008). A founder of *Critical Race Theory* claims that white supremacy is the foundation of the American political and legal systems, making them impenetrable to reform (Crenshaw, 1995). Blalock’s (1967) *Racial Threat Theory* builds upon *Critical Race Theory*’s understanding of the racial power dynamic within the United States, which was built and maintained by slaves and will never be stable due to centuries of discrimination. *Critical Race Theory* claims that it is not the zero-tolerance discipline that constantly targets black and brown bodies but the disproportional scrutiny of black and brown ‘prescribed’ behaviors within the school codes (Skiba et al., 2002; Carbado & Gulati, 2013). This is easy to comprehend when considering the history of the United States and the overt monopolization of power by them built into the foundations of our nation’s pro-social institutions as a means of maintaining this power (Simson, 2014; Wacquant, 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003). Accumulation of social and actual capital has afforded white people the privilege of not being concerned with their race, also known as the “*Transparency Phenomenon*,” which is the tendency to not think about the white-specific societal behaviors that people of color assimilate to (Flagg, 1993). For this aspect

of this research, Racial/Ethnic threat will refer to all these ideas, incorporating all these racial ideologies into one singular term in hopes of being inclusive and adaptable.

Racial/Ethnic Threat in Action

Racial threat theory helps to explain the maintenance and reproduction of a similar power dynamic of us versus them. The racial hierarchy was built into peculiar institutions to maintain this power dynamic, allowing for social class inequality, maintenance of the status quo, and a "white is right" mentality. Adverse effects of the condemning and repetitive nature of peculiar institutions include their disregard for minority youth and their allowance for the dominant race to neglect pro-social institutions. The criminalization of minorities within schools is a microcosm of their criminalization at the societal level (Pickett, Welch, Chiricos, & Gertz, 2014). However, the idea of youth is dualistic; popular society sees youth as vulnerable but high-risk.

Unfortunately, peculiar institutions do not only affect adult minorities; they also plague minority children, causing them to create a split identity as a means of passing through or navigating their first social environment outside the home and school. Black parents are proactive about teaching their children racial socialization to protect them within the society they must navigate (Stevenson, 1994, 1997). Adams-Bass, Bently-Edwards, & Stevenson (2014) conclude that "proactive racial socialization includes the acknowledgment of inequitable treatment of African Americans, pragmatic explanations, examples, and instructions about how to manage racial encounters so that children have a healthy suspicion, accounts of the historical and cultural legacy of African Americans, and affirmation of ethnic standards of beauty and attractiveness." (Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2005). Minority youth identify with the culture they are raised and socialized in, but they have to change who they are, what they believe, how they dress, the way they style their hair, and how they talk to adhere to the social norms set by the dominant race, which are expected of all students within this peculiar institution. These children are socialized in multiple contradictory ways, which impede their identity solidification process, but this assimilation goes without reward because minority children are still subjected to punitive measures within schools and communities. Discipline is administered based on a student's ability to adhere to the set social norms,

making students of color assimilate to the ‘white’ way of acting (Flagg, 1993). Becky Tatum (2017) concludes that “minority youths are cognizant of their social conditions and that frustration arising from these conditions leads to crime and violence.” (p.13)

Sociologically, there are multiple explanations for the potential deviance of black and brown bodies. Conditions due to socioeconomic status and structural barriers limit the advancement of lower-class youth. Aligning with the intentions of the peculiar institutions that plague black and brown bodies and are based on class stratification, social disorganization, and Durkheimian strain theories. Structural issues that African American youth face are primarily attributed to racial discrepancies rather than discrepancies of class (Tatum, 2017). Peculiar institutions have a way of continuing disparities throughout generations; this can be seen in minorities' navigation of the pro-social intuition of schooling. Without early educational development, black students are less prepared for formal schooling. Many black students were not given the opportunity, space, and support needed to develop their potential once they entered school because of teacher-held stereotypes that associate black students with laziness, low expectations, violence, and disregard for learning (Sealey-Ruiz & Green, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1997).

Classrooms with higher levels of minority students are given to teachers with fewer credentials and experience than their white peers. Also, black and Latinx students receive lower-quality teaching regardless of the racial/ethnic background of the teachers (YU, 2022). Jenks et al. (2001) aid in the understanding of these teaching disparities.

“The primarily white and middle-class teachers in our nation’s schools are ill-prepared in knowledge, skills, and attitude to teach for equity and excellence in multicultural classrooms. They cannot teach cross-cultural competency when they lack it themselves.” (p.99)

The disproportionality of suspensions and expulsions among black boys is attributed, in part, to this clash of cultures between them and their white teachers and administrators (West-Olatunji & Baker, 2006). The clash of cultures is formerly known as ‘Cultural Capital Theory’: when the races of the teacher (person with power) and the students (powerless) do not match, the mismatch results in “cultural misunderstanding

and misinterpretations which complicate teacher-student interactions (Milligan & Howley, 2015, p.44; Lareau & Weininger, 2003)”. Within schools made up of teachers who are white women, black boys' resistance to this feeling of powerlessness can be seen as deviant behavior (Hopkins, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Polite & Davis, 1999). This resistance is interpreted by the white teachers as a hostile violation of their norms rather than a difference in cultural understanding, making inner-city black and brown youth constantly feel misunderstood (Hopkins, 1997).

Black and brown bodies, especially in schools, are affected not only by their history and culture but also by how others perceive them, which then affects how they perceive themselves. Research has discussed that the majority of Americans gain knowledge about crime through the skewed lenses of the media. This reliance has also been connected to the fact that people within the dominant culture (white people) have limited to no experience with the realities of crime or black and brown cultures, for that matter. Popular culture is based on what applies to the masses, and with media turning from wholesome to 24 ‘action crime’; mass media created an ‘other’ (criminal/villain) who could be thwarted in the name of justice (police), and then everything would be as it was (returning to the status quo). The presentational shift seen in the media is associated with the evolution of stereotypes surrounding black and brown bodies, from young black and brown men committing petty crimes (before 1970) to them becoming widely recognized as ominous criminal predators (Mauer, 1999; Russell, 2002). Black and brown men were portrayed as physically threatening (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002), animal-like (Eberhardt, 2008), and problem-causing people (Croteau & Hoynes, 2017). The media's discussion of criminality hyperfocused on crimes committed by minorities, which influenced societal perception. Soon, the equation of criminality with BBB became subliminal, causing the discussion of criminality and crime to be interchangeable with the discussion of race within American society (Barlow, 1998; Russell, 1998). Research also indicates that the American public views the loss of black lives as “expected and unsurprising” (Pelled et al., 2021) because of their negative portrayal in the media and the cultural history that surrounds minorities and punishment (Losen & Martinez, 2013; Lynch, Gainey, & Chappell, 2016; Payne & Welch, 2018; Ramey, 2015; Welch & Payne, 2010, 2018). The media's coverage of juvenile violence when black and brown bodies are

involved aims to dissipate societal concerns for minority youth by desensitizing, vilifying, and distancing minority violence from the dominant cultures' experiences/social norms (Barlow, 1998; Larose et al., 2022). Societies' over-reliance on the media about crime informs their everyday perceptions of their safety, but it also creates a narrative that black and brown bodies are hypersensitive to and actively regulate their actions to avoid falling into. Black youth are immensely aware of the negative construction of their identities by mass media as well as the cyclical nature of American institutions to maintain the status quo, which translates into feelings of powerlessness.

