

ABSTRACT

Contact in Context:
Interracial Contact and Racial Formations

W. Matthew Henderson, M.A.

Thesis Chairperson, Jerry Z. Park, Ph.D.

Building from a synthesis of *Interracial Contact Theory* and *Racial Formations Theory*, this study updates the *Contact Hypothesis*, focusing on contemporary issues of racial identity and ideology and on the experiences of those outside of the Black/White racial dichotomy. Using a nationally representative sample, I examine the effects of interracial contact on the distinct *Racial Projects* of Whites, Blacks and Non-Black Minorities. Hypotheses predict contact effects for Whites at the level of racial awareness and ant-structuralism, but not for colorblindness. For Blacks, contact is predicted to have no effects. For Non-Black Minorities, racial projects are predicted to be isomorphic. OLS regression analysis provided support for most, but not all hypotheses. Notably, for Non-Black Minorities, contact predicted greater racial awareness, but also greater antistructuralism and mixed effects for colorblindness.

Contact in Context:
Interracial Contact and Racial Formations

by

W. Matthew Henderson B.S., M.A.

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Approved by the Department of Sociology

Charles M. Tolbert II, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Thesis Committee

Jerry Z. Park, Chairperson

Christopher M. Pieper, Ph.D.

Wade C. Rowatt, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School

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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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DEDICATION

For my family; those who remain and those who have moved on

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

With the publication of the Moynihan Report (United States Department of Labor, Office of Policy Planning and Research 1965) and the emergence of the Culture of Poverty thesis (Lewis 1966), scholars of race have been loath to address the potential role of culture in perpetuating and maintaining race related outcomes in order to avoid blaming the victims of racialized inequality. Instead race scholarship has been primarily focused on documenting and measuring the effects of racial discrimination (Skrentny 2008). Unfortunately, this focus has a potential blind spot in that it is ill adept to document and explain the development and maintenance of racial categories over time and in different circumstances.

Omi and Winant's influential *Racial Formations Theory* provides a corrective by linking the normative patterns of racial categorization embedded within the larger social structure to the dynamic processes of negotiating, contesting and accommodating those categorizations at the level of individual identity. From this perspective, scholars are able to more clearly observe how individuals and groups draw on cultural resources to negotiate the realities of racial hegemony. Furthermore this perspective suggests that racial identities are variable, and can be affected by other factors such as contact with people in other racial categories. Using racially representative data from the 2006 Portraits of American Life Study, this study tests the effects of interracial contact on the racial projects of Blacks, Whites and Non-Black Minority Americans.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Racial Formations Theory: A Brief Overview

Omi and Winant's (1994) work in the development of *Racial Formations Theory* represents an instructive advance in thinking about racial domination and remains among the most influential approaches in the field of racial studies (Alumkal 2004) despite the misgivings of some scholars (Banton 2013; Dennis 2013; Feagin and Elias 2013; Golash-Boza 2013). *Racial Formations Theory* seeks to understand the cultural dimensions which undergird the production and maintenance of racial meanings within a cultural field (Omi and Winant 1994; Skrentny 2008). Far from eschewing socio-structural realities, such as racial discrimination or prejudice, *Racial Formations Theory* seeks to understand the production and negotiation of racial identity within the context of a racialized social structure, where the composition of racial identities are simultaneously reinforced and contested by members of a society from within and without the racial group. Here, race is understood as an "unstable and 'decentered' complex of meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle... racial formation is a process of historically situated *projects* in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized" (Omi and Winant 1994:55-56).

Rather than tease culture from social structure, the authors explain that racial formations occur through a "linkage between structure and representation" (1994:56). The authors describe these linkages as *Racial Projects*, or the simultaneous

“interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics...an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines. Racial projects connect what race means in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized*, based upon their meaning” (1994:56 authors emphasis). The development and maintenance of racial projects occurs as individuals, embedded in racialized social structures, link macro level interpretations of racial identity to their own “common sense’ understandings of themselves and others. The unstable and decentered nature of racial meanings strongly implies that within any racialized social structure, there exists a plurality of beliefs and convictions about racial identity. At the same time, as individuals are socialized to understand the normative rules of racial classification, normative racial identities emerge within racial hierarchy. Racial projects mediate between particularized understandings of racial identity and the normative categories of race within society.

Measuring Racial Projects

One of the advantages of the Racial Formations perspective is that racial projects link individual goals and actions to the constraints of the racialized social structure. Among the contributions of this literature are the explication of racial projects within particular settings and analysis of specific cases. Unfortunately, there is a lack of quantitative analysis focusing on nationally representative samples from which scholars can more broadly compare racial projects across racial classifications.¹ This lack represents a weakness in the racial projects literature due to the theory’s contention that

¹ One notable exception is a study by Hartmann, et al. (2009). While this study focuses on empirically testing Whiteness theory, they utilize data from the American Mosaic Project (2006), the implicit result of which is a validation of a particular type of racial project, which represents the mainstream of White racial projects.

racial projects represent a linkage of individuals to larger social structures. Furthermore, because Racial Formations Theory views racial projects as variable and malleable, it is appropriate to compare how racial projects are impacted by potentially destabilizing and decentering variables: in this case, interracial contact.

Measuring the effect of interracial contact requires a synthesis of two distinct bodies of racial scholarship: research looking at the Contact Hypothesis (Allport 1954; Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003; Emerson, Kimbro, and Yancey 2002) and research looking at Racial Formations. At its simplest, the Contact Hypothesis predicts that increased interracial contact reduces prejudicial attitudes, typically understood as outwardly expressed antipathy or disapproval of racial out-group members (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998). From there, reductions in prejudice and antipathy should contribute to greater racial equity. Decades of empirical tests support the link between increased contact and decreased prejudice and antipathy (Aboud, Mendelson, and Purdy 2003; Brown et al. 2003; Butler and Wilson 1978; Emerson and Yancey 2008; Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew et al. 2011; Robinson 1980) even when the nature of the contact is superficial (Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004) and especially for Whites (Sigelman and Welch 1993). However, leading race scholars suggest that racism and racial inequality in the post-civil rights era function independent of expressed prejudice and antipathy (Bobo and Smith 1998; Bonilla-Silva 2010; Dovidio et al. 2002; Pearson, Dovidio, and Gaertner 2009). Furthermore, it is reasonable to presume that due to social desirability bias, survey respondents understate the extent of their prejudices on survey instruments (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Picca and Feagin 2007). Therefore, focusing on prejudice and antipathy may fail to explain contemporary racism or the role of racial projects in perpetuating it. Measuring

and comparing racial projects should more accurately elucidate group differences while more richly illuminating the effects of interracial contact on Americans, according to their racial identity.

Whiteness as a Racial Project

According to Racial Formations Theory, individual racial identity is constrained by the hegemonic influence of normative patterns of racial categorization. The more aligned one's racial project is to the dominant paradigm of racial classification, which in the United States is overwhelmingly influenced by a White majority, the less resistance one should expect to encounter in their own racial formation. Researchers investigating the racial projects of Whites have focused on the role of what Hughey (2010) labels *Hegemonic Whiteness* (Hughey and Byrd 2013; Hughey 2010) and the negotiation and domination of White racial projects as they influence the taken for granted understandings of racial categorization throughout contemporary society.²

As Hartmann and colleagues (2009) summarize, *Hegemonic Whiteness* consists of three core propositions. First, compared to Non-Whites, White Americans exhibit significantly less awareness of their racial identity. From their perspective racial inequality is almost entirely obfuscated (Lewis 2004) and claims of systemic racial oppression may appear groundless, dishonest or manipulative. The second proposition is because White are less racially aware, they find it more difficult to recognize their privileged position in the racial hierarchy (see McIntosh 1989) and are therefore more

² This is not to say that White racial projects lack heterogeneity; indeed, new strains of White racial projects have emerged which are notable in their well-meaning aim to mitigate racial inequality (Winant 2004). Rather this is to suggest that as the dominant racial group, White racial projects, whether normative or unconventional are less likely to encounter resistance and more likely to influence the mainstream.

antistructural, or less likely to identify systemic, structural or institutional factors which lead to racial inequality. Third, the invisibility of White racial identity and the privileged position of Whites are supported by colorblind ideology which deemphasizes and dissociates the racial basis of social organization.

Empirical research provides modest support for these assumptions (Hartmann, Gerteis, and Croll 2009; Perez and Hirschman 2009). Waters (1990) shows that for many Whites, ethnicity is “situational.” Whites are able to selectively emphasize and deemphasize their ethnic identity in ways which Non-Whites, whose ethnic identity is more concretized and ascribed, cannot and the plasticity of White ethnicity is evidence that even “Whiteness” takes the form of a developed and maintained project.

Furthermore, scholars note that a preponderance of Whites oppose policies aimed at ameliorating racial inequality (Bobo and Kluegel 1993; Bonilla-Silva 1997; Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux 2007) and that Whites are less likely to explain racial inequality as the result of structural arrangements or racist systems (Hunt 2007). The impact of *Hegemonic Whiteness* is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in racially diverse contexts. Researchers looking at interracial volunteer organizations whose goals and values include multiracial cooperation found that, even in these settings, deference to colorblind ideology and the hegemonic position of Whites in the organization was the norm (Burke 2012; Edwards 2008; Hughey 2010).

