

BROTHERS OF THE TRADE:
INTERSECTIONS OF RACIAL FRAMING AND IDENTITY PROCESSES UPON
AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA -
ANCESTRAL KINSMEN OF THE AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE

A Dissertation

by

VEEDA V. WILLIAMS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2011

Major Subject: Sociology

Brothers of the Trade: Intersections of Racial Framing and Identity Processes upon
African-Americans and African Immigrants in America – Ancestral Kinsmen of the
American Slave Trade

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ABSTRACT

Brothers of the Trade: Intersections of Racial Framing and Identity Processes upon

African-Americans and African Immigrants in America –

Ancestral Kinsmen of the American Slave Trade. (May 2011)

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The “implicit rules” of the white racial framing shape meanings, structure interactions, and impose identities upon all who enter American society. The context of this current study conceptualizes how this racialized frame differentially shapes the experiences of native African-Americans and African immigrants in America, disrupting associations between these ancestral kinsmen and subsequently interrupting identity processes. The body of knowledge now available depicts the relationship between native and immigrant blacks as “socially-distanced,” “divided,” “conflicted” – as disconnected. However, I argue that such characterizations – symbolic of the divisive influence of racial structures rooted in America’s slave past – evolve from inappropriate evaluation of black behavior within white racial contexts that do not support or encourage such expression. This current mixed-method study re-examines the relationship between native and immigrant blacks from an *africentric* perspective – a view that captures the authenticity of black behavior in the service of its full

development and potential. Based on data obtained from 40 respondents (20 African, 20 African-American) at a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), this study informs our understanding of the workings of the white racial frame and its impact upon identity processes, specifically for native and immigrant blacks in America.

This research found that absent the influence of the white racial frame upon identity processes, native African-American and African respondents freely interact and fully express identification with a shared ancestry and heritage; that the most significant disconnect in the relationship exists in identification with a common *history* given the separation experienced as a direct result of the American slave trade. This separation – still perpetuated today by American racial constructs’ divisive characterizations – accounts for the differential experiences and motivations of native and immigrant blacks within American society. As a result, native and immigrant blacks do not contextualize or interpret racial experiences in the same manner, giving birth to the misconception that their identification with each other does not emanate from a shared heritage and promoting as an obvious *rift*, obscure *tensions* bred by the white racial framing of American society.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to future generations of BROTHERS with the belief that, one day, you will find each other again. It is dedicated to my nieces and nephews yet to leave their mark upon the world with the hope that you come to understand the significance of positioning yourselves so that you do not leave to others the task of defining who you are – who you can become. Take hold of your own future so that you can provide firm footing on which others – those coming after you – can find support for elevating themselves as well.

As W.E.B. Du Bois found himself during his lifetime (1868-1963), I too, find myself “faced with the great Decision...What with all my dreaming, studying, and teaching [am] I going to do” (Du Bois, 1920:49) to impact social change for the next generation? Having been born in September 1963 – one week after Du Bois’ death – I feel as if I have picked up the baton of his dreams, his studies and teachings in my generation to “speak freely to my people and of them, interpreting between two worlds;” (Du Bois 1920:50) two worlds that should never have existed, for we are one – the African, the African-American – offspring of the same ancestor; brothers – separated by the inhumane practice of the American slave trade. I dedicate this work to our enduring spirit.

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what a journey you have taken my mind on in the past several years. The experience gained from my encounter with you has stretched my intellect, my emotions and my imaginings to the full extent of their expression at times. Thank you for motivating me to elevate my level of thinking and consciousness. To Dr. Sell, one of the kindest souls I have ever met, thank you for walking me through this process so willingly. I will never forget your kindness or your assistance in making it all seem surmountable. To Dr. Wendy Moore, thank you for being “real” with me and for allowing me space to do the same. To Dr. Alex McIntosh, I thank you for always encouraging me in this process, for always being available and willing to assist me. I appreciate you all tremendously.

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To my dad, mom, James, LaVern and Rose, I cannot express how much I miss you all. If at all possible, I hope that if you could look down on this day, know that this is possible because of what each of you have contributed to my life; eternal rest and peace to each of you – until we meet again and thereafter. Much love to you all.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The “American slave past is ‘that ghost which we have not entirely faced,’ and the memory of that institution is a ‘haunted house’ we fear to inhabit...A domestic space haunted by a liminal apparition beyond the grave indicates the ways the past is not dead, but likewise not seen or acknowledged by all” (Feagin 2006:49).

The American slave past haunts not only the domestic spaces within the boundaries of American society but equally the domestic space of ancestral ties between African-Americans and African immigrants living in American society, promulgating a rift that *appears* almost as great as between offspring of former slaves and former slave masters. From the *African slave* to the *African-American* and now the *African immigrant in America*, we share a common bond: our African ancestors in whose identity we garnished the strength to survive an institution destined for our destruction. The question remains, however, is there something about American society that prohibits identification with our common identity?

While most of the existing literature examining the interaction between African-Americans and African immigrants treats them as two *separate* groups differentially trekking through American society and embroiled in conflict with each other, this research takes a critical look at these claims, examining the structures which undergird

This dissertation follows the style of *American Sociological Review*.

such assertions. While it is true that the native and immigrant black in America have different *historical* experiences in and with American society, how do these kinsmen, who share a common ancestral *heritage*, not identify with one another?

This is not to imply that there are no distinctions between black groups in America, for even when sharing direct, daily experiences and interactions within the same social spaces, native and immigrant blacks are influenced by the racialized structures which permeate American society, specifically the *white racial frames* (Feagin 2006) that are rooted in America's slave past and *designed* to interrupt identity processes in ways that impact their identification with a shared ancestry. This project focuses on the impact of those racial structures upon the ancestral domestic spaces of the native and immigrant Black in America, examining what *are* the most salient identities of African-Americans and African immigrants in this society, and seeking answers to the following question: *Does a "disconnect" (a divide or separation) exist between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America such that they do not readily identify as having a shared ancestry and heritage?*

This project provides a conceptual framework which *explains* how the racialized framing of American society disrupts *associations* between African-Americans and African immigrants, subsequently interrupting progression in the identity process; these disruptions are reported as a lack of shared identification and thus, "division" pervades the literature in describing the nature of the relationship between blacks in America. Furthermore, the project seeks to explain how these racialized frames affect the ways in which African-Americans and African immigrants experience and interpret *race* in

America. Exploring how the racialized structures of this society impact the development of and foster congruence with identities rooted in and *imposed* by the *American slave past*, this research asserts that these intersections of *race* and *identity* may be powerful enough to *breed tensions* even between biological, ancestral siblings – African-Americans and African immigrants in America – brothers of the American slave trade.

Significance of Current Research

While more generally illustrating how *race* and *identity* intersect in ways that impact the whole of American citizenry and society, the study more specifically addresses the effects of such intersections upon black, native-born African-Americans and black, African immigrants in America. It provides a clearer understanding of how social factors – the influence of racial frames upon interactions between groups in America – impact associations between native and immigrant blacks in ways that may perpetuate the divisiveness of these racial structures and add fuel to their perpetual maintenance.

In addition, this study has the potential to impact the current discussion of racial theory which largely focuses on divisions between distinctly different racial groups and which tends to treat all *people of color* within American society as a collective group (Feagin 2006; Liberato and Feagin 2007) experiencing “race” the same; rarely do these theories focus on the tensions – contrived by *white* racial frames – between biological and racial ancestors. Clarifying how these racial frames promote identity processes so vastly different for African-Americans (even when compared with their African ancestors) – more than for any other group in American society – it illustrates how

sociological examination, evaluation or study of “black” behavior and identity within such a frame is *inadequate* at best. Thus, this research highlights the significance of a new direction in conducting sociological analyses of black behavior and identity within an *Africentric* framework that gives consideration to the “authentic cultural reality...of the Black experience in American society” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:61-62). Such an analysis, I believe, is crucial to understanding how *black* identity is crystallized – in a white racial framework – as incongruent with mainstream American values, and thus, as an identity with which to disassociate if one is to be accepted in American society. Lastly, this study provides a basis for a new dialogue which proceeds from an assumption of commonality and connectedness of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks in America; a dialogue which can add balance to the current discourse which largely emanates from an assumption of division, separation and conflict.

I chose to focus the analysis specifically on native-born African-Americans and black *African-born* immigrants in America 1) as a means of narrowing the analysis between native-born blacks and black immigrants in America and 2) as a means of highlighting the direct ancestral connection between African-Americans and African immigrants, thereby illuminating the powerful influence of the white racial frame in promoting division between these ancestral kinsmen. It should be noted, however, that there is discussion of other black immigrants as most of the existing literature consists of examination of associations between native blacks and Afro-Caribbean black immigrants and only recently African immigrants.

Background

As noted in the quote at the start of this paper, American society – still haunted by the memories of its past – continues to leave indelible footprints of the *intentionally designed* racial structures (Feagin 2006) orchestrated by the American slave trade. So true is this that even today, the stereotypical identities imposed by the racialized framing of American structures during slavery still linger in the minds of *all* entering and/or inhabiting this society; the cost of acceptance is adherence to a creed that there is a “ghost” that we do not face and a “house” that we do not inhabit; in fact, their existence is rarely acknowledged.