The aforementioned narrative is about stereotypical perceptions of minorities, and when black and brown bodies are in situations that could affirm the stereotypical narratives, it causes them to experience stereotype threat (created by Steele & Aronson 1995; Inzlicht & Schmader 2012; Steele et al. 2002). Stereotype threat is triggered by certain situations or environments that cause someone to fear fulfilling a negative stereotype about their in-group (race, gender, age, etc.). Although stereotype threat is situational rather than biological or based on a person's personality, it still has significant implications for people's animus and navigation of their world. Research suggests that when minorities are stigmatized and incorrectly perceived as dangerous, they become more likely to disengage from school, which could lead them to pursue deviant means of making ends meet, which could lead to incarceration or death (Brinkley-Rubinstein et al., 2014; Rocque & Paternoster, 2011). To that end, recidivism for black and brown students is attributed to the criminal justice-like punitive measure of school punishment. Youths' 'deviant' behavior follows them forever, which creates what Anderson deems a unique form of "double jeopardy" (2004). Double jeopardy here, inhibiting protections for minors who commit similar crimes in adulthood, thus creating a revolving door of incarceration (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003). Black and brown students in American schools experience adverse effects on society's perception of them and then adverse treatment of them. These black and brown children are not judged by their actions but by something they have no control over: the pigmentation of their skin.

Factors That Led to Criminal Justice Measures in Schools

In the 1990s, there was a rise in multiple-victim homicides in US schools. The rise in multiple-victim school violence was not new within our society, but Columbine was the first school shooting in middle-class America's backyard. Columbine was the first time that the violence, usually associated with black and brown bodies, happened to the dominant race; this sparked fear within the white community, and as such, it resulted in mass media representation. In the 1990s, mass media created national visibility for school shootings like Columbine, Sandy Hook, and more; school violence, drug use, and gang activity were on the rise. The abundance of juvenile violence in the media incited strong momentum and an immediate call to action to increase school safety (Frymer, 2009; Larose, Torres, & Barton, 2021). The American Psychological Association attributes juvenile violence to: (1) early exposure/use of drugs and alcohol; (2) easy access to weapons; (3) deviant peer group association; and (4) ubiquitous media violence (1993). The news focuses on negative events involving children since schools are perceived as a 'safe' place and because of societies' heuristic knowledge that deems children to be innocent and undeserving of violence (Gekoski, Gray, & Alder, 2012; Pelled et al., 2021; Pritchard & Hughes, 1997). However, the idea of youth is duly constructed; U.S. popular society sees youth as vulnerable but also as high-risk. Media exposure of juvenile violence is framed to immediately galvanize the American people based on mass hysteria but also dissipate concern by desensitizing and vilifying violence when it pertains to minorities (Larose et al., 2022). The desensitization and vilification are caused by the media's constant misconstruction of the realities of crime within our society (Barlow, 1998).

Following the tragedy of Columbine, all public schools increased their security responses, regardless of perceived affluence; but for some reason, these responses disproportionately affect black students and communities (Council on School Health, 2013; Hirschfield, 2010; Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Losen, 2011; NASSP, 2021; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). Later, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, written by President Bush, was presented as an opportunity to "streamline" students to set objectives rather than teaching them at their level, and by "sanctioning poor performance," rewards were given based on state performance (Bush, G.W., 2001). This act federally incentivized the

removal of lower-achieving students (black students score lower on standardized tests, they have low high school graduation rates, and they are more likely to be suspended or expelled) to special education programs, different schools, or by using the nationally unregulated zero-tolerance policies. “Pushing out” children at an insurmountable rate (Kupchik, 2010). The number of children who slipped through the educational gaps was insurmountable, and almost all were people of color (Finkel, 2010). More recent federal policy and the “Dear Colleague Letter” distributed by the Obama Administration have not been linked to an overarching positive change in the disparities in punishment or the black-white gaps in achievement (Finkel, 2010; Gordon, 2018).

To prevent further tragedies within our nation's schools, the Safe and Responsive Schools (SRS) Project was designed (Skiba & Rausch, 2013). The SRS project was meant to aid in the implementation of individual schools' preventive and comprehensive policies that addressed school violence and sought to improve student behavior. In reality, the SRS project aided individual institutions in disciplining students for their lack of assimilation to their implicit social curriculum (Skiba et al., 2006). The federal government stepped in with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act of 1994 and the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. These federal acts can be traced back to the implementation of zero-tolerance policies within American schools (Skiba & Rausch, 2013). Zero-tolerance disciplines students through punitive consequences as a means of preventing or deterring behaviors that individual schools deem undesirable (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Mallett, 2016; Stinchcomb et al., 2006; Teske, 2011). Schools that heavily rely on zero-tolerance policies have worse standardized testing results, lower reading scores, and lower math scores regardless of socioeconomic status (Morris & Perry, 2016; Rausch & Skiba, 2006).

Columbine was the first time the dominant class had been forced to realize they too were capable of violence; this sparked fear and an overzealous response of adding criminal justice-like punitive measures in schools to protect their children (Gallup, 2011; Muschert, Henry, Bracy, & Peguero, 2014; Muschert & Peguero, 2010; Simon, 2007). The ‘Columbine effect’ ensured the implementation of criminal justice like enforcers, technology, and disciplinary practices within schools across our nation, creating a lens for mandatory expulsion. The Columbine effect’s lens widened to the boundless zero-

tolerance policies that lack consistency between and within states and schools, implementing mandatory consequences for behaviors identified by individual institutions, like suspension and expulsion, to keep kids safe. (Advancement Project, 2010; Bartley, 1995; Burns & Crawford, 1999; Freeley & Simon, 1992; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Newman, 1984; Simon, 2007; Simson, 2014; Skiba, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 1999; Toby, 1998)

The School-To-Prison Pipeline: Adverse Effects of Criminal Justice Measures in Schools

Research suggests that the extreme use of school punishment and exclusion can contribute to the School-to-Prison Pipeline (STPP), which is a “pathway forcing youth out of school systems and into justice systems” (Heitzeg, 2009; Hirschfield, 2008; Kim, 2009; Kim et al., 2010; Mittleman, 2018; Rios, 2011; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Wald & Losen, 2003). As the aforementioned parental fears within schools became more frequent, the need to demonize ‘different’ kids within the schools and emulate the criminal justice system arose. Punitive measures that strike a structural resemblance to criminal punishment are becoming more commonly placed within the U.S. school system (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Fine et al., 2004; Foucault, 1997; Giroux, 2003; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2009, 2010; Parenti, 2000; Simon, 2007; Staples, 2000; Wacquant, 2001). Modern disciplinary technologies include locked and monitored doors, metal detectors, Security Resource Officers (SROs), security cameras, drug-sniffing dogs, performing regular locker searches (Finn & Servoss, 2015; Losen, 2015), detentions, teacher referrals to the principal, in-school and out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions (Losen, 2015; U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2014). Generally, out-of-school suspensions are one of the most common methods of disciplining students in American schools (Skiba & Knesting, 2001; Skiba et al., 1997). But studies suggest that removing ‘bad’ students does not improve the learning environment or deter other students from misbehaving (Ferguson, 2001; Kupchik, 2010; Morris & Perry, 2016; Skiba & Knesting, 2001).