Interracial Contact and Whites

While the initial supposition that contact alleviates prejudice and undermines stereotypes appears generally supportable, the overall impact of interracial contact on *Hegemonic Whiteness* and White racial projects remains less clear. For instance, Jackman

and Crane (1986) find that among Whites, relatively shallow interracial contact had little to no effect on beliefs about racial minorities, nor did it seem to impact racial policy views. Additionally, O'Brien and Korgen (2007) observe that when interacting with Non-Whites, Whites often "bracket out" individual level perceptions of racial out-group members, thus maintaining prior beliefs about race and racial minorities. Yancey (1999) similarly finds that residential integration had no effect on White racial attitudes. Taken together, the effects of contact for Whites are likely contingent upon the intimacy and variety of contact, as intimate and regular contact should be more difficult to marginalize or explain away (Dixon 2006). Special attention should also be paid to the composition of interracial contact, as Whites have been observed to express greater antipathy and aversion to Blacks than to Asian Americans or Latinos (Emerson, Chai, and Yancey 2001; Taylor 1998).

Interracial contact may also potentially exacerbate interethnic tensions and stereotypes, especially if the result of the contact is not positively interpreted (Barlow et al. 2012; Hyers and Swim 1998; Mears et al. 2013; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). For example, one study by Dixon (2006) found that geographic propinquity with Blacks heightened Whites' prejudicial attitudes, but that the effect was considerably mitigated when contact was intimate, friendly and warm. Similarly, increased interracial contact among White South Africans was observed to predict more support for structural solutions to racial inequality, however this effect was also minimized if contact was perceived as threatening (Dixon et al. 2010).

Therefore, based on the extant literature I assert that White racial projects are commonly characterized by 1) obliviousness of racial identity and of the racial basis for

social structure; 2) obliviousness of systemic and structural factors which contribute to racial inequity as well as an antipathy toward structural measures aimed at addressing said inequity; and 3) a colorblind ideology which supports the previous two points by asserting the meritorious nature of social structure and the obsolescence of race as a determinant of social outcomes. Moreover, based on a reading of Racial Formations Theory, which conceives of racial attitudes as part of a complex of factors which contribute to identity, I propose that each of these three characteristics represent the normative White racial project as a layered complex (see Figure 1). Racial obliviousness and antistructuralism represent the peripheral characteristics of *Hegemonic Whiteness* while the core characteristic is colorblind ideology. Based on the consistent link between contact and prejudice reduction and decreased antipathy, I suspect that interracial contact will similarly impact the superficial layers of *Hegemonic Whiteness* as well. However, research also suggests that interracial contact is less likely to affect the central ideological perspectives of Whites (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Jackman and Crane 1986; O'Brien and Korgen 2007). These assumptions lead to the first hypothesis being tested. *H1: For Whites, increased interracial contact will predict greater awareness of racial identities and of racialized social structure, as well as less antistructuralism, but will have no effect on colorblindness.*

Blackness as a Racial Project

While plasticity and selectivity are more characteristic of White racial projects, the subordinate position of Blacks in the American racial hierarchy has, to varying degrees, constrained the development and maintenance of Black racial projects. The

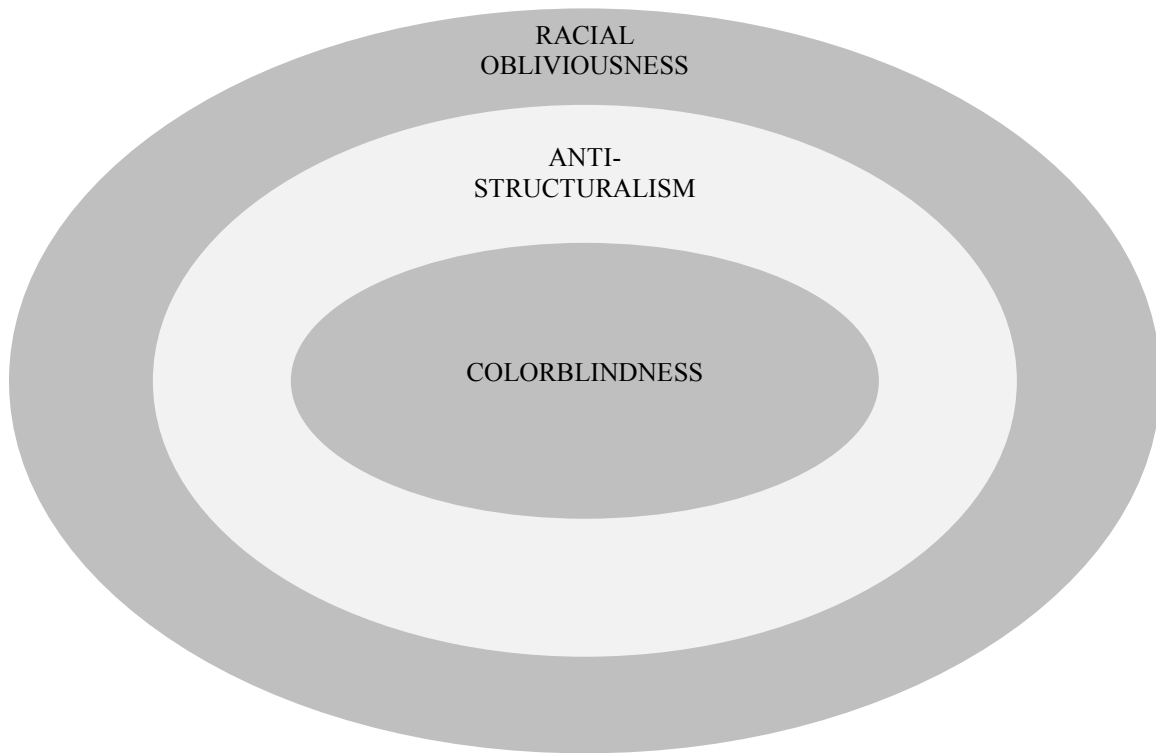


Figure 1. Conceptualization of Whiteness as a Layered Complex

sociohistorical process of Black subjugation, the result of which has been the persistent and nearly wholesale rejection of Blacks from mainstream civic participation, has provoked the development of racial identities alienated from the mainstream of American culture (Du Bois 1903; Yancey 2004). While feelings of alienation may vary in degree from person to person, Bobo and Hutchings (1996) assert that the perception of racial alienation is collectively shared by members of an alienated subculture. As racial alienation persists, it further conditions the socially ascribed characteristics which contribute to the formation and maintenance of a racial category. Therefore, as individuals identify themselves within an alienated racial group, they encounter the emerged patterns of alienation which largely define group membership. While racial alienation is not unique to Black Americans, the deeply entrenched sociohistorical

patterns and identities related to slavery and formal segregation, and the consequences thereof, suggest that Blacks experience alienation more severely than any other racial group in the United States. Indeed, evidence from Bobo and Hutchings (1996) found that Blacks were most the likely to report feelings of alienation and to perceive that members of other racial groups represented a threat to their security. It should also follow that efforts towards assimilation for Black Americans meet greater resistance. Looking at intermarriage rates as an indicator of successful assimilation, Black Americans are the least likely to marry outside of their race even when controlling for class factors, such as education (Qian and Lichter 2007).³

There is also reason to believe that Black racial projects adopt distinctness as an adaptation strategy in response to racial alienation. Yancey (2004) asserts that the distinctiveness of Black American culture is a direct result of being alienated from mainstream society over the course of centuries. In a study of college students asked to respond to evidence that college campuses are racially self-segregated, Black students were distinct in citing the importance of preserving group identity as a justification for self-segregation (Buttney 1999). Hochschild and Weaver's (2007) observe that Black

³ In reference to racial formation, racial alienation is appropriately understood as a constraint to racial projects. The historically situated contemporary meanings ascribed to Black skin present a problematic and confounding challenge to dark skinned immigrants, for whom the logic of America's Black/White binary is foreign. Indeed, for sub-Saharan African immigrants, social stratification and ethnic identity are not tethered to racialized classification systems (Kusow 2006). As American immigrants, they must navigate an unfamiliar set of meanings ascribed to their skin, while lacking their own intuitive understanding of these meanings. A comparative study of Black Somali and White Lebanese immigrants, revealed that while both negotiated and developed an identity as Muslims in a non-Muslim country, White skinned Lebanese immigrants were able to develop racial identities more congruent to those they had in their sending nations. Somali immigrants, on the other hand, were forced to negotiate new racialized understandings of themselves and their group (Ajrouch and Kusow 2007). Itzigshon and colleagues (2005) observe that among a sample of Dominican immigrants who more frequently identify themselves as Hispano/a and Indio/a, the most common reported response to how they believe they are perceived by other Americans is Black. Furthermore, self-identification as "Black" was also found to positively correlate with a negative view of relations between Dominicans and White Americans, further suggesting that alienation powerfully contributes to the content of Black racial projects.

commitment to racial identity overrides the internal hierarchy of skin color within Black communities, as commitment to the group racial project in response to racial domination takes precedence over internal conflicts or subjugation according to differences in pigmentation. As a result, Black racial projects should be expected to stress racial group solidarity and group distinctness as a strategy of resistance and survival in the face of racial alienation.

Interracial Contact and Blacks

The impact of contact on the attitudes of Blacks is an understudied topic of the contact literature, perhaps because the effects of contact on the attitudes of Black Americans appear to be less robust than for White Americans (Emerson and Yancey 2008; Tropp and Pettigrew 2005b). Interracial contact is typically brief and superficial (Sigelman et al. 1996) and the potential effects may be offset or overshadowed when interracial contact is accompanied by prejudice from out-group members and/or recognition of Blacks' alienation in the racial hierarchy (Tropp and Pettigrew 2005a; Tropp 2003). Furthermore, because Blacks represent a smaller percentage of the population, it is probabilistically more difficult for Black Americans to avoid interracial contact in daily life, rendering it less extraordinary or meaningful. When contact does occur, it may reflect hierarchical arrangements of racial domination, whereby contact is often not avoidable or of one's own choosing, and may exacerbate suspicion and antipathy by both parties in the encounter, but especially for Blacks who are traditionally the disproportionate victims of racial alienation (Ellison and Powers 1994). Studies of Blacks in interracial encounters suggest they may also be more heightened to the subtle and non-verbal expressions of antipathy (Dovidio et al. 2002; Hyers and Swim 1998;

Pearson et al. 2009) while favoring more social distance from Whites than Whites from them (Hraba, Radloff, and Gray-ray 1999). Therefore, it appears that although Blacks may derive benefit from interracial encounters, it is at least as likely that interracial contact simply exacerbates feelings of racial alienation and that interracial contact may be risky and costly.