Maintenance of existing racial and power structures in American society is best served if such “inconveniences” as slavery and its consequences are not acknowledged or mentioned; such things detract from America’s democratic imagery of *justice, freedom and equality for all* and challenge the legitimacy of existing (white) power structures rooted in the reproduction of an “asymmetrical hierarchy and the sovereignty of white rule and privilege” (Feagin 2006:35). Thus upon entering American society, seeking acceptance and access to America’s resources, it would be in the best interest of any immigrant to disassociate themselves from any and all entities that may present such challenges to the established structures, and rather, seek association with those entities that support current structure; entities with the power to provide the access they seek.

Those who wield the power in America prefer to proceed from a “legal point of view” proscribed to even at the height of Jim Crow and legal segregation and best illustrated in Gordon’s (1964:4-5) following description:

“If for the moment, one...bars from consideration the remaining Jim Crow laws of the South and the laws forbidding interracial marriage...then its correct to say that the American political and legal system recognize no distinction among its citizens on the grounds of race, religion, or national origin...This means that the social outlines of racial, religious, and national groupings in the United States are more or less invisible; they must be inferred...their existence...is formally unrecognized...[except as] vague perceptions and half-truths...imperfect perceptions and the lack of understanding of the nature of American group life in general [which] constitute fertile soil...for the growth of prejudiced attitudes. Indeed, the white Protestant American is rarely conscious of the fact that he inhabits a group at all. He inhabits America. The others live in groups.”

It is from such descriptions of race in America – which are still all too popular today – that drive the resistance of African-Americans in this country and fuels the uniqueness of the oppression they face in America. The thought that *any* African-American could conceivably *bar from consideration* the consequences of Jim Crow laws, legal segregation or the impact of slavery at the height of Jim Crow rule – or the continued generational legacies to which they have given birth – is as ridiculous as the legitimacy of *any* American, in 1964 or today, claiming that there were/are *no distinctions among American citizens on the grounds of race*. The lived reality of the effects of racism in America is not as easy to dismiss (or bar from consideration) for those who have experienced it directly as it may be for those who have not. While it may be most convenient for America to proceed from such a passive approach so as to hide from view her purposed and well-intentioned creation of distinct racial outlines, the collective memories (Feagin 2006) of African-Americans attests to a different reality.

For African-Americans, the house that others have the luxury of not inhabiting – *if they choose* – is the house in which we *must* dwell daily, searching for ways to cope

with our habitation. We live out and live through the many discriminatory acts that others can choose not to acknowledge or see or to even bar from consideration. In fact, I am reminded of a fellow classmate who admitted that as a white male, he could “choose not to care” about the issues confronting blacks daily. Whereas *whiteness* allows for such “opting out” in the *racism* of America, no such option exists for blacks.

Association with *blackness* in America ensures that one will be faced with the assertion that being black is negative, inferior (Feagin 2006), pathological and downright ugly – an identity *imposed* as a result of the white racial framing of America. Such manifestation of racism and discrimination forces African-Americans to engage society from a perspective rooted in the social-psychological reality that this ideology is, indeed, alive and well, persisting throughout the whole of American society (Feagin 2006). It is far more than a ghost, rather it is a real-life, breathing organism that has not only taken up residency in the depths of our minds but pays us regular, personal visits as we navigate social interactions within American society.

Yet, how often that blacks, too, must deny and ignore the reality, pretending not to see the “ghost,” the “apparition” that is ever present in the living rooms of the haunted houses that we *must* inhabit. If we are to access resources within a society rooted in white privilege and power, often many manifestations of the racialized frames that haunt the domestic spaces of American society and disrupt identity processes between *brothers* must go unchecked. How then – if American society is one that readily practices and knows “how to discourage, choke, and murder ability when it so far forgets itself to choose a dark skin,” (Du Bois, 2003:204) – can our African kinsmen escape

identification with our plight? This research suggests that the answers lie in 1) the perpetual nature of racial frames and constructs, rooted in America's slave past, that breed tensions between native, black African-Americans and African-born, black immigrants in America and influence identity processes and 2) the way that African-Americans and African immigrants in America differentially experience and interpret the historical impact of America's slave past.

The State of the Current Research

Whereas other researchers have studied “the other African-Americans” (Johnson 2008; Deaux et al. 2007; Shaw-Taylor 2007; Kalmijn 1996; Waters 1999; Model 1991; Watkins-Owens 1996) – mostly those from the Caribbean – attempting to provide an understanding of the *black immigrant experience* in America, this research presents an analysis capable of shedding light on the uniqueness of the *black African-American experience* in America. It is a story that has yet to be understood, illustrating how racialized frames impact *all* who trek through American society (in general) in ways that *promote* a disruption in any associations with *African-American* identities to include, more specifically, between ancestral brothers of black, native-born African-Americans and black, African immigrants in America.

Subsequently, the majority of the existing literature treats African-Americans and African immigrants as separate groups differentially trekking through American society, engaged in conflict, and occasionally interacting in common social spaces. This research examined the interactions of African-Americans and black Africans who share direct, daily experiences within the same social space, the impact of racialized structures

and frames in America upon their associations and identification with one another, and their experiences with *race* in America. More specifically illustrating how the racialized framing and structuring of American society *impose* identities based upon racial characterizations, this research investigates how powerful are the *historical* racial frames that continue to construct American society even today; powerful and embedded enough to promote as an *obvious rift obscure tensions*, bred by these racial frames, between ancestral siblings who share the same biological and ancestral identity.

Methodological Approach to the Current Study

The current literature examining the relations between native and immigrant Blacks in America motivated my interest in how black Americans identify and/or form bonds with one another – or not. As a result, I initiated a number of conversations with African-Americans as well as immigrants from South Africa, Somalia, Nigeria, St. Croix, and Jamaica as I navigated my way through studies in the area of race and ethnic relations. Information obtained from some of these conversations helped me to construct my approach of the literature in ways that ultimately resulted in the stated research question and conceptual analysis; it also assisted me in formulating many of the questions for the questionnaire as well as influenced my research design methods. Furthermore, much of the existing literature utilizes instruments rooted in the white racialized structures of American society to evaluate “black” behavior and performance. Given the historically-structured contexts in which American academia is encased – rooted in America’s racial frames – the findings of “distancing,” “division,” and “conflict” are of little surprise. This research, however, employs an Africentric

paradigm – which “projects a normalcy referent for Black behavior that is independent of Euro-American culture and Western racism” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). Thus, the assessment tools used herein are sensitive to the positive and affirming nature of Black behavior that is often constructed as “negatively energized” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) in a white racial construct.

Two questionnaires (see Appendix A) were used to compare African immigrants and African-Americans in terms of associations with and connections to one another and a common identity as well as interpretation of *race* in America. The *African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS)*, developed by Baldwin and Bell (1985), asked participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various statements which express certain beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Black people; this scale has been tested for reliability and validity and has been used in a number of psychological studies. I developed a second questionnaire specifically for this research project, the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire, asked students a series of questions to which they had the opportunity to provide *detailed* responses (providing examples when possible) regarding their racial experiences.

While the ASCS allowed a more *general* assessment of whether a shared identity exists between African-Americans and African immigrant, the Brothers of the Trade Questionnaire allowed for more in-depth analysis and interpretation of the most salient identities participants hold with opportunities for deeper discovery of the perceived sources of shared identities and/or a potential disconnect. This latter questionnaire more specifically addressed with which racial/ethnic group participants identify most and

presented participants with a series of questions regarding their associations and interactions on a historically black campus; it also included a series of vignettes intended to depict racialized incidents which seek to ascertain respondents' exposure (or lack of exposure) to racialized constructs and their subsequent interpretation of the racial scenarios. This information was aimed at assessing whether participants differentially identify and interpret racial events based on their prior experience with and exposure to an environment of racial discrimination (and perhaps, how readily they identify with others experiencing *race* in a society rooted in racial discrimination).

Given the difficulty that was encountered at times in accurately understanding and interpreting the dialects of some of the immigrants with whom I previously conversed and given the possibility of error in reading handwritten responses and/or transcribing interviews, I decided to make these research instruments available via an on-line process so as to obtain more concise and accurate responses in a type-written format. Prior to the start of the research study, four African students and four African-American students, not connected with the study, were sought for a thorough pre-testing of the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire to determine whether respondents understood the questions and if the questions could discern the significant issues raised by the study and/or whether any significant items had been left out. This query also addressed potential language barriers for African students associated with the use of specific idioms of the English language which may be inadvertently used in the questions and the vignettes.

Participants for the study were solicited based on self-identification as African or African-American as well as membership in African and African-American-designated student organizations on the campus of a Historically Black College/University (HBCU) – e.g., the African Students Association and the African-American Students Association; students interested in participating in this research provided their email addresses so that the link to the surveys could be disseminated to eligible participants. Once found eligible for participation – a current undergraduate student attending the University who identified as *African-American* or *African* – participants were directed to the online link to access the research materials. The online program used for this study – Qualtrics – then assigned a random, respondent identification number which corresponded to the email address provided by the student.