Zero tolerance and punitive disciplinary measures may have been initially implemented to provide a ‘safe space’ for children to learn. Black male students are 2-3 times more likely to be suspended (Brooks, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg, 1999; Wald &

Losen, 2003). This has been shown to disproportionately impact racial/ethnic minority youth. This disproportionality has been observed throughout the years. Darensbourg et al. (2010) found thirty years of consistent research demonstrating disparities in the use of punitive and exclusionary punishment along racial lines. (Costenbader & Markson, 1994, 1998; Fenning & Rose, 2007; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Petterson, 2002; Skiba & Petterson, 1999; Skiba, Petterson, & Williams, 1997; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982)

“African Americans account for only about 16% of the total number of adolescents in the United States, they represent over 70% of the youth who are involved in school arrests and make up nearly 40% of the total youth currently imprisoned” (Brinkley-Rubinstein et al., 2014, p.25). (French-Marcelin & Hinger, 2017; Mendel, 2011; Puzanchera, 2009; Sentencing Project, 2010; United States Department of Education, 2012; Wolf, 2013). A similar study was done 5 years later by Emily Homer and Benjamin Fisher (2019), examining national-level data and finding that police in schools were associated with a higher arrest rate for all students based on the student demographics. The average school only has 1.65 arrests per year, but in their model, police within the school were associated with an additional arrest of 1.22 black students, but only 0.38 whites and 0.48 Hispanics per 1,000 students (Homer & Fisher, 2019). The public school population consists of less than 15 percent black boys, but they account for 23 percent of the expelled, 21 percent of the suspended, and 27 percent of the students who experience corporal punishment (Wes-Olatunji & Baker, 2006, p.3). These statistics emulate the criminal justice system's ‘stop-and-frisk’ and ‘stand your ground’ laws and policies, which aid in the disproportional treatment of minorities as a means of maintaining social control (Hirschfield, 2010; Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015).

Impact on Students and Schools

Student Level Outcomes

Unfortunately, peculiar institutions do not only affect adult minorities; they also plague minority children, causing them to create a split identity as a means of passing through or navigating in their first social environment outside the home: school. The counterintuitive idea popular society holds about youth is that they are vulnerable but

also high-risk. Students have many reasons to commit misconduct or deviant behaviors, but this study controls them all. From a developmental perspective, adolescents mark dramatic growth in the areas of the brain controlling impulse control, cognitive abilities, and psychosocial maturity. Since these are not fully developed, adolescents are increasingly vulnerable to general risk-taking and, in the extreme, crime (Cauffman, Cavanagh, Donley, & Thomas, 2016). “The combination of a limited cognitive-control system and an activated socio-emotional system offers an explanation for heightened risk-taking during adolescence.” (Cauffman et al., 2016). Experiencing exclusionary discipline during youth may create a labeling effect (Lemert, 1951). Labeling affects youths' self-conception, leading to more deviance, limiting their interactions with prosocial institutions and positive socialization, and causing institutional stigmatization (Novak, 2019; Sampson & Laub, 1992).

Black and brown students have even more developmental, sociological, and social minefields to navigate within educational institutions than their white counterparts. Developmentally, educated parents lead to a higher value on education, access to books, absorption of educational programs that are watched at home, reliability and use of a computer for educational purposes, and access to extra funds that can be used for educational purposes like museums and zoos. Without early educational development, black and brown students are less prepared for formal schooling. Black and brown youth are immensely aware of the stereotypes that are thrust upon them, having to remain hyper-aware of their educational disadvantages, their actions, and how others perceive their actions. Mathematics, starting with algebra, plays a critical role as a curricular gatekeeper; access to and achievement of higher levels of math can increase overall education and economic opportunity for students. But advanced mathematics is discarded from urban schools, leaving those students at a complete disadvantage (Lubienski, 2002). Black children and communities are associated with lower incomes, which leave little to no funds for extracurricular educational activities and cause parents to work more hours, so the children are left to consume whatever media they like (Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards, & Stevenson, 2014; Anand & Krosnick, 2005). It has been argued that repeated exposure to stereotypical depictions of black people, whether on the news or as a character in a TV show, not only creates negative racially-based arch typologies or

perceptions of black people for others but also negatively impacts black children's psychosocial development (Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards, & Stevenson, 2014; Adams & Stevenson, 2012; Berry, 2000; Brown & Witherspoon, 2002; Gorham, 1999; and Martin, 2008). Black kids watch significantly more television than their white peers (Bickham et al., 2003; Blosser, 1988; Roberts, 2000; Roberts & Foehr, 2008), as mass media is more readily available now than it has ever been (Brown & Marin, 2009), and children (ages 0-5) whose parents have lower education levels are associated with more TV time (Bickham et al., 2003).

Overexposure to the media can cause stereotype threat (created by Steele & Aronson 1995; Inzlicht & Schmader 2012; Steele et al. 2002). “Rocque and Paternoster (2011) suggest that black and brown students who are stigmatized and incorrectly perceived as dangerous may be more likely to disengage from school, thus precluding the pursuit of alternative means to gain income, which may include criminal activity and could lead to incarceration (Brinkley-Rubinstein et al., 2014)”. The stereotype threat and its effects have a cyclical nature when applied to black and brown youth, like a self-fulfilling prophecy. As a result of this, black parents are proactive about teaching their children racial socialization as a means of regulating and protecting them within the society they must navigate (Stevenson, 1994, 1997). Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards, & Stevenson (2014) conclude that “proactive racial socialization includes the acknowledgment of inequitable treatment of African Americans, pragmatic explanations, examples, and instructions about how to manage racial encounters so that children have a healthy suspicion, accounts of the historical and cultural legacy of African Americans, and affirmation of ethnic standards of beauty and attractiveness.” (Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2005)

Sociologically, there are multiple explanations for the potential deviance of black and brown students; examples include conditions due to their socioeconomic status and the structural barriers limiting the advancement of lower-class youth. These explanations are based on class stratification, social disorganization, and Durkheimian strain theories. Institutional issues that black and brown youth face are primarily attributed to racial discrepancies rather than discrepancies of class (Tatum, 2017). Becky Tatum (2017)

concludes that “minority youths are cognizant of their social conditions and that frustration arising from these conditions leads to crime and violence.” (p.13)

Negative consequences of exposure to punitive measures include school failure, repetition of grades, negative attitudes toward school/education in general, dropping out, loss of effective learning skills, lack of agency/dignity, and potential loss of earnings when poor families are expected to find childcare for the suspended/expelled child during the workday, as well as future unemployment (Balfanz, Byrnes, & Hornig Fox, 2015; Bowditch, 1993; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010; Ekstorm et al., 1986; Henry, 2009; Kupchik, 2010; Lcoe & Steinberg, 2018b; Losen, 2011; Marchbanks et al., 2015; Peguero & Bracy, 2015; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Rios, 2011; Watts & Erevelles, 2004; Way, 2012; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

School Level Outcomes

Racial threat theory suggests that when whites encounter a growing minority population within their communities, they racialize the minorities by using their social capital and power to enact legal controls over them. Racial threats encourage severe racialized practices so that whites can protect their power, privileges, dominance, and way of life (Blalock, 1967). Studies have confirmed that schools with copious amounts of minorities tend to be more punitive and arrest more minorities (Payne & Welch, 2010, 2015; Welch & Payne, 2010, 2012, 2018). The racialization of school discipline can be explained by implicit or inherent biases (Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavitti, & Shic, 2016; Goff, Jackson, Leone, Culotta, & DiTomasso, 2014; Kunesh & Noltemeyer, 2015; Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015); although, it is safe to assume, that peculiar institutions created those stereotypical racial divides as a means of maintaining white social hierarchy through formal control. The implementation of criminal justice-like punishment (formal control) in the institution of education increased the usage, frequency, and severity of punitive discipline in schools, thereby increasing the likelihood that black and brown students would experience punitive discipline. The incorporation of formal control of black and brown bodies, via inconsistent punitive punishment through surveillance, technology, and police presence within American schools, shifted disciplinary responsibility and heightened youths’ exposure to the effects of the criminal justice

system (Devine, 1996; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Lyons & Drew, 2006; Ramey, 2015; Simon, 2007).