In light of this, scholars interested in looking at the impacts of contact on Black Americans would benefit from looking at different measures of contact and whether contact with Whites predicts different effects than with other racial minorities. Many Whites may live in relative isolation from Blacks, but demography and racial alienation signify that Blacks may feel all too aware of Whites, and that this awareness is accompanied by a sense of Whites as threatening. Therefore, positive interracial contact should entail encounters where the potential threats of Non-Blacks are neutralized (Butler and Wilson 1978; Works 1961). That this has been observed to be more likely when intergroup contact is between close interracial friends (Ellison and Powers 1994), suggests that intimacy and trust are important factors when accounting for the impact of contact on Black Americans. In addition, researchers note that while neighborhood integration seems to promote interracial contact and more positive attitudes of racial out-group members (Welch 2001), for Blacks, propinquity was less important for predicting positive encounters than was a history of favorable interracial interactions in childhood (Emerson, Kimbro, and Yancey 2002; Sigelman et al. 1996).

A particularly relevant insight from Shelton (2000) is that racial attitudes among Black Americans are neither simple nor homogeneous and that it is more befitting of researchers to consider how variations and fluctuations in Black's racial attitudes effect

and are affected by intergroup contact. For instance, a study investigating the longitudinal trajectory of Black explanations of persisting inequality from multiple waves of the General Social Survey demonstrated that, while Black respondents were more likely than Whites to cite structural factors over time, increased educational mobility predicted an increase in combining structural explanations with individual level explanations, such as motivation (Hunt 2007). This finding suggests that among upwardly mobile Blacks, awareness of the radicalized social structure is at the very least, more nuanced. It is also reasonable to assume that increased mobility will have implications for the quality and frequency of intergroup contact, particularly with Whites, and that Blacks in this position will feel pressure to conform to a more colorblind point of view. Then again, the prevalence of racial alienation suggests that, other things being equal, increased interracial contact should have little to no effect on the racial projects of Blacks. Should any effects be observed, it is likely that only intimate levels of contact will have any effect, as token level interaction seems more likely to frustrate than mollify. This assumption is tested in my next hypothesis. *H2: Due to the overriding condition of racial alienation, increased interracial contact will have no effect on Black Racial projects.*

The Racial Projects of Non-Black Minorities

The racial and ethnic landscape of the contemporary United States has grown increasingly diverse since the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 opened immigration to an unprecedented number of Non-White, Non-European peoples.⁴ The growth in the number of Americans who identify as neither White nor Black represents a significant demographic shift. Non-Black Minorities occupy a much larger

⁴Although less numerically consequential, a small but growing number of interracial marriages and mixed race offspring have also contributed to America's increasing diversity (Qian and Lichter 2007).

portion of the minority population of the United States than do Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau 2013) while in a number of states, the increase in Non-Black Minorities has contributed to minority populations which outnumber even Whites (Frey 2013). As the racial landscape of the United States grows increasingly diverse, it is clear that the racial formation projects of Non-Black racial minorities deserve unique attention. Further, the racial formation of Non-Black Minorities represents a theoretically rich sample, as these groups must actively engage and/or resist the Black/White racial dichotomy which has been the dominant racial order of the last few centuries.

It is conceptually important to note that grouping Non-Black Minorities is in no way a suggestion of their homogeneity; in fact, the diversity of cultures and experiences which comprise these groups are vast. Yet, racial hierarchy in the United States has historically been dichotomized between White and Black and the experiences of Non-Black racial minorities share a common ambiguity, relative to that dichotomy. The racial order of a society represents a significant constraint on individual racial formations because it qualitatively impacts both the arena in which racial projects will be performed and among which racial identities will be accepted (Alba and Nee 2005; Bonilla-Silva 2004; Kim 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993; Yancey 2004). As Non-Black Minorities represent a growing share of the population their place in the racial hierarchy remains unsettled (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Kim 2003; Yancey 2004).⁵ Ethnographic (Thangaraj 2012) and nationally representative data (Xu and Lee 2013) lend support to the supposition that

⁵ The Latin Americanization Thesis of Bonilla-Silva posits that Americans who are phenotypically White enough to be unnoticed by Whites as something foreign or “other” will be accepted into the mainstream while a stable intermediate racial category comprised of Americans phenotypically different from Whites and Blacks will emerge as “Honorary Whites.” Similarly, Kim proposes that Non-Black Minorities will occupy a middle range of racial categorization, due to a process where their racial identity is triangulated as distinct against White and Black identity.

Non-Black Minorities must engage and negotiate a Black/White racial binary while concomitantly negotiating and responding to the disparate views Whites and Blacks have of their racial group and classification.

As is the case with Black racial formations, Non-Black Minority racial projects are powerfully shaped by the degree that their racial identity is alienated from the racial mainstream. Data from a sample of self-identified Hispanics show that a growing number are more likely to reject White identity for a label which emphasizes their link to Latin America or the Spanish speaking world (Michael and Timberlake 2008; Stokes-Brown 2009). Perez and Hirschman (2009) find that among Hispanics and Asians, nativity and longer duration in the United States predict a higher likelihood that individuals will self-identify according to Americanized racial categorizations. These findings are noteworthy for two reasons: first, it appears that longer duration within an American racial context does lead Non-Black Minorities to adopt Americanized racial identities; at the same time, Non-Black Minorities' self-identifications reflect a reluctance and resistance to assimilate into either the White mainstream or the alienated position of Blacks.

Undoubtedly, longer duration in the United States of a racial Minority group increases the likelihood the group will encounter discrimination. Scholars have observed that discrimination leads Non-Black Minorities to identify themselves as distinct from Whites, regardless of their skin pigmentation (Golash-Boza 2006; Michael and Timberlake 2008; O'Brien 2008)⁶. Furthermore, as Pyke and Dang explain, "the nature of racial inequality, and the many dimensions by which it is culturally and structurally constituted, make it difficult for subordinates to construct strategies of resistance that do

⁶Although, Michael and Timberlake caution it is not clear the extent Non-Black Minorities identify apart from Whites because they are rejecting the White mainstream or because they have been rejected by it. It is likely that both are occurring in tandem.

not also entail some aspect of compliance” (2003: 168). It seems the formation of racial identities which effectively link groups to resources, requires a balance between resisting racial domination and alienation while assimilating to the dominant ideology (Alumkal 2004; Kim 2006).

Meanwhile, some scholars reading of emerging Non-Black Minority racial projects suggest that these identities represent greater alienation for Black Americans. Because successful racial projects necessitate some level of compliance with the established racial order, Non-Black assimilation partially entails compliance with the sociohistorical and contemporary alienation of Blacks from the mainstream of American society. Yancey (2004) suggests that while new Asian and Latino identities appear distinct from White identities, when given opportunities to identify as Whites, Non-Black Minorities will do so in order to position themselves closer to the top of the racial hierarchy. Many Asians and Latinos identify themselves as White when given the option, and therefore may continue to resist their minority status in their ongoing racial projects. It remains to be seen how successful these efforts will be and the extent that Non-Black Minority identities will become subsumed into the collective “White” mainstream. To that end, Lee and Bean (2007) note that Asians and Latinos exhibit far greater social distance from Blacks than from Whites, signaling that a continuing rift between Blacks and Non-Black Minorities may be developing, exasperating Black alienation. The extent Whiteness stretches to include more Asians and Latinos will largely determine the vulnerability of the Black/White divide as America’s normative racial order.

Interracial Contact and Non-Black Minorities

While the growing number of Non-Black Minorities has drawn the attention of demographers, there are few published studies examining if and how interracial contact uniquely impacts those outside the Black/White binary. The demographic influx of Non-Black Minorities makes their interracial contact more likely and richer analyses of the unique effects of contact are poised to contribute to a number of important research areas, including immigrant assimilation studies (Alba and Nee 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Portes and Zhou 1993), racial ordering (Bonilla-Silva 2004; Kim 1999, 2003), interethnic identity (Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Pyke and Dang 2003; Waters 1990) and individual racial identity (Ajrouch and Kusow 2007; Paul 2011; Stokes-Brown 2009; Thangaraj 2012).

The dearth of research in this area represents a weakness in the Contact Theory literature (Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004; Kohatsu et al. 2000), particularly when limited available findings demonstrate that contact and friendship between Anglos, Latinos and Whites, is relatively more frequent than with Blacks (Quillian and Campbell 2003; Welch and Sigelman 2000) and that the effects of interracial contact for Non-Black Minorities are insufficiently understood. Oliver and Wong's (2003) study of residential diversity found, that although interethnic propinquity was generally linked to lower prejudice and feelings of competition, Asians and Latinos living in higher status neighborhoods expressed greater antipathy towards other racial minorities but not Whites. For those living in lower status neighborhoods, antipathy towards minorities was significantly lower. Assuming that higher status neighborhoods are more likely to be populated by

larger proportions of Whites, this association suggests that the content of contact influences the racial formations of Non-Black Minorities (Stein, Post, and Rinden 2000).