Once students accessed the on-line survey instruments, they were immediately able to view and provide consent for participation; by continuing on to complete the surveys, participants indicated their consent. This process of consent was also explained to participants prior to accessing the survey materials, during recruitment (See Appendix B for the consent). Upon completion and submission of the questionnaires, the materials were automatically submitted to a secured, password-protected inbox in the Qualtrics program that could only be accessed with proper investigator authentication to maintain participant confidentiality. Also upon completing the assessments, participants were able to print out a confirmation page verifying their participation in the project. This page was then presented to the principal investigator in exchange for a new flash drive that was provided to participants for their participation in the research process. In some

cases, participants did not have access to printers or forgot to print the confirmation page. Their participation was verified by examination of the Qualtrics program records which matched the respondent identification number with the participant's email address.

Outline of Remaining Chapters

Chapter II presents much of the recurrent literature addressing the associations between black, native-born African-Americans and foreign-born African immigrants, highlighting the major themes found in the existing literature. Because answering the basic question posed by this research – *Does a “disconnect” (a divide or separation) exist between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America such that they do not readily identify as having a shared ancestry and heritage?* – requires a thorough understanding of several major theoretical frameworks within the fields of sociology and social-psychology, Chapter III provides a detailed framework from which to conceptualize the assertions of this project. Feagin's (2006) *White Racial Frame* perspective, *Identity Control Theory* as illustrated by Burke (1991), Molm's (1991) notions about *Social Exchange Theory* and Baldwin and Bell's (1985) *afri-centric* description of *African Self Consciousness* are all used in explaining how American society is constructed in ways that promote disruption of associations and interruption of subsequent identity processes between African-Americans and African immigrants.

Chapter IV details my research process and explains why I chose to approach the research topic from the stance taken; a discussion of the mixed-method approach is provided along with an outline of the steps taken throughout this research process.

Chapter V is the data analysis chapter; it includes a mixed-method analysis – a quantitative presentation supported by descriptive data presented in the respondents own words – and subsequent discussion of the results of the raw data collected. The discussion includes the research results in regards to the stated research question and the overall implications of these results upon the connections and identifications shared between native and immigrant blacks in America. The concluding chapter, Chapter VI, briefly reiterates the research findings and discusses them within the context of the overall conceptual framework of the project; it further provides a discussion of the limitations of this project as well as provides a general guiding orientation for future research addressing the issue of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks within American society.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I will provide a general overview of some of the works examining and analyzing the relationship between native and immigrant blacks in America; in most instances, these works tend to characterize the relationship in a popular academic frame of conflict, distancing and divisiveness. I will also address, very briefly, the issue of why much of the research, which focuses on the distancing between native and immigrant blacks is generally ineffective in appropriately evaluating and/or analyzing the relationship between black Americans. Furthermore, in considering other (structural) explanations for the distancing reported between native and immigrant blacks, I will present a review of the literature in view of my overall conceptual analysis (as discussed in Chapter III) of how the *structural* framing of American society, specifically the *white racial framing* (Feagin 2006) of society, fosters such division between all groups within American society and similarly generates the social distancing between native and immigrant black Americans. Because I assert that the white racial structuring of American society is the most crucial element in promulgating the tensions that disrupt associations and further impact identity processes between black Americans – making social distancing seem necessary – it is within such an analysis that I focus a great deal of the attention and as such, the discussion of the literature is suffused throughout this chapter with that focus in mind.

Giving further consideration to the complexity of relations between the native and immigrant black in America, I also present a discussion of the *social exchange theory* to which some of the literature lends itself in explaining the motivation of some black immigrants to distance themselves from native blacks. Then, in surmising the influence of an “exchange” motive entrenched within the white racial constructs of American society, I discuss the current literature’s assertions about the relationship between black Americans within in this context of influence. Finally, looking “beyond social distancing” (Jackson 2007), I present a summary of the literature that shows how the boundaries between native and immigrant blacks are being blurred and blended into more inclusive interactions that suggest that these imposed boundaries have not forged hardened peripheries that cannot be permeated, but are, in fact, rather permeable (Jackson 2007).

Social Distancing

“The finding that intraracial tensions and social distance pervade relations between communities of foreign- and native-born black Americans is the consensus among scholars” (Jackson 2007:223). Yoku Shaw- Taylor’s (2007), *The Other African Americans: Contemporary African and Caribbean Immigrants in the United States*, presents an extensive collection of studies and writings that examine the intraracial relations between native African Americans and immigrant black Americans. Embedded within Shaw-Taylor’s book is Regine O. Jackson’s (2007) chapter, “Beyond Social Distancing: Intermarriage and Ethnic Boundaries among Black Americans in Boston,” which provides a thorough summary of much of the research that highlights

how many black immigrants seek to distance themselves from native African Americans when they enter American society.

Jackson (2007:217) cites numerous studies which illuminate immigrant blacks' attempts to distance themselves from native blacks. These studies include a number of immigrant groups, from Haitian immigrants who attempt to convince whites that they are different from native blacks as a means of distancing themselves (Zephir 1996), to West Indians who also appear not-so-endearing toward native African Americans and resist fusion into black America even to the point of exaggerating their separateness (Kasinitz 1992; Parillo 2000), to African students who find it easier to associate with whites than with native-born African Americans (Becker 1973). In fact, in this latter study, Becker (1973:177) concluded that "there is a basic incompatibility between Africans and black Americans that leads to mutual rejection. Almost unanimously, Africans perceived the relation between themselves and black Americans as negative and used characterizations ranging from 'misunderstanding' to 'hatred.'"

However, it should be noted that Becker's (1973) study is officially titled, "Black Africans and Black Americans on an American campus: The African view." Similarly, Shaw-Taylor (2007:1), while noting the "sense of kinship, group solidarity, and shared culture that yields a common identity" for blacks in America, seems to focus more on the "invisibility" of African and Caribbean immigrants in the growing mixture of diverse black populations in American society and seeks to highlight the most significant issues that immigrant blacks face in the U.S. What these works present, then, is a view from the perspective of the black *immigrant* in America; a view from which *ethnic* identities

and *ethnic* differences are of great concern (I discuss later why such a view may be problematic). Thus, many of these works focus on *cultural* factors that *distinguish* (black) groups in general from one another; for instance, consider that Africans readily acknowledge ethnic/cultural differences between themselves and other Africans depending on the region or country from which they originate, thus they readily acknowledge such ethnic/cultural differences between themselves and African-Americans also. It is precisely on such differences that much of the research focuses its attention and uses to characterize the *whole* of the relationship between immigrant and native blacks.

“Social science research, in particular, has gone from representing black Americans as culturally, socially, and economically homogeneous to presuming pervasive social division and conflict in intraracial relations. In fact, the arguments popularized by journalists and television are often founded on the social science literature” (Jackson 2007:219). Consider the titles of articles that appeared in print across the country and which highlight the distancing and division between native and immigrant blacks. For example, “Black Immigrants Feel No Racial Kinship in U.S.” (Hunt 2002) was the title of one article that ran in a Florida newspaper. Other articles included, “Black vs. Black: The New New Yorkers” (Gordy 1994), “A Diverse – and Divided – Black Community” (Fears 2002), “‘African-American’ Becomes a Term for Debate” (Swarns 2004), “Immigrants Reshaping Black Experience” (Rodriguez 2001), and “A Battle over Race, Nationality, and Control at a Black University” (Wilson 2001). These notions of distance, division, conflict, and separateness throughout academia and

the media get fused into mainstream discourse and feed the social, political, and economic consciousness of American people and abroad, constructing such divisions as accurate and as intentionally chosen, initiated and preferred by black Americans. Such misconceptions fuel the divisions created by American social/racial hierarchies as constructed by the white racial structuring of society (discussed in detail later) and feed the perpetual structures of white power and privilege.

Consider for a moment that most theorists operate within the dominant social contexts of its society and consequently, most theory is presented within these dominant paradigms (Feagin 2010), making it difficult “for scientists to move in a major new direction in thinking or research. Almost all scientists stay mostly inside the paradigmatic box because of fear for their own careers, [as] new views of society are regularly screened for conformity to preferences of elite decisionmakers in academia and in society generally” (Feagin 2010:3). Given the racialized contexts of American society (discussed in detail later in this chapter and in Chapter III), rooted in the endearing images of *whiteness* and negative characterizations of *blackness* as a result of a *white racial frame* (Feagin 2006, 2010) that sets up a hierarchical white-black continuum (Feagin 2006, 2010), the focus on the divisive nature of relationship between groups is commonplace and not surprising.

Because this *white* racial paradigm lends no consideration or significance to cross-cultural patterns of behavior – particularly the *black* experience which resides farthest from the white experience within the continuum – black experiences (and behaviors) are not taken into consideration in the construction of instruments which

assess or evaluate this behavior (Baldwin and Bell 1985). Thus, research and its corresponding instruments rooted in the dominant white racialized constructs are “grossly inappropriate” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:61) in their attempts at assessing and evaluating black behavior and experiences. “Hence, the concerted focus on African American behavior...from the distant past right up to the present time reflects widespread and fundamentally inappropriate (misrepresenting) instrumentation” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:61). This research, however, moves in “a major new direction in thinking” (Feagin 2010:3) as it pertains to the relationship between native African-Americans and African immigrants, conducting an analysis that gives consideration to the *structural* (racialized) framing of American society from an Africentric paradigm that is “culturally specific to the Black experience” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:61); use of the African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) is a move in that new direction.