The criminal justice-like aspects of punitive punishment can lead to the over-penalization of student behaviors that would have been handled internally but are then outsourced to the police (Devine, 1996; French-Marcelin & Hinger, 2017; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Na & Gottfredson, 2013; Nance, 2015; Theriot, 2009; Wolf, 2013). The transparency phenomenon maintains a 'white' way of thinking and acting, making minorities who do not conform to these social standards at risk when being themselves (Flaggs, 1993). Existing literature also reveals that an increased police presence in schools positively correlates with greater levels of punitive punishment for student behaviors that are developmental rather than criminal (Devine, 1996; French-Marcelin & Hinger, 2017; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Na & Gottfredson, 2013; Nance, 2015; Theriot, 2009; Wolf, 2013). An example of this is the fact that black and brown students are more likely to be disciplined for talking loudly, showing disrespect, or making minor threats (Skiba et al., 2002).

The racialization of punitive school discipline created the School-to-Prison Pipeline (STPP); STPP was deemed a negative byproduct of the punitive measures within schools that mirror those of the criminal justice system. (Bowels & Gintis, 1976; Fine et al., 2004; Foucault, 1997; Giroux, 2003; Heitzeg, 2009; Hirschfield, 2008; Kim, 2009; Kim et al., 2010; Kupchik, 2009, 2010; Mittleman, 2018; Parenti, 2000; Rios, 2011; Simon, 2007; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Staples, 2000; Wacquant, 2001; Wald & Losen, 2003) The use of Wacquet's peculiar institutions coupled with Racial Threat has ensured not only racial separation and the disproportional use of punishment based on race in schools, but it has also further disenfranchised the students within the most segregated and urban US schools. The students within the most segregated, urban schools will also experience separation by both race and poverty, with some schools having poverty rates of 90% or higher (Orfield et al., 2012). When poverty is at such a high concentration, it affects the schools' ability to effectively teach and have access to the things their students need. Funding for schools is allocated to the district based on the school communities' payment of property taxes. High concentrations of poverty mean

that the community is most likely not paying all or any of their property taxes, meaning the school has to beg for federal funding to get their students the bare minimum; this presents a stronger causal link to inequities in education than to racial segregation (Milligan & Howley, 2015; Reardon, 2011).

Individual Research and Research Concerning the School Level have Been Done, But no Multilevel analysis

Now that cross-disciplinary foundations are established, the next step is to make connections about why discriminatory punitive actions continue to be used in American schools. To address this question, multi-level analysis will be used to compare the discrimination of black and brown bodies within and between levels. This is how the current study comes into play, using data collected from the Delaware School Survey (DSS) of 2018. This year of data was chosen because it was the last year of ‘normalcy’ within the school before COVID-19 affected the students’ attitudes towards education, which has had a significant negative impact on student attitudes towards teachers, a disengagement from learning, and a belief that the content requested of them is too difficult (McLure, Koul, & Fraser, 2022).

The first goal of this study is to broadly examine the relationship between the peculiar foundations of our nation's institution of education: the history that modeled it, the power dynamics that maintained it, and the institutions that implemented negative associations (stereotypes) within their actions as a means of perpetuating it. Youth who experience school discipline are less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to have continued interactions with the criminal justice system (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003; Hirschfield, 2009; Kirk & Sampson, 2013; Lee, Courtney, Harachi, & Tajima, 2015; Liberman, Kirk, & Kim, 2014; Lopes et al., 2012; Sweeten, 2006; Wiley & Esbensen, 2016). Evidence shows that early exposure to CRJ systems for youth translates into lower levels of prosocial outcomes such as meaningful employment, marriage, homeownership, social stability, and additional “stakes in conformity” (Toby, 1957). In line with the theoretical propositions of strain and anomie (Agnew, 1992; Cohen, 1965; Merton, 1949), this can also lead to potential criminal adaptations as a way of making ends meet. The punitive measures used to discipline students, like the institution of criminal justice,

disproportionately target and grant more severe punishments to black and brown bodies when compared to their white counterparts. The disparities in punishment allude to the lack of structural consistency, like Wacquant's peculiar institutions and their foundational holes. However, without consistency in the severity of discipline, there becomes an incongruence between what and who experiences behavioral consequences (Darensbourg, Perez, & Blake, 2010; Skiba et al., 2006; Skiba, 2000).

Current Study

This study examines whether and how school discipline and punishment vary along racial/ethnic lines at the individual level (level 1). This effort also assesses the degree to which the demographic composition at the school-level contributes to racial/ethnic disparities at the individual level. To make theoretical sense of the results, Wacquant's notion of peculiar institutions and the Racial/Ethnic Threat framework will be used to make theoretical sense of both individual- and school-level outcomes. The first hypothesis reflects what the previous work has largely indicated:

Hypothesis 1: *Based on past research on the peculiar foundations of the institution of education and racial/ethnic threat, racial/ethnic minority youth have a higher likelihood of experiencing discipline/punishment than their white counterparts.*

Hypothesis 2: *In line with racial/ethnic threat perspectives, racial/ethnic minority youth attending schools with higher percentages of white students will experience more punishment than their white counterparts within the same school.*

The racial/ethnic threat framework encompasses and builds upon ideas presented by Blalock (1967), Foucault (1997), theoretical minority threat (Welch, 2018), power threat, minority threat, social threat, ethnic threat, racial threat, and critical race theory (Blalock, 1967; Blumer, 1958; Carbado, 2011; Conrad, 1992; Crawford, Chiricos, & Kleck, 1998; Crenshaw, 1995, 2011; Crenshaw et al., 2011; Durkheim, 1893; Liska, 1992; Matsuda et al., 1993; Medina & McCraine, 2011; Stewart, Martinez, Baumer, & Gertz, 2015). This combination creates an inclusive and adaptable racial/ethnic threat theory, which we, as a discipline, defined as a means of maintaining white superiority when faced with growing minority populations by using social capital and power to enact legal control over them (Blalock, 1967; Bell, 1980; Beger, 2002; Crenshaw, 1995; Skiba, 2000). To further the investigation of punitive disparities, this theoretical framework addresses the issue at a macro level.

Racial threat theories largely propose that greater levels of racial diversity increase the implementation, presence, and use of criminal justice-based policies and practices. When examined through this lens, the field has largely overlooked whether the racial/ethnic threat associated with minority students impacts their experience with school discipline when considering the socio-demographics at the school-level. To test this further, this study proposes that:

Hypothesis 3: *Racial/ethnic minority youth attending schools with higher percentages of white students will also experience more punishment than their minority peers attending predominantly minority schools.*

If hypothesis 3 yields statistically significant results, then Wacquant's theory can be used to explain the foundational issues within the institution of education. Working from a foundational perspective to rectify the discrimination in the institution of education, rather than constantly putting out small fires within and between the levels, creates a regression to the mean or stagnation. Pointing out the holes within the institution of education will shed light on its foundational problems and galvanize people into real change, unlike previous research that points out solutions to the problem of racialized punitive school punishment.