A study from Kohatsu and colleagues (2000) looking specifically at the effect of contact on Asian Americans found that those who appeared to either identify with or reject the dominant White culture were more likely to express feeling racial hostility toward or from Black Americans. This is consistent with research suggesting that the affective quality of interracial contact between Blacks and Non-Black Minorities is comparably low and can even lead to *increased* antipathy (Cummings and Lambert 1997; Guthrie and Hutchinson 1995; Hoxter and Lester 1995; Kohatsu et al. 2000; Mack 1997; McCormack 1995). Additionally, respondents who more closely identified with Whites indicate more support for the values of *Hegemonic Whiteness*. Hunt's (2007) investigation of nearly three decades of General Social Survey data finds that, over time, Hispanics have mirrored Whites' explanations for racial inequality; although surprisingly, they have expressed increasing support for antistructuralism, supporting the view that the racial projects of Non-Black Minorities may more closely reflect those of Whites over time and with increased contact and exposure (Yancey 2004). On the other hand, Non-Black Minorities are also more likely to have witnessed the real effects of racial discrimination. Therefore, even as they express support for antistructuralism, they are also more cognizant of structural disadvantage than Whites, suggesting their views will be more nuanced (Hunt 2007).

Thus, while extant literature looking at the effects of interracial contact on the attitudes of Non-Black Minorities is limited, we can presume that any measureable effects will be contingent upon either the context or the content of interracial encounters.

Based on the literature, it makes sense to test the potential for different types of contact to affect racial attitudes, as well as the intuitive potential that, for Non-Black Minorities, the racial content of encounters will have an isomorphic effect toward the attitudes of those more frequently contacted. This is tested in the following hypothesis. *H3: Increased interracial contact among Non-Black Minorities will predict greater racial awareness; however increased support for antistructuralism and colorblindness will associate with having a close White friend, while decreased support for antistructuralism and colorblindness will associate with having a close Black Friend.*

CHAPTER THREE

Data and Methods

The data for this study come from the 2006 Portraits of American Life Study (PALS), a nationally representative, in home survey administered in English and/or Spanish to non-institutionalized adults in the Continental United States. Interviews were administered using a combination of Paper and Pencil Instrument (PAPI) and Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (ACASI) via a laptop computer for some of the more sensitive questions. The survey's response rate was 58%, producing a sample of 2,610 respondents. More specific information regarding survey methodology can be found in Emerson, et al. (2010).

While multiple steps were taken to ensure that the sample was nationally representative of American adults, the distinctive feature of the PALS is its oversampling of Black, Asian and Latino Americans. This oversample provides researchers with significantly larger Non-White subsamples than are typically available in other data sets. After dividing the sample into racial groups the following subsamples remain: Non-Hispanic White ($n = 1,292$), Non-Hispanic Black ($n = 543$), Latino ($n = 555$) Asian ($n = 202$) and Native American ($n = 18$), the latter of which was excluded from analysis, due to concerns that it was not only too small to be independently analyzed, but that the experiences of Native Americans were distinct enough from Asians and Latinos that they should not be included with the sample of Asians or Latinos. This left a total sample of 2,592. The subsample of Latinos and Asians were combined to form a sample of Non-

Black Minorities ($n = 757$). Although the PALS is a panel study, the current study utilizes only the first wave of the data, as future waves are not yet available for public use.

Finally, because the survey provides weight variables which correct the oversample of Non-Whites, analysis was performed on un-weighted data.

Because this study is interested in observing the impact of intergroup contact specific to different racial categories, the larger samples of Non-Whites in the PALS present an opportunity to construct separate predictive models for each racial group, thus isolating any unique effects of intergroup contact based on racial and ethnic identity as well as any commonalities which may persist across racial categories (James 2008).

Racial Formations Theory assumes that patterns of racial formation emerge from political negotiations. The emergence of these patterns implies that racial projects, though fluid, should normalize according to racial hierarchy and are reflected in the mean level responses to relevant racial attitude questions. Separating the data into subsamples by racial categorization, should demonstrate the composition of different racial projects. The data should then allow for comparisons between group means, as a proxy for the normative racial projects of each racial category, and to test for the unique effects of contact by racial identity.

Dependent Variables

Five separate dependent variables serve as an approximation of the normative racial projects of White, Black and Non-Black Minority respondents. For each measure, respondents are given a sentence reflecting a particular position on a racial issue and then asked to assess the extent they disagree or agree with the statement by providing an appropriate response from the following five point likert scale: 1) Strongly Disagree

2) Somewhat Disagree 3) Neither Agree nor Disagree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree. The first measure probes *Support for Racial Segregation* by asking for a response to the statement: “It's OK to have a country where the races are basically separate from one another, as long as they have equal opportunity” with higher scores indicating greater support for segregation. The second measure investigates *Support for Affirmative Action* by asking for a response to the statement: “The government should do more to help minorities increase their standard of living” while the third measure, aiming to ascertain *Support for Reparations* is taken from responses to the statement “The government should financially compensate Black Americans who are descendants of slaves.” The fourth variable, aimed at measuring *Support for Colorblindness*, is taken from responses to the statement “One of the most effective ways to improve race relations in the U.S. is to stop talking about race.” Finally, *Support for Multiculturalism* is measured from responses to the statement “If we want to create a society where people get along, we must recognize that each ethnic group has the right to maintain its own unique traditions.”¹

Independent Variables

The primary independent variables of interest include three distinct measures of interracial contact, which represent different levels of intimacy with racial outgroup members. The least intimate measure of interracial contact is taken from an item asking respondents to indicate the frequency they engage in conversation with a person of a

¹During the initial analysis of the data, I suspected that the five dependent variables might load together as factors in a scale. However, factor analysis demonstrated that the items failed to load together. Furthermore, while a five item scale might be more parsimonious in terms of interpretation, the data failed to yield an appropriate scale suggesting that each of these variables represent a unique dimension of American Racial Projects.

different race. Available responses were coded from 0 to 6 and ranged from: 0) Never 1) Once or Twice a Year 2) About Once a Month 3) A Few Times a Month 4) Once a Week 5) A few Times a Week and 6) Every Day. The next level of contact is taken from an item asking respondents how often in the past year they visited the home or were visited in their home by someone of a different race. Available responses were coded from 0 to 7 and included: 0) Never 1) Once 2) 2-4 Times 3) 5-9 Times 4) Once a Month 5) Twice a Month 6) Once a Week 7) More than once a week.

Intimate interracial contact is measured using a binary variable indicating whether respondents identified a person in their friendship network that was of a different race than themselves. PALS respondents were asked to produce a network of up to six people living outside their home they feel closest to. Respondents were then asked a battery of questions about each person in their sextet, including their racial identity. Respondents indicating at least one person in their sextet is a different race than themselves were coded (1) while those who did not were coded as (0). This method of estimating interracial friendships has been shown to be the most rigorous against cognitive and desirability biases (Smith 2002).

Additionally, because the survey asks respondents the racial composition of their intimate networks, network diversity can be further delineated according to the race of each network member. Therefore, the sample of White respondents includes independent binary variables indicating if the respondent identified at least one Black person in their network and/or at least one person in their network who was a Non-Black Minority. Likewise, the sample of Black respondents includes binary variables indicating if the respondent identified at least one person in their network who is White and at least one

person in their network who is a Non-Black Minority. The Non-Black Minority sample includes binary variables indicating if at least one person in the network is White and/or if at least one person in the network is Black.

Covariates

Multivariate models also include a number of demographic and control variables related to racial identity, including respondents age (ranging from 18-80), gender (1 = male), marital status (1 = married), and whether the respondent lives with a child or children under the age of 5 years old (1 = yes). Also included are continuous measures of income (ranging from 1 = Less than \$5,000 to 19 = \$200,000 or more), educational attainment (ranging from 1 = Less than High School to 6 = Beyond a Bachelor's Degree), political identity (ranging from 1 = Very Liberal to 3 = Middle of the Road or Politically Ambivalent to 5 = Very Conservative) and county size (ranging from 1 = 5,000 or less to 10 = More than 2,000,000).

Additional covariates relevant to race and identity were also included. Binary measures include whether the respondent feels the racial demographics of their neighborhood are changing (1 = yes) and whether the respondent felt at any point in the last three years they had been treated unfairly because of their race (1 = yes). Also included are continuous variables measuring how important the respondent felt their race was to their identity (1 = Very, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = A Little, 4 = Not at All) (see Croll 2007) and how closely connected respondents felt to their racial group (1 = Extremely, 2 = Very, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Not at All). Sample descriptive statistics are displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Sample Descriptive Statistics (Dependent Variables and Demographic Variables)					
Variable	N	Mean or %	SD	Min	Max
<i>Dependent Variables</i>					
Whole Sample					
Segregation	2523	2.26	1.32	1	5
Affirmative Action	2531	3.39	1.4	1	5
Reparations	2506	2.25	1.41	1	5
Colorblindness	2523	3.07	1.45	1	5
Multiculturalism	2524	3.94	1.24	1	5
White Sample					
Segregation	1270	2.29	1.27	1	5
Affirmative Action	1268	2.95	1.3	1	5
Reparations	1266	1.67	1.11	1	5
Colorblindness	1271	3.103	1.39	1	5
Multiculturalism	1269	3.905	1.22	1	5
Black Sample					
Segregation	525	2.169	1.4	1	5
Affirmative Action	528	3.96	1.32	1	5
Reparations	515	3.41	1.44	1	5
Colorblindness	520	2.835	1.61	1	5
Multiculturalism	525	3.947	1.29	1	5
Non-Black Minority Sample					
Segregation	728	2.273	1.34	1	5
Affirmative Action	735	3.75	1.37	1	5
Reparations	725	2.455	1.29	1	5
Colorblindness	732	3.18	1.41	1	5
Multiculturalism	730	3.988	1.24	1	5
<i>Demographic Variables</i>					
Age	2592	43.6	16.402	18	80
Male (0,1)	2592	0.41	0.49	0	1
Education (n=2572)	2572	3.029	1.602	1	6
Less than HS = 1	354	13.76	-	-	-
HS/GED = 2	1059	41.17	-	-	-
Vocational Tech = 3	223	8.67	-	-	-
Some College, Associates = 4	268	10.42	-	-	-
Bachelors = 5	431	16.76	-	-	-
Beyond Bachelors = 6	237	9.21	-	-	-
Income	2313	8.44	4.62	1	19
Married	2590	0.46	0.5	0	1
Live with Children Under Age 5	2592	0.18	0.38	0	1

Source: Portraits of American Life Study, 1st Wave (2006); All data are unweighted and exclude Native American respondents.

