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How Far Does Influence Go?: Racial ideology, Anti-racist Action, and University Culture

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Background

- The U.S. is facing nationwide demands for racial equity
- Universities play a vital role in the continued socialization of millennials
- It is essential to understand where college students find themselves within this narrative
- University demographics:
 - Public
 - 22,000 students
 - 54.4% female, 44.8% male
 - 76.5% white, 18% non-white or multiracial
 - 86% undergraduate

Research Questions

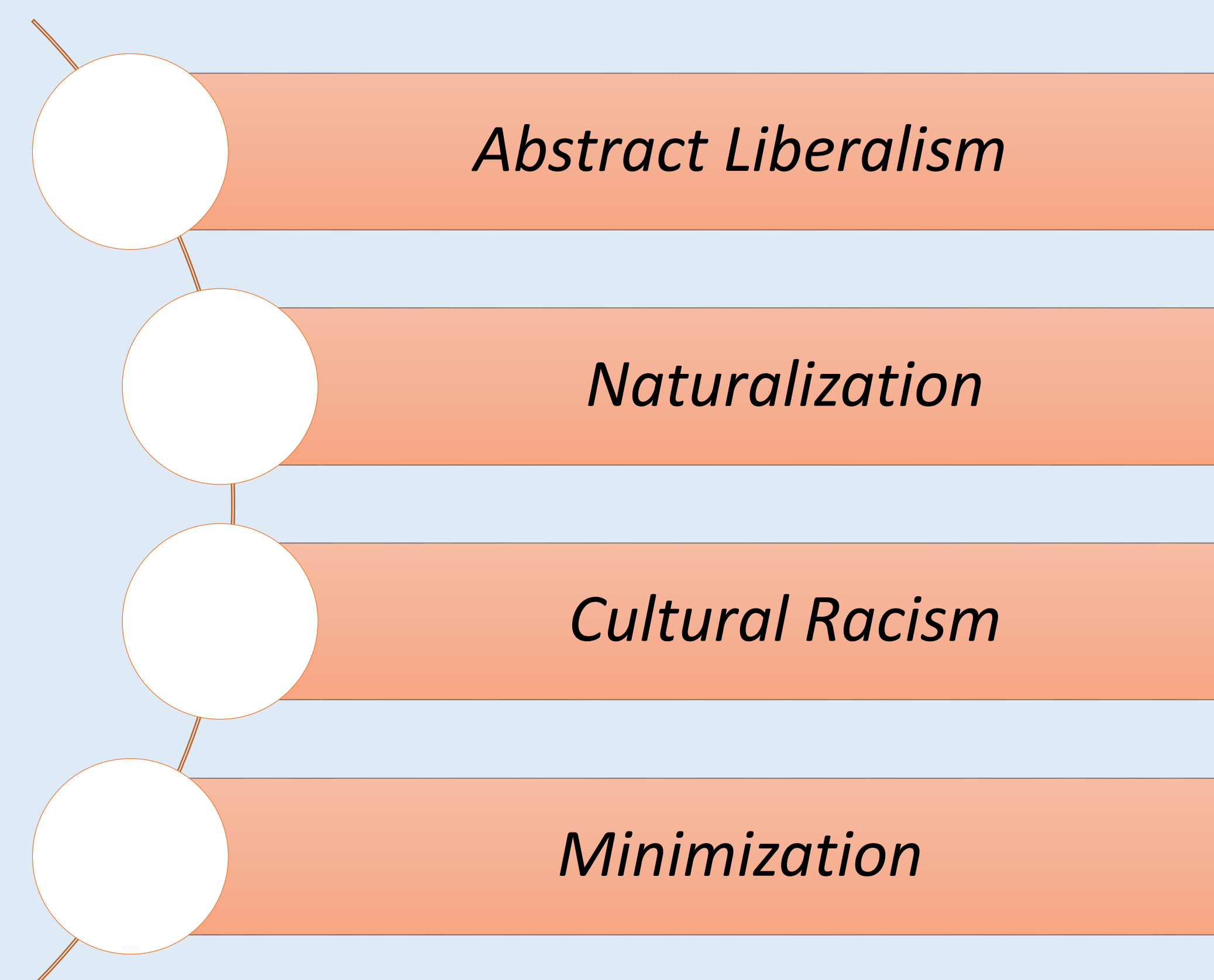
- How does the university's culture influence college students' racial ideology?
 - Racial ideology – the beliefs one holds about a specific racial or ethnic group
- How do the racial ideologies of college students affect the political characteristics of their civic engagement?
 - Political characteristic – petitions, contacting media, protests, etc.
 - Civic engagement – chosen association, group, or cause to support

Hypothesis

I hypothesize that the university's culture and level of comprehensive diversity inclusion will influence students' racial ideology and, at extension, their activism.

Theoretical Framework

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's framework to understand colorblind racial ideologies – Four frames:



David G. Embrick finds that many institutions appropriate diversity with trainings, policies, and statements but few follow through with sufficient implementation – “diversity ideology”

Charles A. Gallagher argues that the narrative of colorblindness promoted through mass media further disguises persistent racial inequality



Research Design

- Case Study
- In-depth, face-to-face interviews
- Approximately 30 students
- Between the ages of 18 and 30
- All ethnicities and genders

Analytical Strategy

- Students enter university with preexisting racial ideologies derived from local community
- Potential exposure to increased diversity and eventual immersion into university community
- Nuanced racial ideologies may arise – reinforced or changed – justification (EBS) or enlightenment
- Relationships between racial ideologies and civic engagement will be analyzed to explore the influence that university culture has on shaping or changing racial ideologies among millennials

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