Methods

Data Source

This study analyzes data using the Delaware School Survey (DSS) of 2018. The Delaware School Survey dates back to 1989 and has been conducted by varying groups, such as the Delaware Legislature through the Delaware Health Fund and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. More recently, the University of Delaware's Center for Drug and Health Studies and its personnel conducted an anonymous study. Each year, the study is reviewed by the University of Delaware's Institutional Review Board as the questionnaire is completed by almost all of Delaware's public school 5th, 8th, and 11th graders. The survey collects data about the youth's socio-demographic background, school-based experiences, community context, exposure to alcohol and drug-related issues, the effectiveness of prevention programs, and family conditions. Students were asked to participate in the optional survey of 153 questions, but a very small number of schools and students elected not to participate. While the survey captures elementary, middle, and high school levels, this study only examines high school data collected in 2018. This wave of data provides the last year of in-person learning before the CoronaVirus (DSS, 2021).

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study captures measures related to school discipline/punishment. Specifically, youth were asked, "How often do you get suspended or expelled from school?" Youth could respond with either: 1) "never," 2) "before, but not in the past year," 3) "a few times in the past year," 4) "once or twice a month," 5) "once or twice a week," or 6) "almost every day." To capture whether the student had received a suspension or expulsion within the last year, these data were "dummy coded" into "yes" (1) or "no" (0) responses, making it a binary response. Table 1 shows that, on average, 18 percent of all the sampled youth reported being suspended and/or expelled at some point in the last year.

Table 1. Overview of Multi-Level Variables

Variables	Mean	Proportion	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Punished (Students who have been Suspended or Expelled from School)	0.18	18%	0.39	0	1
Percent of Black Students Between Schools	33.42	-	16.41	5.02	78.12
Black	0.29	30%	0.46	0	1
White	0.46	46%	0.49	0	1
Other	0.24	24%	0.43	0	1
Hispanic	0.19	19%	0.39	0	1
Male	0.49	50%	0.5	0	1
Disability Status	0.17	17%	0.37	0	1
Prior CRJ Experience	0.25	25%	0.43	0	1
Prior Misconduct/ Bad Behavior	3.68	-	4.25	0	45
Familial Bond	25.41	-	4.69	6	30
Educational Bond	3.1	-	1.23	0	5
Students Perception of School Climate	7.72	-	1.83	3	15
Percent of White Teachers	81.64	-	10.68	27	92
Percent of White Admin	63.85	-	25.29	0	100
Number of School Dropouts	20.33	-	16.13	0	52
Total Chronic Absences	246.18	-	154.54	20	533
Number of Out-Of-School Suspensions	128.64	-	102.3	13	421
Number of On-Time Graduates	87.59	-	7.57	68.78	98.19

Independent Variables

The independent variables being examined include the student's race/ethnicity and the racial/ethnic composition of the school. To capture the student's race, they were asked, "Which of the following best describes you (choose only one)?" 1) "American Indian or Alaskan Native," 2) "Asian," 3) "Black or African American," 4) "White," 5) "Mixed," or 6) "other." This measure was collapsed from six categories to three, capturing whether the student reported being black, white, or other. To collect students' ethnic backgrounds, they were asked, "Are you Hispanic or Latino", to which they could reply: 1) "no", 2) "Mexican/Mexican American", 3) "Puerto Rican", 4) "Cuban or Cuban American", or 5) "other Hispanic or Latino". These data were combined, separated, and dummy coded to ensure categorical exclusivity. Table 1 reveals that 46 percent of the students report being white, 30 percent of students report being black/African American, and 24 percent of students report falling into another racial category. Finally, 19 percent of youth reported being Hispanic or Latino.

In efforts to measure the racial/ethnic composition of the school, data were pulled from Delaware's open census governmental data. Each school's composition by race was collected and combined with existing DSS data. These percentages are based on student enrollment by race; choices included "African American," "White," "Asian," "Native American," "Native Hawaiian," "Hispanic/Latino," and "multi-racial." The data were recoded into the schools' demographics of black, white, and non-white students. The percent black (PB) variable in Table 1 indicates that 13 percent of students report going to a predominantly black (51% or higher) school demographic.

Control Variables

As outlined above, prior research has identified various factors that have been found to influence the likelihood of receiving school discipline/punishment (suspensions or expulsions). These covariates include gender, disability status, and prior interactions with the criminal justice system (Doherty et al., 2015; Elliot et al., 1998; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2001; Hemez et al., 2020; Mowen et al., 2019; Turner, 2019; Wolfgang et al., 1985). First, to account for students' gender, the survey asks, "What is your gender?" Participants could answer 1) "male" or 0) "female." The female was assigned the contrast

category for the analysis. Table 1 shows that 50 percent of students surveyed identified as male, with the remaining half reporting as female.

The inclusion of disability types—such as learning, physical, and emotional disabilities—is vital, as research has shown that the presence of any disability can be a predictor of exclusionary discipline (Skiba et al., 2006). Respondents were asked, “Have you been identified by a doctor or other health care professional as having difficulty because of physical, learning, or emotional conditions or disabilities (mark all that apply)?” to which students could respond: 1) “No, I do not have any kind of disability.” 2) “Yes, I have a physical condition or disability,” 3) “Yes, I have a learning condition or disability,” or 4) “Yes, I have an emotional condition or disability.” Rather than accounting for any disabilities, the data was recoded into a binary response, converting the variable into students with at least one disability. Table 1 shows that about 17 percent of the students surveyed have at least one disability.

To account for students' previous interactions with the criminal justice system, they were asked: “How many times have you ever been arrested?” Responses included: 0) “0 times,” 1) “1 time,” 2) “2 to 3 times,” and 3) “more than 3 times.” Responses were re-coded to assess whether they had ever been arrested (1) or not (0). This measure was then combined with the survey item “How often do you get stopped by police?” Students were able to respond: 0) “Never,” 1) “Before, but not in the past year,” 2) “A few times in the past year,” 3) “Once or twice a month,” 4) “Once or twice a week,” or 5) “Almost every day.” This measure was also recorded as a binary response (0 = no and 1 = yes). By recoding these variables into binary responses and counting each value within the cases, 0 = never has been stopped or arrested, 1 = stopped or arrested, and 2 = stopped and arrested. The data were then recoded and collapsed into a CRJ interaction measure capturing the frequency of being stopped and/or arrested (1) or not (0). Table 1 shows that 25 percent of students reported being stopped and/or arrested by police.

Misconduct and delinquent behavior were also included given the body of research signaling their strong correlation with suspension and expulsion (Doherty, Cwick, Green, & Ensminger, 2015; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2001; and Wooldridge, 2005). Misconduct was measured by students' responses to a variety of questions: “How often do you cheat on a test in class”, “How often do you skip one or more classes, or a

whole day of school, without permission or being sick”, and “How often do you take part in a fight where a group of your friends are against another group”. Criminal behavior was measured by the youths' responses to the following questions: “How often do you sneak money from adults wallet, purse, or other place?” “How often do you steal something from a store without paying for it?” “How often do you break into a car, house, or other building?” “How often do you hit someone with the intention of hurting them?” “How often do you take some kind of weapon to school or a school event?” and “How often do you damage or destroy property on purpose that does not belong to you?” Respondents could choose: 1) “Never,” 2) “Before but not in the past year,” 3) “A few times in the past year,” 4) “Once or twice a month,” 5) “Once or twice a week,” or 6) “Almost every day.” The sum of all these variables was taken, and frequencies were calculated as a means of gauging the level of misconduct and criminal activity experienced throughout their lives. Table 1 shows an average of 36 percent of students who had participated in “bad” misconduct and/or delinquent behavior.