Table 2. Sample Descriptive Statistics (Covariates and Independent Variables)

Variable	N	Mean or %	SD	Min	Max
<i>Covariates</i>					
County Population	2592	5.82	2.53	1	10
Political ID (Lib to Con)	2567	3.03	0.95	1	5
Transitional Neighborhood	2534	0.44	0.5	0	1
Felt Treated Unfairly B/C of Race	2585	0.17	0.38	0	1
Race Important for Identity (From Less to More)	2587	2.05	1.17	1	4
Feel Disconnected from Race	2559	2.29	0.92	1	4
Feel Aware of Race (From Very to Not at All)	2580	3.65	2.07	1	4
<i>Independent Variables</i>					
Whole Sample					
Conversations with Someone of a Different Race	2587	4.23	2.0	0	6
Visit or are Visited by Someone of a Different Race	2549	2.52	2.19	0	7
Diversity in Network of Six	2592	0.22	0.41	0	1
White Sample (n = 1292)					
Conversations with Someone of a Different Race	1289	4.13	1.9	0	6
Visit or are Visited by Someone of a Different Race	1277	2.48	2.18	0	7
Diversity in Network of Six	1292	0.19	0.39	0	1
Black Diversity in Network of Six	1292	0.05	0.23	0	1
Non-Black Minority in Network of Six	1292	0.14	0.34	0	1
Black Sample (n = 543)					
Conversations with Someone of a Different Race	543	4.56	1.96	0	6
Visit or are Visited by Someone of a Different Race	530	2.57	2.23	0	7
Diversity in Network of Six	543	0.19	0.39	0	1
White Diversity in Network of Six	543	0.1	0.31	0	1
Non-Black Minority in Network of Six	543	0.1	0.3	0	1
Non-Black Minority Sample (n = 761)					
Conversations with Someone of a Different Race	755	4.18	2.16	0	6
Visit or are Visited by Someone of a Different Race	742	2.55	2.19	0	7
White Diversity in Network of Six	757	0.21	0.41	0	1
Black Diversity in Network of Six	757	0.05	0.23	0	1

Source: Portraits of American Life Study, 1st Wave (2006); All data are unweighted and exclude Native American respondents.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The theoretical assumption of this project is that the dependent variables reflect the normative racial projects of Americans. Splitting the sample by racial categorization provides us a window into how normative racial projects differ across racial categories. Figure 2 presents the results of difference of means tests (t-tests) performed on each of the dependent variables in each subsample. Comparison of means shows that the general support for multiculturalism and lack of support for segregation is unaffected by race. Results show statistical homogeneity among all three subsamples in their support for segregation (means = 2.29, 2.17 and 2.27 for Whites, Blacks and Non-Black Minorities, respectively), and multiculturalism (means were 3.91, 3.95 and 3.99),¹ as none of the group means was statistically different at level $p < .05$. Results did show statistical heterogeneity in mean levels of support for affirmative action policies, reparations and support for colorblindness. Mean level support for affirmative action among Blacks (3.96) was significantly higher than for Non-Black Minorities (3.75) and for Whites (2.95). Mean level support for Non-Black Minorities was also significantly higher than for Whites. Additionally, mean levels of support for Blacks (3.41) were also significantly higher than for Non-Black Minorities (2.46) and for Whites (1.67) while Whites and Non-Black Minorities significantly differed in their support for reparations, with Whites expressing lower support for reparations than for any other issue. Finally, while whites'

¹ Available responses ranged from 1-5

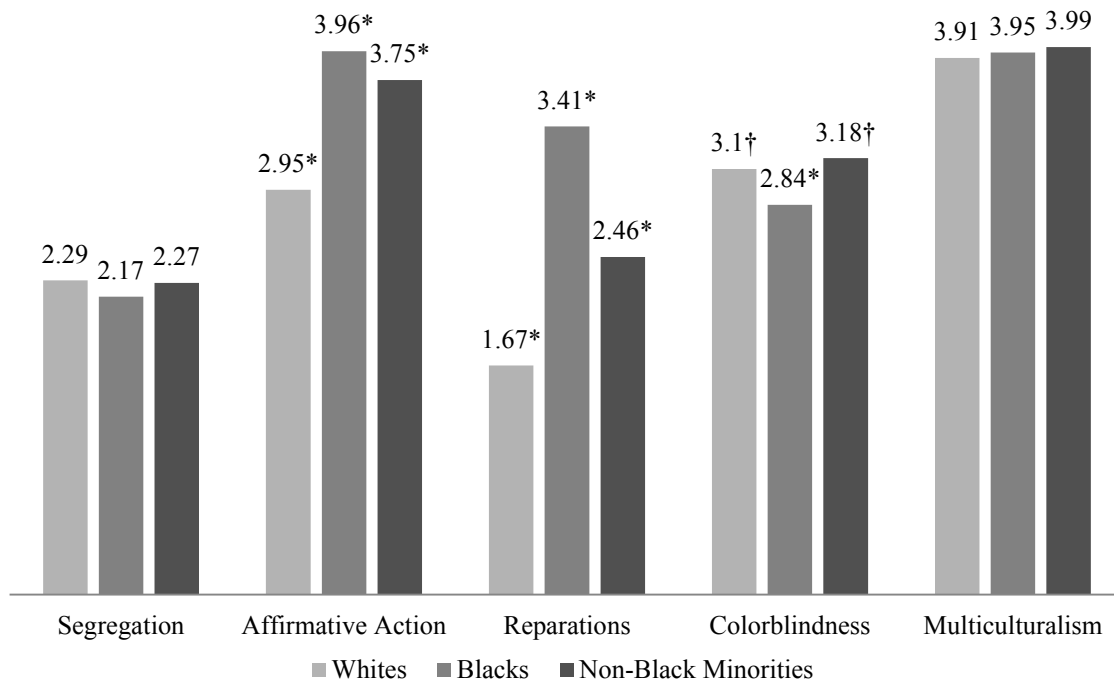


Figure 2. Group Means of Support for Dependent Variables; *Mean score differs from both reference groups at level $p < .01$; †Mean score differs from Black mean only; *Source*: Portraits of American Life Survey (2006).

mean level support for colorblindness (3.1) did not significantly differ from Non-Black Minorities (3.18), Black mean level support (2.84) was significantly lower compared to both groups.

To investigate the potential effects of interracial contact on racial projects of Whites, Blacks and Non-Black Minorities, OLS regression analyses were performed for each subsample and on each of the five dependent variables². Tables 2 – 4 present the results of these analyses. In Table 3, H1 is tested using five separate models, one for each dependent variable. Model 1 presents the results of analysis on support for separate but

² During initial analysis, variables were also analyzed using Logistic regression producing nearly identical results. As Zhai and Woodberry (2011) note, when the number of response categories is 5, results from ordered logit and OLS are virtually identical and OLS is also more effective at containing Omitted variable bias (Allison 1987, 2001). Furthermore, because the proportional odds assumption was frequently violated in logistic regression analysis, it would have been necessary to perform multinomial logistic regression on all five response categories for each of the five variables, making interpretation of the results far less coherent and accessible, compared to OLS.

equal segregation. Significant positive relationships were observed for measures of age and gender while significant negative relationships were observed for measures of education and income. Independent effects of key independent variables were observed for measures of outgroup conversation and visitation, but for neither measure of network diversity. For each increase in the rate of outgroup conversation, support for segregation is predicted to decrease by 0.05 while for each increase in the rate of outgroup visitation, support for segregation is predicted to decrease by 0.04. Model 2 presents the results of analysis on support for affirmative action. Significant negative relationships were observed for measures of income, gender and conservative political identification while age was positively associated. Among key independent variables, only outgroup visitation was significant, predicting that for each increase in outgroup visitation, support for affirmative action increases by 0.05.³ Model 3 presents the results of analysis on support for reparations. Significant negative relationships were observed for measures of income and conservative political identification while a positive relationship was observed for age. Independent effects were observed for measures of outgroup visitation, for which a one unit increase predicted a 0.04 increase in support for reparations, and for respondents reporting a Black person in their intimate network where, all things being equal, support for reparations is predicted to be 0.37 points higher. Model 4 presents the results of analysis on support for colorblindness. Among control variables, conservative political identification was positively associated with support for colorblindness while

³ Reports of unfair treatment based on race was negatively associated with support for affirmative action, but only at significance level $p < .10$.

residence in a transitional neighborhood was associated with a decrease.⁴ In regards to contact variables, none of the measures of interracial contact was observed to predict support for colorblindness among Whites. Finally, Model 5 presents the results of analysis on support for multiculturalism. Measures of age and conservative political identification were observed to negatively associate with support for multiculturalism, while education level was observed to positively associate with support.⁵ Significant effects were observed for rates of outgroup conversation, as each unit increase predicted a 0.06 increase in support, and visitation, where each unit increase predicted an increase in support of 0.04.