Other researchers (Waters 1999; James 2002; Rumbaut 1997; Shaw-Taylor 2007), have, in fact, veered beyond the factors highlighting cultural differences in their examination of this relationship as well. These researchers also give consideration to structural factors that may impact these notions of “distancing” between native and immigrant blacks. For example, Waters (1999), examining stereotypes between Caribbean immigrants and African-Americans concluded that “what might be perceived as cultural differences in terms of work ethic, attitudes about education, and values may actually be structural effects based on the selectivity of immigration” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:3). Further clarifying this assumption, Shaw-Taylor (2007:4), commenting on Winston James’ study of Caribbean blacks’ mobility in America in which James (2002)

notes that these immigrant blacks bring more human capital in terms of educational literacy and occupational skills on arrival, remarks that James' "conclusions undermine the so-called cultural superiority thesis" in favor of structural factors that influence black immigrants' ability to fare better than his native-black counterpart.

The "so-called cultural superiority thesis" to which Shaw-Taylor (2007:4) makes reference, refers to the ideation of black immigrants' labeling as "a model minority" (Shaw-Taylor 2007:4; Johnson 2008) possessing specific skills and values pertaining to work which fuels their ability "to succeed in America despite the structural barriers of racial prejudice and discrimination" (Shaw-Taylor 2007:4). What is left out of the discussion is that not only do these immigrants possess more of this human capital (James 2002) than native black populations on arrival but also more than the average education attained by the native *American* population in general (Rumbaut 1997). Ruben Rumbaut's (1997:20) finding that "over 2 million engineers, scientists, university professors, physicians, nurses and other professionals and executives" that America admitted into her borders since the mid-1960s, makes it difficult "to draw conclusions about cultural differences in reference to ethic or values without careful consideration of structural effects" (Shaw-Taylor 2007:5). Given such information, it certainly would encourage the asking, "What is it about American society (one of the richest nations on earth) that stifles the development of human capital in her native-black population when immigrant blacks, coming from poorer nations, arrive at her borders with more of this capital than America's population? And what drives the immigrant black to distance himself from his native-American brother upon arrival?"

White Racial Frame: Structural Influence upon Social Distancing

While this research seeks to diverge from the normative characterization of relations between black Americans as distant and divisive in nature and shine the spotlight on the *commonalities* between African kinsmen who “share an emotional bond with their dispersed kin...a bond that transgresses geographic and temporal bounds” (Jackson and Cothran 2003:577), it must be noted that this bond – while it has survived centuries of oppression and separation meant for its total destruction – has not been able to escape the direct impact of the racialized structures of American society. These structures impose identities upon all who cross its borders; structures rooted in an historical, racial past that make immigrant “social distancing” from his native brother seem necessary. Such impositions of identity occur as a direct result of the inherent *structure* of America – specifically, the *white racial framing* (Feagin 2006) of its society.

The *White Racial Frame* as described by Feagin (2006) refers to the racialized, color-coded framing of American society that creates and maintains divisions between groups of people, setting up a system of social hierarchies based on ideas of racial superiority and inferiority (Feagin 2006, Marger 2009). In American society, because racism is predominantly a white-on-black phenomenon (Feagin 2006, Lopez 1996), the disparate impact of the social hierarchy and racial oppression results in whites ascending to the top position of the hierarchy, blacks descending to the bottom position, and all other groups entering within this context situated within this continuum (Feagin, 2006:21). Feagin (2006:286), more specifically, speaks to the *divisive and oppositional* nature of race in America in noting, “One is black the extent to which one is most distant

from white...And one is white the extent to which one is most distant from black” (Feagin 2006:286). Thus, in a system of racial oppression, perpetuated and maintained by whites, and “intentional (motivated by prejudice or intent to harm)” (Feagin and Feagin 2003:16) in its efforts to preserve the privileges of those identified with *whiteness*, it is evident that those who have most notably stood in furthest distance from such physical and social identification with *whiteness* is the African-American (given their marked association with *blackness* which most easily differentiates them from the physical characterization of *whiteness* and given their vehement *resistance* to the structures of white privilege and power at the expense of black degradation which further constructs their social positioning); thus they are most identified by negative characterizations.

Because *race* is so significant to American society, it comprises a master status, or status-determining trait that often overpowers other characteristics which might run counter to it (Hughes 1945). As a result of America’s historical and racialized frames, where representations of *blackness* are associated with negative imagery, *whiteness* with positive imagery (Feagin 2006), most African-Americans and African immigrants are *initially* presumed more similar than different and lumped into one large category – simply defined as *black* or *African-American* – by most whites in society (Feagin 2006; Shaw-Taylor 2007) and perhaps, treated accordingly. However, because African-American resistance to racial structures further (and so uniquely) shapes the oppression they experience (unlike any other group in American society), when differences between the native and immigrant black become known, whites often find methods of

distinguishing between them in ways that further fuel division and pressure black immigrants into dissociation from *native black* in order to escape the treatment connected with these associations.

For example, Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996:184-185) noted in their examination of social isolation and employment in an area of Brooklyn, “Red Hook residents, and particularly Black, male...residents, are excluded from Red Hook jobs for reasons of discrimination: both negative discrimination against local residents and positive discrimination in favor of other groups.” Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996) further note that the discrimination includes a combination of racial, employee preferences, fear of crime and general hostility toward the residents. Similarly, Water’s (1999) interviews with white employers found that when asked about perceived differences between immigrant and native blacks, these employers reported differences, noting that the West Indian immigrant was more hard-working and ambitious than the African-American and the native African-American, more troublesome. Subsequently, these employers, able to distinguish the difference between native and immigrant blacks based on employment records, prefer black immigrants over native blacks (Thurow 1968, 1975; Hodge 1973; Reskin and Roos 1990). As a result, immigrant blacks distance themselves from native blacks to avoid the negative characterization (Waters 1999; Deaux et al. 2007; Zachary 2006; Vickerman 1999) of being troublesome.

These researchers (Deaux, et al. 2007; Shaw-Taylor 2007; James 2002; Waters 1999; Rumbaut 1997; Kasinitz and Rosenberg 1996; Thurow 1968, 1975; Hodge 1973; Reskin and Roos 1990), then, seem to support the notion that significant differences

reported between black Americans often surround issues of work and achievement. Given the fact that black immigrants come to America seeking better opportunities than are afforded them in their countries of origin, they come seeking a better life. While aware of the problems associated with race in American society, they have neither directly felt the harshest impact of these issues, are not significantly tied to these issues, nor is fighting racial discrimination high on their list of priorities. They come focused on economic advancement; anything that impedes this goal is to be avoided.

Social Exchange in Social Distancing

Other groups entering into American society, then, recognize upon their entrance that association with *blackness* (a native African-American identity) entails high costs that are to be avoided – personal, physical and psychological costs (Feagin 2006:270). Given such costs, they seek dissociation with the unfavorable characterizations of *blackness* with the same fervor as they seek favorable association with the benefits of American structures rooted in positive images and affirmations of *whiteness*; such negotiation of *association* better positions individuals to gain greater access to resources needed to succeed in American society. Essentially then, immigrant blacks seeking better life conditions than experienced in their home countries, enter American society seeking a *benefit* and seeking to avoid the *costs* of certain associations. Such negotiation of *benefits* and *costs* suggests that (black) immigrants are driven by a “social exchange” motive, *voluntarily* seeking better options within American society – a luxury not offered to their native African-American brother upon his entrance into American society.

To expound on this point, consider briefly, *social exchange theory*. “Social exchange theory analyzes how the structure of rewards and costs in relationships affects patterns of interaction. In its most common form...the theory applies to social interaction that meets the following conditions: (1) Actors are dependent on one another for outcomes they value; (2) actors behave in ways that increase outcomes they positively value and decrease outcomes they negatively value; and (3) actors engage in recurring exchanges with specific partners over time” (Molm 1991:475). African (black) immigrants, in their interactions with American society (and focused on a “social exchange” motive), seek to increase positively valued outcomes –attained through the reciprocal exchange with elements within American society that govern access to resources – while also seeking to avoid negatively valued outcomes. American society, likewise benefiting from the presence of the immigrant black in America, also seeks – and enjoys – outcomes which it positively values. Negatively valued experiences, which are to be avoided, for both actors (America and African immigrants) appear rooted in exchanges or interactions with native black Americans – close associations with native African-Americans may lead to negative racial experiences for the black immigrant (Deaux et al. 2007; Waters 1999; Zachary 2006) and extended inclusion of the native African-American in the opportunity structures of American society often leads to challenges of these unequal social and economic structures for America; thus, exchange relations appear to be better structured for acquiring positively valued outcomes when it occurs between the two (America and immigrant black) and when decreasing interaction or exchange with native black Americans. Consequently, recurring exchanges are likely

to continue between America and the black immigrant more often than exchanges with native African-Americans. Such exchanges tend to position the native African-American as the common source of negative outcomes and present the picture for the black immigrant – who is not fully aware of the intended effects of America’s racialized structures – that American social structures are, in fact, legitimate patterns of interaction when it comes to the native black American.