This study also controls for youths' level of education and familial bond. Research shows that more positive home and school relationships can deter negative life outcomes and punishments (Wright & Cullen, 2001). In prior works, positive family bonds have shown “substantive effects” on delinquency rates/participation among youths of varying ages (Mowen, Brent, & Boman, 2019; Wright & Cullen, 2001). To assess the impact of family bond, the study pulled the following survey items: (Please choose the best response for the following statements: “My parents know where I am when I am not in school”, “I get along with my parent/guardian”, “I talk to either of my parent/guardian about how things are going at school”, “My parent/guardian shows me they are proud of me”, “I can count on my parent/guardian to show up when I need them”, and “I have good role models in my family”. Possible responses to these questions ranged from one to five: 1) “most of the time,” 2) “often,” 3) “some of the time,” 4) “not often,” and 5) “never.” Responses were reverse-coded so that higher values represented greater levels of the bond. Overall, descriptive statistics show a range of 1–30 and a family bond mean of 25, suggesting that students are more positively bonded with their families than not. Prior work similarly finds that positive educational bonds and perceptions of school climate align with lower levels of delinquent behavior and/or experiences with punitive

punishment (Doherty et al., 2015; Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams, 1998; Hemez, Brent, and Mowen, 2020; Mowen et al., 2019; Turner, 2019).

To control for an educational bond, youths' responses to several survey items were included in the final models. First, students were asked: "Which of the following are true for you? Mark all that apply." This study focuses on respondents who answered: 1) "I care about doing well in school" or 2) "I want to get a good education." Second, students were also asked: "Which of the following people give you a lot of support and encouragement? Mark all that apply." For this measure, data was collected for respondents who answered: 1) "Your teacher" or 2) "An adult in your school." Responses to both questions were compounded together and then added to the average students' grades. Third, the DSS asked, "What one category best describes your overall grades on your last report card?" and respondents could answer: 1) "Mostly As," 2) "Mostly Bs," 3) "Mostly Cs," 4) "Mostly Ds," 5) "Some other grades" or 6) "Not sure." Descriptive statistics were run, and a mean score of 2.09 was found, meaning that people with mostly B's have average grades. The data were recoded (1-2 = 1 and 3-6 = 0) to represent respondents with average or higher grades. The combination of data is presented in Table 1, which shows that 31 percent of students have a positive educational bond.

School climate was measured by respondents' answers to the survey questions: "Please choose the best response for the following statements." The focus of this study was the respondents' answers to these questions: 1) "I feel safe in my school," 2) "school rules are strictly enforced," and 3) "student violence is a problem in this school." Answers ranged from one to five: 1) "most of the time," 2) "often," 3) "some of the time," 4) "not often," and 5) "never." Responses were reverse coded into the affirmative; Table 1 shows 77 percent of students reported having a positive school climate, meaning they felt safe within their individual institutions.

School-level data was collected from the principals' surveys and averaged between schools. The principals reported that 82 percent of teachers are white. As shown in Table 1, the average school has 77 white staff members and 64 white administrators. Table 1 also shows the average school has 20 students drop out, the average principal deals with 246 chronic absences from students and 128 out-of-school suspensions, and the average student has an 87 percent likelihood of graduating high school in four years.

Analytic Strategy

To understand the relationship between school discipline and race, the data needs to be modeled in two ways. First, the relationship between students' race/ethnicity and school demographics, as they relate to discipline, includes both individual and institutional-level data. This point becomes more pressing when considering that students are naturally nested within schools. This nesting effect violates the assumptions of independence built into regression models. To account for these levels (i.e., the nesting of level-1 data (students) into level-2 data (schools)), the use of multi-level modeling strategies is required. Further, the use of multilevel logistic regression models allows for mixed models where all or some of the model's variables are random; this helps correct for a lack of independence and collinearity as it models for differences between and within individuals. For example, Bersani and Doherty (2013) demonstrated that independent variables can have effects at two different levels: between and within (see also Horney, Osgood, and Marshall 1995 and Mowen & Brent 2016). In this study, the within-individual effect is captured by the independent variable (students' race) being group mean centered and contrasted against white students to capture the rates at which minority students are punished comparatively. The between-individual effect is the independent variable of race at both the individual and school levels, as it is aggregated and controlled when measuring punishment for each individual. This procedure allows us to explore the relationship between race and the conditional probability that students within this data sample will experience punishment rather than not (log odds).

Data Considerations

As with most data, there is some missing data present that warrants further consideration. To address this, questions with simulated variables were taken into account, and some factors were left out entirely. Another limitation is the use of 2018 data, as it is the most recent state data that has not been skewed due to the Corona outbreak of 2019 that is still affecting in-person learning in 2022. This data does not include socioeconomic factors like household income, participation in free or reduced lunch, information on the poverty line, or the use of food stamps. This survey also does not include aspects of peer delinquency, which research has indicated to be a significant

factor in student participation in deviant behavior. Finally, this data does not indicate the use of school security, which is an important factor for the STPP.

Results

Model 1: Between and Within Effects of Race on Punishment

First, the results are presented through multilevel logistic regression, which explores both the individual (level 1) and the school (level 2) effects of race on punishment. Thereby exploring the previously noted control variables from both levels of research in stepwise results by first introducing individual demographic variables in Step 1. Step 2 introduces delinquency and previous contact with the criminal justice system. Step 3 is the beginning of the merging of the interactions of the two levels by introducing variables, such as a family bond, an educational bond, and the perception of school climate. Finally, Step 4 is the incorporation of school-level 2 variables that have been noted to affect punishment in schools; these variables include the percent of white teachers in schools, as well as the percent of white administrations, dropout rates, chronic absences, out-of-school suspensions, and four-year graduation rates.

Step one of Table 2 shows that black youth are reported to have significantly (136 percent) greater odds of receiving punishment like suspension or expulsion than their white counterparts in school. Similarly, males are more likely than females to be punished (73 percent greater). Those who report a disability are significantly more likely to be punished, with an odds ratio of 90 percent. These findings follow previous research on the relationship between race and school punishment.

Next, the introduction of delinquency and previous contact with the criminal justice system is in step 2 of Table 2. Overall, the effect of these variables also coincides with previous research as being significant controls on punishment. Also, the variables from step one that were not significant stayed that way in step two. When comparing students who have and have not had prior contact with the criminal justice system, the students who have had that contact are 112 percent more likely to be punished in school than those who do not have prior contact with the criminal justice system. Students who have been delinquent previously, relative to non-delinquent students, are 16 percent more likely to experience school punishment.

It should be noted that with the inclusion of these variables, the likelihood of black youth, relative to white youth, being punished in school has increased by 170 percent. This shows that even when controlling misbehavior, it is compounding the effect

of being black, while the likelihood of school punishment for males (61 percent) and students with disabilities (70 percent) have both decreased. These findings can cause some concern because the impact of being black on changing outcomes is greater than the actual misconduct itself.

Step 3 of Table 2 is a means of bridging the two levels by understanding the individual students' perceptions of their family and school lives. Family bond, educational bond, and school climate are noted in previous literature as control variables that aid in diminishing the likelihood of school punishment. However, in Step 3 of Table 2, these variables are insignificant, and their inclusion raises the likelihood of black students being punished to 187 percent, while simultaneously further decreasing the likelihood of school punishment for males (57 percent) and maintaining the likelihood of punishment for students with disabilities (70 percent). Finally, school-level variables are put forward to see the between and within effects of race on school punishment. As shown by step 4 in Table 2, both the between (level 1) and within (level 2) effects of race on the odds of in-school punishment are the percentage of white teachers and administrators, the school dropout rates, chronic absences, out-of-school suspensions, and rates of graduation. The percentage of white teachers significantly (.01) lowered the likelihood of school punishment by about 4 percent. The rest of the variables included in step 4, which were the percent white administrators, dropout rate, total chronic absences, out-of-school suspensions, and four-year graduation rates, did not significantly affect punishment. Like in prior steps, their inclusion did increase the likelihood of black students being punished in schools to 203 percent, while also decreasing and syncing up the likelihood of punishment for both students with disabilities and male students at 52 percent. Although it would be logical to believe that bad behavior and contact with the criminal justice system should be the only significant indicators of the use of school punishment, the opposite seems to be true. Within step 4, contact with the criminal justice system (121 percent) and bad behavior (16 percent) pale in comparison to the effect shown for black students relative to their white counterparts of being 203 percent more likely to be punished within the same school and between schools with varying demographics.