To test H2, I performed OLS regression exclusively for Black respondents on each of the five dependent variables. Table 4 presents the results of these analyses. Model 1 presents the results of analysis on support for separate but equal segregation. Significant negative relationships were observed for measures of county population and for outgroup visitation. Each unit increase in outgroup visitation predicted a 0.07 decrease in support for separate but equal segregation. In Model 2, regression analysis demonstrated that only a negative association with income was significantly related to support for affirmative action⁶ while in Model 3, only a positive association with age was observed.⁷ In Model 4, a negative association with education and a positive association with feeling aware of one's race were observed to be significantly related to

⁴ At significance level $p < .10$, measures of education, county population and feeling connected to your race were also negatively associated; awareness of race was positively associated.

⁵ At significance level $p < .10$, living with children under age 5 and awareness of race were negatively associated with support for multiculturalism.

⁶ At significance level $p < .10$, age was negatively associated with support for affirmative action.

⁷ At significance level $p < .10$, the importance of race to one's identity was negatively associated with support for reparations.

colorblindness while in Model 5, none of the variables predicted support for multiculturalism at significance level $p < .05$. A positive relationship between having Non-Black Minority friend in one's intimate network and support for multiculturalism was observed, however the significance ($p = 0.065$) did not fall below level $p < .05$.

Finally, in a test of H3, OLS regression performed on the dependent variables using the subsample of Non-Black Minorities, with results displayed in Table 5. In Model 1, a significant negative association was observed between outgroup visitation and support for segregation, where each increase in the rate of visitation predicted a decrease in support for segregation of 0.06. Having a White friend in one's intimate network also predicted negative support, but this coefficient was above level $p < .05$ ($p = 0.076$).

Model 2 presents the results of analyses on support for affirmative action. Here conservative political identification was found to negatively associate with support, as was having a White friend in one's intimate network, which predicted a 0.31 decrease.⁸ In Model 3, results from analysis on support for reparations demonstrate negative associations between gender, income and conservative political identification.⁹ In Model 4, living in a transitional neighborhood was found to negatively associate with support for colorblindness. More immediately, significant relationships between key independent variables were also found. An increase in the rate of outgroup visitation was found to increase support for colorblindness by 0.07 points per unit increase, while having a White friend in one's intimate network was found to decrease support for colorblindness by 0.35

⁸ Income was found to negatively associate at significance level $p < .10$

⁹ At significance level $p < .10$, living in a transitional neighborhood and feeling connected to one's race were found to positively associate and negatively associate, respectively.

points.¹⁰ Finally, Model 5 presents results from analysis on support for multiculturalism among Non-Black Minorities. Negative associations were observed for living in a transitional neighborhood and feeling aware of race. However, none of the key independent variables predicted support for multiculturalism at significance level $p < .05$, although having a Black friend in one's intimate network did predict a 0.35 point increase in support but at a significance level of $p = 0.093$.

Interracial Contact on White Racial Projects

Based on what we know about different contact effects across racial categories, I proposed three hypotheses testing the effect of contact on the normative racial projects of Whites, Blacks and Non-Black Minorities. H1 predicted that interracial contact would positively effect racial awareness, negatively affect support for antistructuralism, but have no effect on colorblindness. Analyses of contact effects on White racial project responses fully support this hypothesis. As presented in Table 3, Models 1 and 5, more frequent interracial contact, at the level of conversation and visitation, predicted significantly lower support for separate but equal segregation and higher support for multiculturalism. Moreover, although the effect sizes were quite small, these variables had relatively large standardized coefficients (not shown)¹¹ as only measures of age, income and education yielded larger betas in Model 1, as did the measure of age in Model 5. These findings support the prediction that interracial contact makes it significantly more unlikely for Whites to remain racially oblivious. This is a somewhat

¹⁰ Negative associations were observed for measures of education and feeling connected to race at significance level $p < .10$.

¹¹ To conserve space, model standardized coefficients were not shown but can be produced upon request.

intuitive finding, as it makes sense that more frequent contact with Non-Whites would lead to greater awareness of, if not appreciation for, other racial groups. If we assume that Whites in interracial interactions are generally more dominant due to White hegemony, and more likely to dictate the terms of the encounter, then it also makes sense that Whites are more likely to view interactions in a positive light. Counter to expectations, however, none of the measures of network diversity had an effect on racial awareness. Rather, the results are consistent with Jackman and Crane (1986) who find that intimacy of contact is less important than variety of contacts towards changing Whites' racial attitudes.

The results presented in Models 2 and 3 also support the prediction that more frequent contact weakens support for antistructuralism. While the rate of interracial conversation was insignificantly related to both dependent variables (*affirmative action*, *reparations*) the rate of interracial visitation positively predicted support for affirmative action and reparations. Support for reparations was also predicted to be higher for those who reported having a Black friend in their network. The effects of significant contact variables were also comparatively high, as only political identification yielded a substantially larger standardized coefficient. This is not surprising, as support for both issues is largely reflective of political ideology and prior research finds strong associations between political identification and antistructuralism (Hinojosa and Park 2004). Nor is it inconsistent with Racial Formations Theory, which emphasizes the inextricably political nature of developing and maintaining racial identities. Therefore we should expect political identification to tell a significant part of the story. That aside, the results show significant effects of interracial contact on White support for antistructuralism, independent of the effects of political identification. Although

measures of superficial contact yielded no effect on antistructuralism, more intimate contact did, suggesting antistructuralism is a more entrenched component of Whiteness than is racial obliviousness and that movement on these issues requires more meaningful and intimate relationships.

Meanwhile, none of the independent measures of interracial contact significantly effected support for colorblindness. The results are consistent with the argument that colorblindness represents, for Whites, a hegemonic ideology (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Hartmann et al. 2009; Lewis 2004) whereby race is believed to no longer matter in contemporary society. Bonilla-Silva (2010) concludes that, for many Whites, colorblindness is so normative that it is taken as common sense. This description overlaps with the concept of Berger's *Plausibility Structures* (Berger 1967); in the Post-Civil rights era and with the repudiation of overt racial discrimination, the logic of colorblindness presents itself as a taken for granted value. Based on the data, it appears that interracial contact is effective for undermining the periphery layers of White racial identity, particularly racial obliviousness and even antistructuralism, however, the normative virtues of colorblindness do not appear to be significantly undermined by interracial contact of any kind.

Interracial Contact on Black Racial Projects

Based on previous research showing the predominant influence of racial alienation and White hegemony on the experiences of American Blacks, H2 predicted that interracial contact would have little to no effect on their normative racial projects. This hypothesis is supported by the data presented in Table 4. Looking at the independent variables of interest, the negative relationship between the rate of interracial visitation

and support for separate but equal segregation (Model 1) was the only significant effect observed at level $p < .05$. Although this finding technically refutes the hypothesis that contact would have no effect, the nature of the relationship substantively supports the theoretical claim tested in H2 that interracial contact does not counteract the effects of racial alienation. The fact that the relationship is a negative one is consistent with the conclusion that increased interracial contact can actually make racial alienation more salient for Blacks, further emphasizing the deleterious effects of structural racism and making separate but equal segregation less appealing. Then again, increased visitation may also be evidence of greater affinity for Non-Blacks, and potentially, a stronger value for racial integration.

It is also possible that some of the variation could be the result of Black separatist sentiments within the Black sample and that support for segregation, in part, reflects the desire to maintain Black separatism as a survival strategy in the face of White Racism. If this is true, then respondents reporting meaningful and regular interracial contact would likely reflect greater support for integration, relative to those in racial isolation. More importantly, analysis of interracial contact on the racial projects of Blacks shows no other effects on any of the dependent variables, at each level of contact. In sum, the lack of substantive and significant findings yielded from analysis of Blacks' racial projects supports H2, further suggests that Black Racial Identity remains largely defined by racial alienation and that variation in Black racial projects is more likely the result of factors independent of the rate of outgroup contact.

Interracial Contact on Non-Black Minority Racial Projects

H3 proposed that for Non-Black Minorities, more frequent interracial contact would predict greater racial awareness, similar to Whites, but that the effects for antistructuralism and colorblindness would be contingent upon the racial composition of contact. The data presented in Table 5 only partially support the hypothesis. Results from Models 1 and 5 provide support for the link between contact and increased racial awareness. Results in Model 1 show that, controlling for other factors, only the rate of visitation, which predicted a decrease in support for separate but equal segregation, was significant at level $p < .05$. As might be expected, the standardized coefficient was also the largest in the Model.¹² Meanwhile, none of the contact variables predicted effects on support for multiculturalism (Model 5).¹³ However, it should be noted, that mean level support for multiculturalism was very high in the sample of Non-Black Minorities (see Figure 2), and that the slope intercept for Model 5 was greater than 4, suggesting relatively uniform approval of multiculturalism. This makes intuitive sense considering approximately four of every five people in the sample of Non-Black Minorities are linked to a recent immigration experience.¹⁴ To the extent that racial identity is influenced by ethnic and cultural links to a different ethnic tradition, it makes sense that respondents would reflect a more uniform appreciation of their different cultural experiences and of other groups as well. Therefore, while contact appears to have no effect, it may be a

¹² There is some evidence that having a White friend also weakens support for segregation, as this coefficient was significant at level $p < .10$. However the smaller sample size suggest that this interpretation should be viewed with skepticism, barring more robust, confirmatory findings. Similarly, reporting having a Black friend predicted increased support for multiculturalism, but only at the same, probationary level of significance $p < .10$.

¹³ See footnote 12.