The Literature in Context: The Frame and Social Exchange

Deaux et al’s (2007) research, examining the existing tensions between native and foreign blacks in America tends to further illustrate this influence of white racial framing and the social exchange motive as immigrants negotiate identity in American society. This research looked more specifically at the effects of *stereotype threats* on native-born blacks and immigrants. It suggests that “when negative stereotypes about a group’s abilities and potential are ‘in the air,’ they can undermine the performance of members of that group. When a stereotype is believed to be relevant to...performance, it poses a threat that the person will be judged or treated in terms of the stereotype. The impact of that threat is reduced performance on...relevant tasks” (Deaux et al. 2007:386). The findings indicated that *greater association with the experiences of African-Americans lead to greater susceptibility to the negative effects of stereotype threats* for West Indian immigrants. In other words, West Indians’ “awareness of negative group stereotypes about African Americans” (Deaux et al. 2007:385) led them to dissociate with the native African American for fear that they might be judged and

treated according to these same stereotypes if they associated too closely with the experiences of African Americans.

Deaux, et al's (2007) research further posits that when immigrant blacks enter American society seeking a better life, "stereotypes about black Americans are both known and endorsed by West Indian themselves" (Waters 1999), suggesting that they *intentionally* seek to dissociate themselves from native blacks in their effort to *gain* access to resources in America – "the most effective way to construct a better future at home for themselves and their relatives" (Zachary 2006:51) – and *avoid* negative characterizations and other consequences of being associated too closely with (and thus, treated as) their African-American ancestor. Thus, these immigrants distance themselves from native-blacks in an effort to avoid the consequences of the racialized stereotyping constructed as part of the white racial framing of American society so that they can *live* the American dream but ultimately *attain* the "African dream" (Zachary 2006:55) – realizing their desires to apply their energies and monies back home to improve the conditions of Africa (Zachary 2006).

Vickerman (1999:139), echoes this sentiment in speaking to the perceived consequences of racial stereotypes when writing, "blacks, in general are being stereotyped as lazy; therefore immigrants seek to put as much distance between themselves and the stigma of welfare as possible." Most immigrant blacks do not comprehend how the native black American, once reduced to "forms of inert labor, as labor without a point of view, as property" (Gordon 2007:77) came to understand that in American society "to be black and not laboring amounted to an illicit laziness" (Gordon

2007:77). Even the original African in America – the slave – was often described by whites as lazy; to even assert that a slave had the option to be lazy is an oxymoron. But then, such is the value of constructing such stereotyping – said enough times, regardless of whether it is true, and particularly for those who do not know better, it becomes reality.

Woldemikael (1989:39) further summarizes with great clarity the social exchange motive of immigrant blacks in reporting, “Haitians in Evanston see black Americans as having little to offer them. In fact association with, and identification as, black American actually has disadvantages from the Haitian perspective.” Fear of “being lumped together with African-Americans as second-class citizens,” (Zachary 2006:52) which is perceived to result in denial of access to desired resources, often drives the motivation of immigrant blacks to distance themselves from native black Americans; the source of this fear, however, is rooted in historical racial structures initiated at the founding of American society and which construct such denial of resources and other social benefits of citizenship to blacks as normative.

“While the literature on African immigrants is less abundant” (Jackson 2007:224) generally than the literature characterizing the relationship between native and Caribbean blacks, African immigrants also experience 1) the need/desire to maintain ties to a home country/culture that is not restricted by the boundaries and stereotypes of “black identity” and race as in a white, racially-constructed environment, 2) similar impositions of identity as a result of the white racial frame and 3) the interplay of the social exchange motive in order to gain benefits and avoid costs associated with

association with black identity. This is seen as “A growing number of Africans are arriving in the United States in search of a better life. But even as immigrants learn to negotiate a complex new culture, they cannot forget the beloved and blighted lands that sent them forth, yet call them back” (Zachary 2006:48).

For these black immigrants – “transnationals” (Zachary 2006:51) – *temporarily* negotiating identity in America while still tied to their home country – the “cries of Africans left behind are difficult to drown out, and they shape the aspirations of Africans in America” (Zachary 2006:55). They “are forced to create a distinctive relationship with both America and Africa” (Zachary 2006:51) and “must succeed in America, but in a manner that pushes them toward Africa, not away from it” (Zachary 2006:53). For them, “the quickest route to becoming ‘super-empowered’ individuals capable of giving back to the motherland is success in the United States” (Zachary 2006:51). Thus, the impact of American racial structures that impose racial identities and are tied to access to resources make social distancing from the native black American seem necessary for these African immigrants seeking an economic “insurance policy against the instability that always threaten” (Zachary 2006:51) many African countries.

“Over and over again, we are told that despite contextual, structural, or individual variables that might suggest otherwise, social relations between immigrant blacks and native black Americans are mired in conflict. Choosing to maintain an ethnic or national identity...is portrayed as lack of identification with native black Americans...In fact, any expression of ethnic identity among black immigrants is read as distancing” (Jackson 2007:226). Again, such assertions feed into the divisive, white racial

structuring of American society, pitting these “newcomer” black immigrants, who are seeking better living conditions, against native African-Americans who are constantly challenging the structures of unequal white privilege and power. In fact, it is precisely through such “distancing” and separation that these white racial structures were originally engineered – whites tearing Africans from their homeland and from their ancestors, forcing them into the inhumane system of American slavery then ripping slave families apart and preventing their associations with one another through the practice of buying and selling slaves as property – and now the same strategies are being used in the maintenance of these racialized structures; the *form* of the strategies of control may have changed *in ways that* (immigrant) *blacks are not fully aware of* (Gordon 1964:237) but the intended consequences are still very much the same.

Social Blending

Just as the *structural* explanations for the *imposed* “distancing” are often left out of the discussion of relations between native and immigrant blacks, what also goes unchecked quite often is how “the literature ignores the way immigrant blacks and native blacks affirm and negotiate cultural differences in their neighborhoods, their workplaces, and even in their own families” (Jackson 2007:219). For example, Watkins-Owens’ (1996) examination of Caribbean immigrants in the Harlem community stresses that much of the alleged tension between native-born African-Americans and West Indian immigrants is over-emphasized and argues that the groups she studied had more in common than not. While Watkins-Owens (1996) does not ignore that there are controversies and conflicts between native and immigrant blacks, she also observed the

formation of social networks as a result of cooperation between Caribbean immigrants and native blacks (Jackson 2007) and noted that while many newcomer Caribbean immigrants “were largely limited to their own ‘ethnic’ communities...the immigrant leaders were not. They maintained ties to and participated in the activities of their native born cousins” (Thomas 1998).

Furthermore, Watkins-Owens’ (1996:5) noted that “the interplay of race with foreign background in context of the Harlem community and the larger white society is important to an investigation of the dynamics in an intraracial ethnic setting.” Realizing that both the Caribbean immigrant and the native black were powerless – economically and politically – and that nonresident whites held political power in the Harlem neighborhood (Joyce 1998; Watkins-Owens 1996), native and Caribbean blacks had to unite in order to force traditional structures to become “more responsive to community concerns” (Watkins-Owens 1996:110). Similarly, in order to fully understand the interplay of *race* between the larger white (American) society and the foreign-born African immigrant – interaction that the immigrant black is not fully aware of – one must engage in an understanding of the interplay of race between white America and the black immigrants’ ancestor: the native black American, the African-American, the African slave, the original African in America – instituted at the beginning of this nation’s history. For it is precisely this interplay of race from which the current racialized structures and frames stem, imposing “a more restrictive identity” (Vickerman 1999:139) for the black immigrant that is congruent with these early, historical, yet pervasive structures and fueling disruptions of associations and subsequent identity

processes for all entering American society, to include between native- and foreign-born blacks in America.

Consider also Reuel Rogers' (2001) black immigrant respondents who spoke quite admirably about the native blacks' resistance to racism and their struggle for civil rights. Rogers (2001) reported that "some Afro-Caribbean immigrants feel a measure of proud racial group solidarity with African Americans, notwithstanding the differences in their histories and cultures" (Rogers 2001:187). Disagreeing with a prevailing notion that the only basis of black immigrant identification with native blacks was due to the racial constraints of American life, Rogers (2001) suggests that such notion "misses the affirmative dimensions of the immigrants' racial identification with his nativeborn counterparts" (Jackson 2007:227); one respondent, when asked if he felt close to native African Americans responded, "Oh yes...our histories are similar. It just so happens that some got dropped off here, and some in the West Indies" (Rogers 2001:187).

Jackson (2007:248) further illustrates for us the impact of acknowledging the differential histories of blacks in America – the impact of some being dropped off here, and some in the West Indies and still others in other areas as Rogers (2001) suggests – finding that these differential histories "have not hardened into meaningful patterns of social exclusion." Examining the patterns of black Americans' interactions with each other in Boston – to include their coupling and intermarriage patterns – Jackson (2007:249) found that immigrant and native blacks were "blending," "blurring," "shifting" and "crossing" boundaries toward a "larger pan-ethnic black...community" (Jackson 2007:247).