Table 2: Stepwise Between and Within Effects of Race on School Punishment

School Punishment	Model 1			Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.		Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.
Black	2.36	0.26 ***		2.7	0.33 ***	2.87	0.36 ***	3.03	0.44 ***
Other	1.34	0.18 *		1.4	0.21 *	1.44	0.22 *	1.53	0.27 *
Hispanic	0.87	0.13		0.79	0.13	0.83	0.14	0.85	0.16
Male	1.73	0.16 ***		1.6	0.17 ***	1.57	0.17 ***	1.52	0.18 ***
Disability Status	1.89	0.21 ***		1.69	0.21 ***	1.69	0.22 ***	1.52	0.23 **
Prior CRJ Experience				2.12	0.23 ***	2.07	0.23 ***	2.21	0.28 ***
Prior Misconduct/ Bad Behavior				1.16	0.01 ***	1.15	0.01 ***	1.16	0.02 ***
Familiar Bond						0.98	0.01	0.99	0.02
Educational Bond						0.93	0.04	0.92	0.05
Students Perception of School Climate						0.99	0.03	1.03	0.33
Percent of White Teachers								0.96	0.01 **
Percent of White Admin								1	0.01
Number of School Dropouts								0.99	0.01
Total Chronic Absences								1	0.00 1
Number of On-Time Graduates								1	0.01
Constant	0.1	0.02 ***		0.04	0.01 ***	0.08	0.04 ***	1.03	1.5
Wald chi2	107.09			365.66		351.04		300.75	
N	3479			3357		3222		2344	
Note: *** p<.001; ** p<.01, *p<.05; † p<.1									

Overall, this model demonstrates that being black in school places an individual at increased odds of being punished, and black individuals relative to their white counterparts are significantly more likely to be punished in school, even while accounting for theoretically important constructs such as self-reported delinquency, gender, disabilities, and prior contact with the criminal justice system. Next, to further unravel the impact of being black on school punishment, similar models were run, but with the key removal of all students who did not self-report as black or African American and adding the variable (pb) percent of black students within schools.

Model 2: Effects of School Composition on School Punishment for Black Students

The results of this second modeling strategy are similar to the first analysis. The stepwise results (introducing demographic variables followed by individual and school control variables) are almost identical to the previous model, but as a means of telling a story, the variables will continue to be presented in this stepwise manner. The reason for this choice is that Model 2 aims to express the effects of these variables on black students only. This was done by changing the previous variable of student race, either black, white, or other, and recalculating the data to only include students who identified as black within their survey. With this data, this body of research can now focus on the variables and their effects on black students alone. This drastically lowers the number of cases (1263 cases between 31 schools) but still creates significant results: the lowest school reported 5 black students, and the school with the highest number of black students reports 139. On average, schools reported having only 47 students; the between-school variation is not significantly high, but it is there.

Step 1 in Table 3 shows that both the male and disability variables are insignificant predictors of punishment for black students. The percentage of black students within schools is a significant predictor of punishment for black students (about 98 percent). This means that black students are more likely to receive school punishment as the number of black students within a school rises.

Table 3: Stepwise Effects of School Composition on School Punishment for Black Students

School Punishment: Accounting only for Black Students	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Odds Ratio	Std.E rr.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.
Percentage of Black Students in Schools	1.02	** 0.00 *	1.02	** 0.01 *	1.02	** 0 *	1.02	** 0.01 **
Male	1.19	0.15	0.95	0.14	0.95	0.15	0.94	0.17
Disability Status	1.37	0.27	1.26	0.28	1.34	0.31	1.27	0.34
Prior CRJ Experience			2.51	** 0.41 *	2.39	** 0.41 *	2.89	** 0.56 *
Prior Misconduct/ Bad Behavior			1.17	** 0.02 *	1.17	** 0.02 *	1.18	** 0.03 *
Familiar Bond					0.98	0.02	0.99	0.19
Educational Bond					1.05	0.07	1.1	0.08
Students Perception of School Climate					0.93	0.38 I	0.94	0.04
Percent of White Teachers							1.03	0.03
Percent of White Admin							1.01	0.004 I
Number of School Dropouts							0.98	0.01 *
Total Chronic Absences							0.99	0.001
Number of Out-Of- School Suspensions							1	0.002 I
Number of On-Time Graduates							0.97	0.02
Constant	0.15	** 0.03 *	0.07	** 0.07 *	0.21	0.14 *	0.08	0.163
Wald chi2	20.66		140.53		133.09		119.6	
N	1,237		1,174		1,103		873	
Note: *** p<.001; ** p<.01, *p<.05; I p<.1								

School demographics were measured on a continuum, meaning that as the percentage of black students within a school increases, the odds of black students being

punished also increase. This insinuates that there is a protective factor within the schools and confirms the racial threat theory. The same can be said for the opposite side of the continuum: if you put a black student in a school that is progressively becoming more white, they are less likely to be punished. Even though it does not matter what school they go to, this research can confidently assume that at the individual level, black students are more likely to get punished.

The following step in Table 3 maintains that the percentage of black students within schools is a significant predictor of punishment for black students, with a significance of .01. Step 2 also introduces previous contact with the criminal justice system and delinquency, both of which are significant predictors of punishment for black students. This makes sense, as experience within the criminal justice system and student delinquency are both indicators for punishment according to past research. Black students who have had contact with the criminal justice system are 150 percent more likely to be punished in school than those who have not had prior contact with the criminal justice system. Black students who have been previously delinquent are 17 percent more likely to experience punishment in school than those who have not. Similar to step 2 of Table 2, the insignificant variable from step one remained that way.

Step 3, as you will recall, is a means of bridging the two levels by understanding the individual students' perceptions of their family and school lives. The key difference to remember is that Table 2 consisted of all students, whereas now this research is solely focusing on the students who identify as black. Family bond, educational bond, and school climate are noted in previous literature as control variables that aid in diminishing the likelihood of school punishment. Equivalent to Table 2, these variables within Table 3 are insignificant, although their inclusion in Table 3, does not change the likelihood of black students being punished within schools of varying black percentages.

Finally, the presentation of the school-level variables to black students was only a means of seeing the between (level 1) and within (level 2) effects on school punishment. The only variable included in this step to make a significant (.05) impact on punishment rates for black students within varying makeups of black schools was the dropout rate, but this effect was less than 10 percent. The rest of the variables included in step 4, which were percent white administrators, percent white teachers, total chronic absences, out-of-

school suspensions, and four-year graduation rates, did not significantly affect punishment for only black students. Throughout the steps of Tables 2 and 3, the significant data remained that way, which means that there are no inconsistencies within our data.

The logical thought process for including all of these controls is seen throughout the literature; punishment should be based on bad behavior and/or previous contact with the criminal justice system, yet in Table 2, this data finds that there are significant (.001) minutes compared to racial factors of punishment. The same cannot be said for Step 4 of Table 3. While the odds ratios are very similar between the two tables in Step 4, their significance to the likelihood of punishment for only black students does rise, regardless of school demographics.