¹⁴ Just less than 82% of the sample of Non-Black Minorities was either born abroad, or is the child of one or both parents born abroad.

reflection of the overwhelmingly high support for multiculturalism in the sample. Overall the data present modest support for the link between contact and increased racial awareness among Non-Black Minorities.

The results in Models 2 and 3, which test for the contingent effect of interracial contact on antistructuralism, also provide support for H3. In Model 2, having a White friend was negatively associated with support for affirmative action, with political identification being the only other significant variable. Furthermore, the standardized coefficients were comparable, suggesting that the independent effects of having a White friend on support for affirmative action are at least as powerful as the effects of political identification. Model 3, meanwhile, tells a similar story, as having a White friend not only predicts decreased support for reparations, but the standardized coefficient is the largest in the sample. Taken together, the data show that although having a Black friend does not appear to affect Non-Black Minority support, having a White friend was the most robust predictor of support for antistructuralism variables. These findings are consistent with those of Hunt (2007) who found increasing support for antistructuralism among Hispanics over time. Should this trend continue it is possible that increased contact with Whites may result in greater convergence and isomorphism among Non-Black Minorities toward antistructuralism. Future research should continue to track this development, focusing on the potential implications for Non-Black Minority racial formation as well as the potential impact on racial alienation for Blacks (Yancey 2004).

Regarding the contingent effect of contact on support for colorblindness, the data fail to support H3. In fact, analysis of the data (Model 4) reveals the opposite of what was predicted and that having a White friend predicted *less* support for colorblindness. On the

other hand, results of the full Model show the relationship between contact and support for colorblindness to be somewhat ambiguous as results also showed that rate of interracial home visitation was associated with *greater* support for colorblindness and in closer alignment with White hegemony. This is potentially confounding when accounting for the measure of White friendship which produces the opposite effect.

Some of the ambiguity may result from the measurements. While the measure of interracial visitation does capture the respondent's rate of interracial home visitation, unfortunately due to data limitations, I am unable to tease out the racial composition of these encounters. This makes it impossible to investigate whether more frequent visitation of and by Whites produces different effects on colorblindness, than if visitation was more frequently of and by Non-Whites. I am also unable to see if a higher rate of visitation of and by Non-Whites primarily accounts for the higher support for colorblindness in the Model. Based on the way this variable is measured, it is also likely that some interracial visitations are with other Non-Black Minorities which may result in different effects as well.

Contrarily, the binary measure of network diversity, where respondents indicate having a close friend of a different race, not only allows me to isolate the unique effects of racial composition, but it should produce a much more rigorous indicator of contact, than the measure of visitation which might artificially be inflated due to desirability bias (Smith 2002). The sample's process of naming a close network of friends suggests that the interracial relationships captured in this measurement are more reliable, meaningful and consequential for moving racial attitudes. While in home visitation is implicitly less superficial than interracial conversations, it is also presumably less consequential than

one of your six closest friends being a different race than you, and this difference may be substantive enough to produce distinct effects which may account for the discrepant findings.

In short, based on the data, and unable to control for the racial composition of interracial visitations, I am left to conclude that the dynamics of interracial home visitation produce contrary effects on support for colorblindness compared to having a White friend. Both findings refute H3, which anticipated that support for colorblindness would be contingent upon racial composition of contact and that greater contact with Whites would have an isomorphic effect on Non-Black Minority support. It should be noted that, statistically, Whites and Non-Black Minorities did not differ in their mean levels of support for colorblindness (see Figure 2). The significant relationship between White contact and decreased support for colorblindness implies that similarity in support for colorblindness is *despite* contact with Whites and not *because* of it. Furthermore, based on these findings, the unique effect of close intimate contact with Whites may reflect the possibility that White contact makes the racial otherness of Non-Black Minorities more salient, potentially leading to feelings of alienation. One final possibility is that greater support for colorblindness among Non-Black Minorities who more frequently interact with whites is evidence of favored status in an emerging racial hierarchy, with Non-Black Minorities located below Whites but above Blacks. Should this be the case, Non-Black Minorities in frequent contact with Blacks might find colorblindness attractive as a legitimization of their own status. Future investigations of how Non-Black Minority responses are affected when contact is between Blacks or between Whites, would be beneficial.

Table 3. Results of OLS Regression Analysis of Contact Variables on White Racial Projects

Variable	Model 1: Support for Separate but Equal		Model 2: Support for Affirmative Action		Model 3: Support for Reparations		Model 4: Support for Colorblindness		Model 5: Support for Multiculturalism	
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
Intercept	2.94***	0.26	3.35***	0.27	2.33***	0.23	2.80***	0.29	4.28***	0.25
Age	0.01*	0.00	0.01*	0.00	0.01**	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.01***	0.00
Male (0,1)	0.15*	0.08	-0.19*	0.08	0.01	0.07	0.09	0.09	-0.08	0.07
Education	-0.08**	0.03	0.03	0.03	-0.03	0.02	-0.06†	0.03	0.05*	0.03
Income	-0.04***	0.01	-0.02*	0.01	-0.02*	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Married (0,1)	0.08	0.09	-0.04	0.09	-0.10	0.07	0.05	0.09	-0.06	0.08
Live with Children age < 5 (0,1)	-0.03	0.12	0.07	0.12	-0.05	0.10	0.09	0.13	-0.22†	0.11
County Population	-0.01	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.02	-0.04†	0.02	0.02	0.02
Political ID [^]	0.05	0.04	-0.23***	0.04	-0.17***	0.03	0.18***	0.04	-0.10**	0.04
Live in Transitional Neighborhood (0,1)	0.00	0.08	0.03	0.08	-0.03	0.07	-0.27**	0.09	-0.02	0.08
Felt Unfair Treatment b/c Race (0,1)	-0.04	0.14	-0.25†	0.14	-0.13	0.12	0.05	0.15	-0.06	0.13
Importance of Race for Identity	-0.07†	0.04	0.03	0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
Feel Connected to Race	-0.01	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.04	-0.09†	0.05	-0.05	0.04
Feel Aware of Race	-0.01	0.02	-0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.02	0.05†	0.03	-0.04†	0.02
Rate of Outgroup Conversation (0-6)	-0.05*	0.02	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.06*	0.02
Rate of Outgroup Visitation (0-7)	-0.04*	0.02	0.05*	0.02	0.04*	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.04*	0.02
Blacks in Network (0,1)	0.10	0.17	-0.09	0.18	0.37*	0.15	-0.06	0.19	0.10	0.16
Non Black Minorities in Network (0,1)	0.06	0.11	-0.01	0.12	0.14	0.10	-0.02	0.13	0.07	0.11
N	1093		1091		1090		1093		1094	
r ²	0.0863		0.0627		0.0768		0.0572		0.0879	

Source: Portraits of American Life Study, 1st Wave (2006); data are unweighted

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; [^]Political ID ranges from More Liberal to More Conservative

Table 4. Results of OLS Regression Analysis of Contact Variables on Black Racial Projects

Variable	Model 1: Support for Separate but Equal		Model 2: Support for Affirmative Action		Model 3: Support for Reparations		Model 4: Support for Colorblindness		Model 5: Support for Multiculturalism	
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
Intercept	3.14***	0.46	4.36***	0.44	2.82***	0.48	2.81***	0.51	3.21***	0.43
Age	0.00	0.00	-0.01†	0.00	0.01*	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Male (0,1)	0.06	0.14	0.15	0.13	0.15	0.15	-0.08	0.16	-0.01	0.13
Education	-0.06	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.06	-0.23***	0.06	0.08	0.05
Income	-0.02	0.02	-0.05**	0.02	-0.02	0.02	-0.04†	0.02	0.00	0.02
Married (0,1)	-0.23	0.17	0.25	0.17	-0.23	0.18	0.05	0.19	-0.09	0.16
Live with Children age < 5 (0,1)	-0.01	0.18	-0.10	0.18	0.14	0.20	0.06	0.21	0.01	0.17
County Population	-0.06*	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03
Political ID [^]	-0.01	0.07	-0.07	0.07	0.01	0.07	0.07	0.08	-0.07	0.07
Live in Transitional Neighborhood	0.16	0.13	-0.05	0.13	0.17	0.14	0.12	0.15	0.02	0.12
Felt Unfair Treatment b/c Race (0,1)	-0.11	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.16	0.15	-0.22	0.16	0.00	0.13
Importance of Race for Identity	-0.04	0.09	-0.07	0.09	-0.16†	0.10	-0.07	0.10	0.10	0.09
Feel Connected to Race	0.05	0.08	0.07	0.08	-0.01	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.08
Feel Aware of Race	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.09**	0.04	-0.02	0.03
Rate of Outgroup Conversation (0-18)	-0.04	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.03
Rate of Outgroup Visitation (0-7)	-0.07*	0.03	0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.03
Non Black Minorities in Network (0,1)	-0.11	0.22	0.15	0.22	0.26	0.24	-0.12	0.25	0.39†	0.21
White Friends in Network (0,1)	0.06	0.22	-0.11	0.21	0.03	0.23	-0.11	0.25	-0.09	0.20
N	472		473		465		469		471	
r ²	0.0611		0.0415		0.0363		0.1137		0.0373	

Source: Portraits of American Life Study, 1st Wave (2006); data are unweighted

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; [^]Political ID ranges from More Liberal to More Conservative

Table 5. Results of OLS Multiple Regression Analysis of Contact Variables on Non-Black Minority Racial Projects