Jackson (2007) further seems to acknowledge the workings of the white racial structuring of American society in the intraracial interactions between immigrant and native blacks. For example, conceding that while these intraracial relations are not conflict-free, (Jackson 2007:248) he posits that “when we consider the restricted space for the construction of black identities...the contemporary social context in which black immigrant/black American relations exist (especially the mainstream tendencies either to deny diverse black subjectivities or to accentuate cultural differences and deny racism)...some degree of conflict is understandable” (Jackson 2007:248-249). Thus while “blacks...are trapped in the social identity that needs to be negotiated because it is anchored in the host society’s negative ideas about the black person,” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:28) these native and immigrant black Americans with differential histories are showing that these “symbolic boundaries...between groups are permeable.”

It is precisely this understanding about our histories that the native and immigrant black American must come to realize if we are to make a completely reunite our ancestral families again. We must understand that we are brothers, separated by the inhumane practice of slavery in America; some “dropped off here” (Rogers 2001:187) and some dropped in other areas as a result of the American slave trade, yet the fact remains that we are brothers. Jackson and Cochran (2003:576) suggests that one way to begin such unification is through “more Afrocentric education...as a means of reeducating people to have a better perspective of the African diaspora and to dispel myths and negative stereotypes about African people.” John Arthur (2001) asserts that the African immigrant has much to offer and gain from interaction with native black

Americans. And while “the cultural, political and economic affinity between African immigrants and their native black American counterparts is not as strong as it should be, considering the ‘historical cord that ties them together’” (Jackson 2007:225), it is perhaps that much of the uneasiness or *lack of affinity* between native and immigrant blacks is a general lack of familiarity with a shared *history* rather than a lack of a connection to a shared *heritage*.

For example, Arthur (2001:83) reports that “Sometimes this uneasiness is given a political dimension in the form of statements, allegedly made to African blacks by black American youths, that the Africans did nothing to stop the slave trade and that the Africans are partly to blame for selling the African-Americans’ ancestors to the white man hundreds of years ago.” However, Black youths in America today, of any origin, would be hard pressed to speak sufficiently about the motivations of their ancestors generations ago. Consider Deaux et al’s (2007) research on stereotype threat effects and how first-generation West Indian immigrants increased their performance on academic testing under *stereotype threat* conditions while second-generation immigrants’ performance showed decrements characteristic of African-American students under “threat” conditions. Clearly, there are *different motivations* affecting behavior from *one* generation to another let alone in the motivations of ancestors hundreds of years ago that these black youth are simply unable to consider in the relationship between these (African and African-American) ancestors. Thus, it must be considered that statements such as this are made as a result of not having accurate or sufficient access to information about their past (shared) history. The only way to gain a more accurate

reality is for Africans and African-Americans to cooperate in ways that *link* the cord from the Motherland to the trek of the original African (slave) through America to form one complete picture of this shared historical journey. However, “Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunters” (Feagin 2006:54); that is, in a white racially-constructed society, where history is controlled by those empowered to do so, such breaks in the cord that link native-black African-American and the black African immigrant will always glorify and benefit the needs of elite whites who wield power in American society.

Conclusion

While much of the research tends to focus on ethnic/cultural differences that lead to “social distancing” between native and immigrant blacks, this project considers structural factors that *impose* social realities and identities and force negotiation of relations between native and immigrant blacks; factors that wreak *social extortion* upon immigrant blacks to dissociate from their native black brother in their pursuit of better living conditions. Fully aware of the intended effects of America’s racialized structures, this current researcher seeks to present a view that looks beyond the “social distancing” (Jackson 2007) that is symbolic of the influence of the white racial framing of society. Focusing attention on behavior, attitudes and perceptions that are thought to be *common* amongst black peoples, this view assumes that the relationship between native and immigrant black *brothers* – at its core – emanates from a position of shared heritage and “conceives of Black behavior as being in the service of the authentic needs and social priorities of the African community, i.e., towards its affirmation, enhancement, survival,

positive development and fulfillment of its potential as a community” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62; see also Akbar 1979; Azibo 1982; Williams 1981).

The blending and blurring of boundaries that separate black Americans in favor of “a more inclusive black American community” (Jackson 2007:249), as noted in the literature, and rooted in a shared African heritage is indicative of the possibilities of such a view coming into fruition; it is a view which challenges the pervasive status quo of American racialized structures. Conversely, all the talk about social distancing that “suggests dysfunctional black communities...their inability to get along...conveys the impression that black Americans are incapable of functioning in a multicultural society” (Jackson 2007:219). Such characterizations are a direct inference of the white racial structuring of American society that asserts that black behavior is inferior and dysfunctional behavior.

However, because black immigrants have yet to fully gain an awareness of the intricate workings of America’s racial constructs, such concerted challenge to racial structures can only be conceptually portrayed at the time. Thwarting a more united challenge to structures of white privilege and power, the divisive nature of white racial constructs inherent throughout the social processes of American society continues to propagate tensions that disrupt *associations* between the native-born African-American and black immigrants and thus, interrupt further identity processes.

Social researchers studying these associations and interactions repeatedly highlight such tensions, transmitting the belief that the native and immigrant black intentionally elect to dissociate from one another and thus, lack a shared *identification*

with one another; other researchers then rely on this literature for support of their own research undertakings and eventually this recycled information overwhelmingly influences the discourse regarding the associations. However, Feagin (2010) asserts that much of Western social theory is, itself, handicapped by the racial socialization of its societal and historical contexts. Thus, the dominant white racial framing that permeates all social institutions (Feagin 2006) particularly constructs the environments of academia and American educational structures in which much of the indoctrination to societal expectations and inherent structure takes place. Therefore, it is not unusual that in a white racially-constructed society, such divisions between groups – as is common and intended in the white racial framing of American society – are most often the focus.

In the next chapter, I present a conceptual framework which *explains* how the differential experiences with the racialized framing of American society (structure) disrupts associations between African-Americans and African immigrants, how such disruptions impact subsequent progression in identity processes, and how the racialized frames of this society affect the ways in which African-Americans and African immigrants experience and interpret *race* in America. Further exploring how the racialized structures and frames of this society impact the development of and foster congruence with identities rooted in and *imposed* by the *American slave past*, this research asserts that these intersections of *race* and *identity* are powerful enough to *breed tensions* even between biological, ancestral siblings – African-Americans and African immigrants in America – brothers of the American slave trade; tensions that give the *perception* that, indeed, there does exist a disconnect between African-Americans

and African immigrants such that they do not identify with a common ancestry and heritage.

Finally, if one considers for a moment the assertion that “*identity is a set of meanings*’ applied to the self in a social role or situation defining what it means to be who one is” (Burke 1991:837). While the highly racialized structuring of American society – with its hierarchical constructs of racial superiority and inferiority (Feagin 2006; Marger 2009), – forces those entering this social environment to negotiate their positioning *within its racialized structure*, social situations occurring outside the influence of these constructs might yield a different “set of meanings...defining what it means to be who one is” (Burke 1991:837). As the boundaries that separate the native from the immigrant black – contrived by the racial constructs inherent within American society – become further “blurred” and permeated (Jackson 2007), disruptions in associations become more obscure, resulting in a more unified black community; thus the natural (shared) identity processes are able to unfold and become more apparent.

Given that this research is conducted at a Historically Black University, one might assume that as the interactions between native and immigrant blacks occur in a *social situation* (environment) less influenced by white racial constructs, there should be greater freedom to readily associate with an identity truly reflective of one’s own natural affinities and less impacted by the impositions of the white racial frame. In such a case, it would seem likely that native and immigrant blacks would, in fact, more distinctly associate and identify with a shared heritage and thus, it can readily be assumed that under such conditions, no apparent disconnections exist between them. In light of the

recent literature pointing to the blurring and blending of boundaries between native and black immigrants, then, the timing is ripe for such conceptualization as is presented in this research project.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL/ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The focus of this paper is deeply embedded in the roaring currents of *race* with a specific focus on the *white racial framing* (Feagin 2006) of American society. This chapter highlights, in a fashion similarly described by Goffman's (1974:xiii) *frame analysis*, the significance of "implicit rules" – within this racialized framing – that shape meanings and define social situations, influencing identity processes as individuals socially interact with one another. Given the black immigrant's lack of familiarity with the implicit rules and meanings within America's racial structures, the views often presented within the literature (from the immigrant perspective) regarding his connection to his native brother tends to be somewhat distorted – rooted in ethnic and cultural differences – and indicative of associations that are likely to be found by any people with differing cultural experiences. As a result, native and immigrant blacks experience and interpret race from different perspectives; thus I spend some effort in distinguishing the black immigrant – newcomer – view of American life from the native African-American – counter-framer – view. Due to the immigrant's lack of *racial* consciousness and social experiences based upon *racial* construction, his association with the experiences of native African-Americans (as portrayed in the literature) seems more problematic than with any other group with differing cultural experiences.

Furthermore, this chapter engages in a more in-depth analysis of *identity* processes as offered by Burke's (1991) *identity control theory* which describes the

identity process as a self-adjusting, looping system consisting of several components constantly operating in ways that seek congruence of an individual's internalized *identity standard* with *input appraisals* from the surrounding environment. This project illustrates how this identity *process* ultimately *imposes* identities upon all dwelling within American society; more specific to this research, it is a process which operates in a manner that produces tensions that pit brother against brother as a result of powerful racialized structures orchestrated at the birth of this nation and rooted in *America's slave past*; the stress of such impositions resulting in the formation of second-order identity processes that do not find confirmation of its expression in mainstream identity processes.