Discussion

The overall societal treatment of black and brown people has created a microcosm of disenfranchisement for minority youth within schools. The STPP and its connections to our overtly racialized prison system have both been causally linked to our nation's discriminatory foundation. Although this negative association of black and brown bodies with deviance has especially adverse effects on youth, during adolescence, youth are developing their sense of self while also trying to navigate a world that constantly reminds them of their inferiority. This study's findings coincide with the literature that indicates that black students are significantly more likely to experience punishment/discipline than their white counterparts. Furthermore, this research took this a step further to find that regardless of the school's demographics, black bodies will continue to experience (with a high likelihood) significantly greater punishment/discipline than their white counterparts while accounting for individuality and diversity between schools. The findings support the earlier proposed summation of ideas deemed as racial/ethnic threat within this body of research, also referred to as the cyclical disenfranchisement of minorities. These findings also affirm Wacquant's theory of the creation of holes within institutions to stagnate minorities, deeming them rather than their actions deviant or criminal. Discriminatory and racialized discipline in schools is detrimental to children of color, and once exposed to it, it continues to negatively affect them.

Policy Implications

Past policies that are vital to this literature and research include the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act of 1994, the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002, the Civil Rights Data Collection of 2013-2014, Obama's 'Dear Colleagues' letter of 2014, and an overview of what has been significantly proven through research and knowledge yet to be gained about school discipline reform published by Steinberg and Lacroe in 2017. Disproportional discrimination persists, even after being brought to public light. They have been pointed out as practices that are

inherently racist but later justified and pacified as a means of maintaining ‘safety’ (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2021).

Under the guise of maintaining ‘safety,’ the U.S. society has allowed exposure to criminal justice-like punishment within schools. The nature of its persistent discriminatory punishment continues to negatively affect black and brown bodies at an exceedingly higher rate than their white counterparts, regardless of school demographics. This, and continued wide-scale research, will aid in the discussion of diminishing the use of criminal justice-like punishment in schools because it has overall negative effects on all students exposed to it but also hyper-focuses its punishment on minority students (Decker & Kohfeld, 1985; Devine, 1996; French-Marcelin & Hinger, 2017; Hirschfield, 2008; Hirschfield, 2010; Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Kupchik, 2010; Lynch, Gainey, & Chappell, 2016; Na & Gottfredson, 2013; Nance, 2015; Theriot, 2009; Wolf, 2013.)

Contributions and Limitations

The scholarly contributions of these findings are meant to bridge the gap between ‘big’ criminal justice and school justice by understanding that the latter is a microcosm of the former but with lifelong confounding consequences. These findings are also meant to bring to light these ‘unconscious’ and ‘overlooked’ processes that are aiding in the continuation or stagnation of black and brown bodies being associated with deviance/criminality. These findings and those from which they stem were sparked by questions and further research to provoke difficult conversations. These findings grant further validity to the school-to-prison pipeline and the likelihood and severity of punishment for minorities as a negative byproduct of systematic discrimination. Regardless of whether this byproduct is implicit or not, the established skewed power dynamic is meant to maintain ‘safety,’ but the question that needs addressing is whose safety and safety from what exactly. Holes in the educational institution's foundation were made to maintain the racial hierarchy that benefits the dominant class by stagnating black and brown bodies as a means of controlling them.

The limitation of this piece is that the data is limited and older due to the COVID-19 virus changing the way the U.S. approaches educating younger people. The data used

was from the Delaware School Survey (DSS) of 2018, and while data were collected from elementary-, middle-, and high school-level students, only high school juniors' (11th grade) data were used in this analysis. For more inclusive data, more states and age levels would be included in the survey. The data pulled was from 2018 (DSS, 2021), which was the last year of 'normal' in-person learning before the CoronaVirus, and schools have yet to return to that definition of 'normal' even going into 2023. Post-Covid, more students are learning online, more parents are working from home, and more precautions are being taken within schools all over the United States than they were before Covid. Data from upcoming years or linear research that includes the pre-, during-, and post-Covid education system will be intriguing to analyze. Nevertheless, all prior research focuses on schools and their make-up or infrastructure from before COVID, so the DSS data was chosen to coincide with and build on past research as a means of building a bridge between the formally published institutional understanding and the individual experiences of discrimination within schools.

Similar and more inclusive research could be done using all schools within the United States. Students would take individual surveys on their interactions at home and in school. This would be accompanied by an in-depth principals' survey covering their schools' demographics and participation in pro-social programs. Both surveys would include questions about socioeconomic status, participation in free or reduced lunch programs, racial/ethnic make-up, and participation in after-school activities or structured events (like jobs or religious gatherings), as participation in these has been seen to deter students from becoming delinquent (Mowen et al., 2019; Hemez et al., 2020). In further research, grade limitations should be proposed to the survey to include 8th-12th grade students and schools. Research shows that students who do not pass 8th-grade math are more likely to drop out of high school across the board (Jacob & Lefgren, 2009). The inclusion of the 12th-grade student could also bring about interesting data because of the drop-out risk as well as the increased exposure to alcohol, drug use, and potential deviance that is associated with seniors in high school.

Conclusions

When comparing Tables 2 and 3, results show that the school context significantly impacts black students. Their individual risk of punishment is compounded by the school's demographic makeup. Schools with a majority of black students are usually based in black communities, and the optics of that community and school criminalization have maintained the practices of the institutions within it. I say all this to say that the racial threat theory is cyclical.

For future research, it is important to note "the ethical duty of researchers to respond to misrepresentations of research on race and crime." (Russell, 1998) Researchers have been responding to and challenging misconceptions within this field for quite some time now, but responsive research still underestimates discrimination (Skiba et al., 2011). Scholarly research is overrun with white intellectuals telling other white scholars about the adverse effects of racialized punitive punishment. To fully understand discrimination and its effects, one must write from experience; further research needs to embrace black and brown voices as a means of conveying their experiences within a deeply rooted and ever-growing cyclical nature of maintaining a power dynamic that actively works against minorities but still needs to be navigated as it is a part of all public institutions.

Research also needs to be consumable for everyone, not just people within the field or 'intellectuals', meaning that it needs to be easily consumed and have minimal jargon. When the research is easily consumable, it can be shared on a massive scale, like in the media, which will expose even more people to the need for change. Future research needs to be digestible for *all* as a means to connect the layman to this damning evidence. Once the public knows the depths of these discriminatory actions in schools, they will band together and make the needed changes. Real changes were seen and implemented in schools, like the legislation brought about by the 'Columbine effect' (Advancement project, 2010; Bartley, 1995; Burns & Crawford, 1999; Gallup, 2011; Hirschfield, 2008; Kupchik, 2010; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Muschert, Henry, Bracy, & Peguero, 2014; Muschert & Peguero, 2010; Simon, 2007, 2014; Skiba, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 1999;

Toby, 1998). These changes were brought on in response to a tragedy and gave too much individual responsibility to schools. Now that the negative implications of these actions have been determined and greatly observed, we can use the data to inform the public on how to keep their children safe without racializing punishment or exposing children to all the adverse effects of criminal justice like punishment listed within the literature review. The findings presented within this body of research can be expanded upon and applied to the institution of criminal justice, as it is a microcosm of juvenile justice and its practices are being used within schools. Further research could also be done on incorporating Racial/Ethnic Threat and 'Peculiar institutions' as measures to investigate all pro-social institutions, helping to find and fix the roots of discriminatory issues seen within all pro-social institutions.

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