Variable	Model 1: Support for Separate but Equal		Model 2: Support for Affirmative Action		Model 3: Support for Reparations		Model 4: Support for Colorblindness		Model 5: Support for Multiculturalism	
	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
Intercept	2.58***	0.40	4.57***	0.42	3.88***	0.39	3.23***	0.43	4.19***	0.37
Age	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Male (0,1)	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.11	-0.21*	0.11	0.03	0.12	0.03	0.10
Education	-0.05	0.04	0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.04	-0.07†	0.04	0.02	0.04
Income	-0.02	0.02	-0.03†	0.02	-0.04**	0.01	-0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Married (0,1)	-0.16	0.12	0.13	0.12	-0.13	0.11	0.14	0.13	0.01	0.11
Live with Children age < 5 (0,1)	0.07	0.14	0.18	0.14	0.19	0.13	-0.08	0.15	0.13	0.13
County Population	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.03	-0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.02
Political ID [^]	-0.03	0.06	-0.15*	0.06	-0.14*	0.06	-0.03	0.07	-0.07	0.06
Live in Transitional Neighborhood	-0.04	0.11	0.09	0.11	0.19†	0.11	-0.24*	0.12	-0.22*	0.10
Felt Unfair Treatment b/c Race (0,1)	0.07	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.06	0.13	-0.16	0.14	0.19	0.13
Importance of Race for Identity	0.10	0.07	-0.11	0.07	-0.08	0.07	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.06
Feel Connected to Race	0.02	0.07	-0.09	0.07	-0.11†	0.06	-0.14†	0.07	-0.10	0.06
Feel Aware of Race	-0.02	0.03	-0.05	0.03	-0.01	0.03	0.03	0.03	-0.06*	0.03
Rate of Outgroup Conversation (0-6)	-0.02	0.03	-0.01	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.03
Rate of Outgroup Visitation (0-7)	-0.06*	0.03	-0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.07*	0.03	0.00	0.03
Black Friends in Network (0,1)	-0.32	0.22	0.28	0.23	-0.09	0.22	-0.18	0.24	0.35†	0.21
White Friends in Network (0,1)	-0.25†	0.14	-0.31*	0.15	-0.41**	0.14	-0.35*	0.15	0.18	0.13
N	624		626		623		625		625	
r ²	0.0591		0.0739		0.0949		0.0481		0.0457	

Source: Portraits of American Life Study, 1st Wave (2006); data are unweighted

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; ^Political ID ranges from More Liberal to More Conservative

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Conclusion

Among the insights of Racial Formations Theory is the assertion that racial identity is developed and negotiated within and in response to the dominant racial hierarchy. In the United States the degree of individual assimilation or resistance to the dominant patterns of racial identity influence the ongoing racial projects of Whites, Blacks, and Non-Black Minorities. The hierarchical and distinct positions of these groups imply that distinct normative patterns emerge, based on racial categorizations.

Examination of large, racially representative data allows for greater understanding of normative racial projects across racial categories, as well as the opportunity to examine the impact of interracial contact. Three hypotheses were tested, to determine the impact of interracial contact on the racial projects of Whites, Blacks and Non-Black Minorities. The results of the analysis from Tables 2-4 are summarized in Figure 3.

Drawing from the decades of empirical studies of interracial contact on White racial prejudice, as well as the literature on *Whiteness Studies*, H1 proposed that interracial contact would predict decreased support for the peripheral layers of *Hegemonic Whiteness* (racial obliviousness and antistructuralism), but would have no effect on the core of *Hegemonic Whiteness*, (colorblindness). Results from OLS regression strongly support this hypothesis. Furthermore, intimacy of contact was not necessary to produce these effects. Therefore, relative to racial awareness and antistructuralism, data from a national sample align with previous findings linking

	↑ Racial Awareness		↓ Antistucturalism		↓ Colorblindness
	<i>Decreased</i> Support for Segregation	<i>Increased</i> Support for Multiculturalism	<i>Increased</i> Support for Affirmative Action	<i>Increased</i> Support for Reparations	<i>Decreased</i> Support for Colorblindness
Whites					
Conversation	Yes*	Yes*			
Visitation	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	
Black Network				Yes*	
NBM Network					
Blacks					
Conversation					
Visitation	Yes*				
White Network					
NBM Network		Yes†			
Non-Black Minorities					
Conversation					
Visitation	Yes*				No*
White Network	Yes†		No*	No**	Yes*
Black Network		Yes†			

Figure 3. Summary Findings from OLS Analysis; Only significant relationships reported. Coefficients of no statistically significant effect were left blank. Variables with values of 'No' represent coefficients which went in the opposite direction; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; † $p < .10$

increased contact and decreased prejudice and antipathy (Aboud et al. 2003; Brown et al. 2003; Butler and Wilson 1978; Emerson and Yancey 2008; Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew et al. 2011; Robinson 1980). Theoretically, it may be that prejudice and racial aversion are related to racial awareness and antistucturalism. That effects were observed for Whites at the superficial level of contact measured by the rate of interracial conversations, aligns with the findings of Dixon and Rosenbaum (2004) who find that even superficial contact ameliorates White prejudice, as well as Jackman and Crane (1986) who conclude that intimacy is less important than the rate and variety of contact. Additionally, it should be encouraging to those interested in moving racial policy attitudes that interracial contact had a positive effect on White support for structural solutions to inequality (see Hunt

2007). The observed relationship indicates that contact not only impacts affective orientations of Whites towards racial others, but in support of contact theory, respondents who reported greater contact appeared more willing to address the structural causes of racial inequality, independent of political identification. Finally, the absence of any contact effects on the core of *Hegemonic Whiteness* (colorblindness) lends credence to those who argue that colorblind ideology is taken as common sense and operates at deep levels of the White American psyche (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Burke 2012; Emerson and Smith 2000; Hughey 2010). For those interested in undermining colorblind ideology, it appears from the data that something different is required. This finding underscores the important role of educators and cultural elites in countering colorblind ideology with an alternative view of the reality of race in contemporary American society. Future research should focus on other potential factors which might predict variation in White adherence to colorblindness.

This study also looked at the potential impact of increased interracial contact for Black Racial Projects. The impact of interracial contact has been understudied, largely due to too few available samples large enough to examine Blacks, directly. Extant research has shown that while Blacks often benefit from interracial encounters, interracial contact can also exacerbate racial tension and feelings of alienation and subordination. Furthermore, the pervasive and persistent alienation of Blacks from the mainstream threatens to overshadow any effects interracial contact might have. Based on the predominance of racial alienation, H2 proposed that interracial contact would have no effects on the racial projects of Blacks in the sample. Analysis of the data support H2, further validating the assertion that Blacks remain alienated from the racial mainstream.

Researchers should continue to consider the effects of racial alienation on Black racial formation, paying particular attention to the potential impact of greater numbers of Non-Black Minorities in the United States presumably jockeying for resources and status (Yancey 2004).

Finally, as Non-Black Minorities are projected to constitute an increasingly large share of the American population, more studies illuminating the implications of interracial contact on the racial identities and experiences of those outside of the Black/White racial dichotomy are needed. From the limited research available, the racial projects of Non-Black Minorities appear more fluid and contestable, due to the ambiguous nature of their relationship to the racial hierarchy. H3 proposed that the content of interracial character would reflect the level of assimilation to the White mainstream or the proximity to Black alienation. Therefore, White friendship was expected to predict stronger antistructuralism and colorblindness, while Black friendship was expected to predict weaker antistructuralism and colorblindness. Analysis of the data partially supported this hypothesis. While contact variables did predict increased racial awareness, similar to Whites, and while reporting a White friend did predict stronger support for antistructuralism, the observed effects of contact on colorblindness did not support H3. Specifically, the rate of visitation, for which I was not able to isolate the racial content, was positively associated with support for colorblindness while having a White friend predicted the opposite of what was expected. These findings underscore the need for more investigation of the attitudes and beliefs of Non-Black Minorities. As their share of the population increases over time, there will inevitably be increased opportunities for Non-Black Minorities to encounter Americans of other races and more

pressure to either resist or assimilate according to normative racial categories. This dynamic has important implications for race scholars, particularly in terms of America's racial ordering. It remains to be seen how flexible, permeable or venerable the historical Black/White dichotomy of race will remain for Americans in the coming decades (Yancey 2004) or if the increase in Non-Black Minorities will instigate entirely new normative racial categories and a corresponding, new racial hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva 2004). Analyses of nationally representative data provide some insight, but more research is needed to more fully anticipate the formations of Non-Black Minority racial identity and their impact on the coming racial landscape.

It should be noted that this study has limitations. First, due to the nature of the sampling instrument, the data analyzed are self-reported, rather than observed directly. As stated above, self-reported measures of race related attitudes are likely susceptible to desirability bias. Furthermore, because the items are self-reported and are cross-sectional, there is not a reliable way to observe how individual responses correlate with or precipitate social action, notably, the extent which racial attitudes predict individual behavior toward outgroup members. Future research should employ a mixture of methods synthesizing observed effects of interracial contact across large samples with in depth observations of small groups, where the effects of interracial contact can be understood within the context of other factors. Another limitation, is that while this study extends examination of contact to the level of ideology and identity, it is unable to account for the ways interracial contact might impact *aversive racism* (Dovidio et al. 2002; Pearson, Dovidio, and Gaertner 2009). In other words, because this study focused on self-reported measures of ideological content, it was unable to measure how interracial contact impacts

the often unconscious and unintentional attitudes and dispositions of contemporary Americans toward racial outgroup members, nor was it able to predict the impact of interracial contact on important variables such as trust of outgroups or feelings of group threat. Going forward, research which controls for the ideological content of racial identity, while also accounting for the affective dispositions of individuals, would provide a more contextually complete understanding of the effects of interracial contact. Limitations aside, probing the ideological and evaluative content of racial identity is illustrative of not only how racial categorizations remain salient in contemporary society, but also how various factors undermine or reinforce racial identities.

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