A discussion of *Social Exchange Theory* (Molm 1991) will follow, engaged from a perspective that highlights how individuals and groups are often motivated to develop – or negotiate – certain identities and behaviors in order to gain access to desired outcomes and resources. We will discuss how structural factors help drive the development of these motivations. Lastly, discussion of Baldwin and Bell's (1985) afri-centric paradigm and the significance of *African Self Consciousness* within the paradigm, will illustrate how African-American identity – constructed as “counter” to mainstream American identity rooted in a white racial construct – finds support for its affirmation, enhancement and fulfillment (Baldwin and Bell 1985) in this afri-centric structuring; this affirming nature, however, is a direct contradiction of the white racial structuring and framing of American society. Such “counter-framing” has been

significant in the survival, not only of black identity in America, but in the survival of black people in America.

Thus, in answering the overall research question, this study conceptualizes for the reader how the abovementioned theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for understanding how the racialized framing of American society undergirds interruptions in identity processes between African-Americans and African immigrants – setting African-American identity as an outlier identity – by disrupting the *associations* between these native and immigrant brothers, how such disruptions are projected as *disconnects* in their identification with a shared ancestry and heritage, and how these racialized frames affect the ways in which African-Americans and African immigrants experience and interpret *race* in America given their differential experiences with these racial contexts. Exploring how the racialized structures and frames of this society impact the development of and foster congruence with identities rooted in and *imposed* by the *American slave past*, this research asserts that these intersections of *race* and *identity* are powerful enough to breed *tensions* – between biological, ancestral siblings – and project them as insurmountable *disconnects* which prevent identification with a shared heritage. However, these *tensions*, while real – resulting from the ways the historical past is differentially experienced and interpreted in American society – are not more powerful than the bond that connects the native African-American and the African immigrant in America to their shared ancestry and heritage.

White Racial Frame

Of all the contemporary racial theories, Feagin's (2006) analysis of *Systemic Racism* and its underlying conceptualization of the *white racial frame* most closely illustrates an understanding of how American racial structures shape and impose identities rooted in America's slave past. A theme that resonates throughout Feagin's (2006) discussion of *Systemic Racism* is the notion of the perpetual oppression of people of color by whites in America. Racist ideology, attitudes, emotions, stereotypes and discriminatory habits and actions that reach far and deep and manifest themselves in American institutions all make up Feagin's interpretation of *systemic racism*. Integral to the defining nature of systemic racism and crucial to an understanding of the persistence of these features in American society is the notion of *racial framing*. The *White Racial Frame*, to be more specific, is "a color-coded framing of society" (Feagin, 2006:25) inherent in American structures that refers to the particular way that whites conceive of and interpret their world. This frame shapes everyday events and encounters with others and is characterized by negative images and stereotypes of African Americans and other people of color, while asserting positive views of whites and white institutions (Feagin 2006). All of these racial attitudes, ideologies, emotions, habits, views, stereotypes, images and metaphors directed at people of color embody the "implicit rules" Goffman's (1974:xiii) – indicating the proscribed valuing and treatment of individuals based on "color" – that shape meanings and define social situations within the white racial framing of American society.

In fact, Feagin (2006) asserts that the oppression of blacks in America is so pervasive that the discriminatory nature of these rules and meanings as well as the inequality they produce, spill over into *all* the institutions of American life – political, legal, educational, religious, and economic – as well as into the everyday experiences of people of color. Keep in mind that these institutions make up the social structure of a society. *Social structure*, according to Gordon (1964:30-31) refers to “the set of crystallized social relationships which its members have with each other which places them in groups, large or small, permanent or temporary, formally organized or unorganized, and which relates them to the major institutional activities of the society...social relationships that are *crystallized* – that is, which are not simply occasional and capricious but have a pattern of some repetition and can to some degree be predicted, and are based, at least to some extent, on a set of expectations.” Thus, within the *white racial framing* (Feagin 2006) of American society, the implicit rules and meanings associated with people of color are crystallized into regular patterns of predictable behavior, interaction and expectations and are explicitly expressed in the many racist and discriminatory acts that are commonplace within American society.

The basic features of the white racial frame, then, represent the very “racial views, proclivities, actions, and intentions” (Feagin, 2006:7) of all institutions within American society, including the negative images and stereotypes of African-Americans and other people of color; being “black” defined by its sharp opposition to what it means to be “white” (Feagin 2006). Thus, as *whiteness* is characterized as “highly superior”, *blackness* then is designated as “highly inferior.” Such characterization, deeply

embedded in a historical system of oppression against people of color makes whites' inclination to discriminate against these groups commonplace (Feagin 2006). Thus, whites do not approach people of color with an open mind about who they are but rather, with preconceived ideas and expectations about who they are in relation to whom they (whites) believe themselves to be according to the implicit rules of the white racial frame.

Social Hierarchy in the Frame

Another feature of the white racial frame is the significance of a black-white continuum. Racism is “centrally a white-on-black phenomenon” (Feagin 2006; Lopez 1996) in the *white racial framing* of American society. *Racial groups* – “social group[s] that persons inside or outside the group have decided is important to single out as inferior or superior, typically on the basis of real or alleged physical characteristics subjectively selected” (Feagin and Feagin 2003:6) – tend to be ranked largely on this white-black structuring; the disparate impact of the social hierarchy and racial oppression results in whites ascending to the top position of the hierarchy, blacks descending to the bottom position, and all other groups entering into this context situated within this continuum (Feagin 2006:21). Feagin (2006:286), more specifically, speaks to the divisive and oppositional nature of race in America in noting, “One is black the extent to which one is most distant from white...And one is white the extent to which one is most distant from black.” Thus, in a system of racial oppression, perpetuated and maintained by whites and intentionally “motivated by prejudice or intent to harm” (Feagin and Feagin 2003:16) in its efforts to preserve the privileges of those identified

with *whiteness*, it is evident that those who stand in furthest distance from such physical identification in American society – African Americans whose marked association with *blackness* most easily differentiates them from the physical characterization of *whiteness* – are most identified by negative characterizations and whose historical resistance to the structures of *whiteness* in America uniquely positions them as the primary target in the “white-on-black” structures of oppression in America.

Other groups of color entering into American society recognize upon their entrance that association with *blackness* entails high costs that are to be avoided – personal, physical and psychological costs (Feagin 2006:270). Given such costs, they seek dissociation with the unfavorable characterization of *blackness* with the same fervor as they seek favorable association with the values of *whiteness*. Even other groups of people who are often categorized as black and closely associated with African-Americans given their stark similarities in physical traits and common ancestry, such as African and West Indian/Caribbean immigrants, seek dissociation with native-born African-Americans (Deaux et al. 2007; Shaw-Taylor 2007; Waters 1999); the price of such negative characterization associated with native blacks in American society – as a result of America’s racial framing – too high. Thus, the white racial framing of American society uniquely positions African-Americans as a group with which association incurs great costs. As such the frame promotes disruptions in associations between African-Americans and others entering American society, including African immigrants seeking to acquire benefits in America and avoid such costs.

Historical Significance of Slavery in the Frame

While Feagin (2006) readily asserts that the pervasiveness of “white-on-black” oppression – a direct result of slavery – uniquely positions African-Americans as a primary target of white oppression, Shaw-Taylor (2007:21) acknowledges that “the historical legacy of slavery in America created a heightened sense of racial consciousness that blacks in Africa were generally unfamiliar with.” Unfortunately, this legacy is all too familiar for native African-Americans, and thus, *racial consciousness* appears almost second-nature to the native African-American. Because the African immigrant, however, has experienced a different trek through America, his lack of experience with America’s historical – inhumane – oppression of black people also renders his sense of *racial consciousness* lacking. Given, however, that the native African-American and the African immigrant are *both* brother to the African slave (the *original African* in America who endured the most inhumane effects of white oppression) – one brother happened to be born in the land of bondage, the other did not make the horrific trek to America and thus, was born in Mother Africa – a discussion of the historical (yet distinctive) experiences of the native-born and the foreign-born black in America is worthwhile. This geographical difference is not without significance as it accounts for some of the tensions often highlighted between African-Americans and African immigrants in America.

However, with much of the focus on *social distancing* and conflict, the *complexity* of relations between immigrant and native blacks as a result of America’s social structuring is often overlooked and is not taken into account. For example, Ekeh’s

(1999:89) interpretation of the difference in the native/immigrant perspectives is such that “In black America, there is an absence of ethnic consciousness...whereas Africans on the African continent lack conception of race in their behavior. African Americans’ folkways are suffused in race consciousness. Interactions between Africans and African Americans have sometimes been brittle because of these differing patterns of primordial consciousness.” Zachary (2006:53) driving this point home, makes this distinction even clearer in stating that “For Africans, ethnic identification – what was once known as tribe – trumps race.” In American society, however, *race* is as much a part of the “fabric of America” as “baseball, hot dogs, apple pie and Chevrolet” (as an old television commercial crooned) and as inherently a part of its defining nature as “free market” capitalism. Such differences speak to the *structural* nature of the societies and environments from which native black Americans and immigrants blacks derive and the impact of white racial frames upon American social structures.

The Black Immigrant View: Newcomer to the Frame

The foreign, black immigrant population in America is largely made up of immigrants and refugees from different parts of the Caribbean and Africa (Johnson 2008; Shaw-Taylor 2007). “Afro-Caribbeans, also part of the Atlantic slave trade...are the most established foreign black group...mostly from English-speaking Barbados, Jamaica, and Montserrat” (Johnson 2008). They come largely from Jamaica (30 percent), Haiti (25 percent), Trinidad and Tobago (9 percent) and are concentrated heavily on the East Coast in New York, Miami and Fort Lauderdale (Logan 2007). Up until the mid-1970s, however, blacks from Africa constituted a very small proportion of

the black immigrant population (Johnson 2008). Initially going to European countries to study, those who came to America to study usually returned to their country after completing their studies. However, an onset of developments in the 1970s – corruption, economic crisis, civil wars Military coups in Africa – triggering mass emigration and Europe closing its doors to former colonials, made American society and education more attractive, particularly given its recent changes due to the civil rights movement (Johnson 2008; Shaw-Taylor 2007).

“The momentum of the civil rights movement and civil rights legislation gave impetus to the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:7); as a result, “ethnically restrictive immigration laws of the United States based on national origin were replaced...The changes to immigration law were made in consonance with the trend toward eliminating legal racism in the United States as the civil rights movement gained traction” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:7-8). The civil rights movement was a direct result of the native black American’s challenge of and resistance to oppressive, discriminatory racial structures in American society; thus black immigrant entrance into the United States was also a direct result of the movement given how such entrance was impossible prior to this action taken during the civil rights era.

After the civil rights movement led to the entrance of increasing numbers of non-European immigrants, it subsequently led to the introduction of the “diversity visa program” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:8) which, designed to entice *professionals* from immigrant populations as a means of subsidizing the American economy “provided quick passage for these Africans, who would not qualify for visas otherwise” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:8).

This focus on the *professional* skills that many black immigrants possess fuels much of the research which highlights how black immigrants consistently outpace African-Americans in socioeconomic spheres (Johnson 2008, Deaux et al. 2007, Model 1991, 1995, Kalmijn 1996). This concerted focus on education and the professionalism of the black immigrant population is highlighted and serves as a catalyst for tension between native and immigrant blacks as these immigrants come to be seen as the “model minority” (Johnson 2008; Shaw-Taylor 2007) of blacks in America. What is often left out of the conversation is how these immigrants attain higher educational achievements than African-Americans, Caribbeans, Asians and whites in America (Johnson 2008; Shaw-Taylor 2007; James 2002; Rumbaut 1997). Again, these “hand-picked” African immigrants, lacking a sense of racial consciousness and failing to fully understand the struggles that native African-Americans endured for the right of blacks to attain an education in American society, are often unable to appreciate that they enjoy the status they do in America because they come to an American society already “acted upon” by the native black American; unaware of the divisive intentions of white racial structures, they reap the benefits of the native blacks’ action while, seemingly, concurring with the stereotypical images of their native brother (Deaux, et al. 2007).

Consider further the assertion that these “other African-Americans,” (Johnson 2008; Deaux 2007; Shaw-Taylor 2007; Kalmijn 1996; Waters 1999; Model 1991; Watkins-Owens 1996) or black immigrants, come to the America with well-formed pre-migration, nonracial identities, seeking to avoid racial experiences by establishing their foreignness (Johnson 2008) from those with whom association may lead to such

experience. Thus, while immigrant blacks may come to America with a *broad* conception of the significance of *race* in American society as a result of historical racialized constructs initiated at the inception of the nation, their lack of *exposure to* such historical racial structures whose “unflattering representations [of blacks] are constructed through a generalized notion of black inferiority” (Jackson 2007:220) and subsequent lack of *race* consciousness, renders the black immigrants’ view somewhat lacking in a full understanding of the intricacies of how these divisive racial structures are *intentionally* constructed to impose specific social realities and identities. Hence, immigrants’ “reluctance to assimilate into the larger African-American community can easily be misinterpreted as a wholesale rejection of the latter group. In reality, it stems from an attempt to avoid the imposition of a more restrictive identity than that to which they are accustomed. Or to put it another way: they are attempting to preserve the broader identity options” (Vickerman 1999:139) intrinsic within their home culture.

For the black immigrant, then, associations with the experiences of African-Americans in American society “means entering a world half-blind with a naïve consciousness” (Gordon 2007:78). The experiences of African-Americans to include the inhumane and historical oppressive treatment during slavery, legal segregation and the on-going racial discrimination still today – the direct result of the *intended* (Feagin 2006) manifestations of white racial constructs initiated at the beginning of the nation – are not the experiences of black immigrants in America. Thus, the black immigrant does not understand that resistance to this oppressive treatment by native blacks historically is “a sign of a healthy consciousness. It means a refusal to submit to attempts of human

erasure” (Gordon 2007:76-77). So, while immigrant blacks may *know of* the racism that inundates American society, they are unfamiliar with and unexposed to the intended effects and forms of *human erasure* exacted upon the African-American in American society. As such, they are unencumbered by and pose no significant challenge to America’s pervasive structures of white domination and privilege which have historically designated the native African-American as its primary target because of his constant challenges to these existing structures.

Gordon (2007:78) further asserts that for African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants “the history of black emergence in the United States suggests a challenge hardly fathomable to immigrant populations.” Explaining that most of these immigrants migrate from poverty-stricken countries with brutal state leadership, Gordon (2007:78) posits a most significant question, “How then, could they ever imagine how bad the United States could be if they are migrating to it?” However bad it was/is for the African-American, black immigrants’ *broad* consciousness and conceptualization of racial structures in America is sufficient enough to realize that it is treatment to be avoided.

African immigrants, “who are coming relatively late into America’s complex ...social relations dynamic” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:19) and entering an American society that is far more accepting of them as a direct result of the native blacks’ challenges to racial structures and which make his entrance into American society possible (Shaw-Taylor 2007), do not dissociate with native blacks because they lack identification with a common ancestry and heritage; however, because they lack familiarity with and *are not*

fully aware of how the racialized constructs historically (and currently) play out in American society, sometimes the lack of understanding about the implicit meanings of race – particularly for his native brother – leads to tensions in the relationship between native and immigrant blacks. Unaccustomed to the meanings of “presenting self strictly in terms of their phenotype” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:20) or rather, in terms of a *racial* basis, African immigrants are often insensitive to and “dismissive of African-Americans” (Zachary 2006:52) for their focus on racial discrimination. While African immigrants currently have the luxury “not to hide behind the excuse of racial bias” (Zachary 2006:53), they do so due to their lack of exposure to and lack of comprehension of the racialized constructs of American society.

Unfamiliar with intricate effects of these *racial* constructs upon native African-Americans and the manner in which they *impose racial* identities upon all who enter American society, immigrant blacks simply do not yet fully “comprehend the history of African-American exclusion – and how racial awareness continues to distort American life today” (Zachary 2006:53). And while “None of these gymnastics in the establishment of identity makes sense in an African context” (Zachary 2006:52), absent such structural (racial) impositions upon identity, black immigrants entering American society, would readily be able to avoid those restrictive impositions of identity with which they are unaccustomed (Vickerman 1999); impositions which make much of the “social distancing” toward native blacks seem necessary.

Furthermore, the African immigrants’ motivation for being in America should be examined. The African immigrant is not so concerned with “becoming American,” its

racial construction, or with identification with any particular group – other than his own ethnic group (Zachary 2006) – as with acquiring the *benefits* of association with America. “They are transnationals, people who choose to maintain their separateness in the host country and retain tight links to their community of origin...they generally view their American experience as transitory” (Zachary 2006:51). While many dream “of coming to America...The principal challenge for recently arrived Africans in America is...to maintain a dynamic relationship with Africa” (Zachary 2006:50). For them, “There’s no enjoyment in this country. Nothing. This country has no life” (Zachary 2006:51); often preferring their young children remain in Africa for exposure to African values, they understand that “Children have no manners here. By growing up in Nigeria, she’ll know what I mean by respect” (Zachary 2006:51).

So, in reality, there is not so much a dissociation with native African-Americans due to a lack of identification with a shared African heritage, nor is it indicative of identification with white racial structures over the unjust struggles of native blacks; African immigrants are simply motivated to attain better life conditions, negotiating a complex society with which they are not completely familiar and deeply committed to “the beloved and blighted lands that sent them forth, yet call them back” (Zachary 2006:48). America’s racial issues are simply not their greatest concern nor a major focus of their attention; given their lack of history with such, “they had no reason to believe they were inferior” (Appiah 1992:6). Thus, on their path to achieving their dream, avoidance of anything and anyone that may hamper such successful negotiations is a positively valued outcome which they seek.

The Native African-American View: Counter-framer

The historical trek of the African-American, the native, American-born descendant of the *original African* in America is much more complex. They did not happen upon American society *voluntarily* as a means to their own ends as do the black immigrant, but as a means to an end for elite, white men seeking to advantage themselves at the expense of the exploitation of others; in this case, at the expense of the “other brother” of the African slave – the native black American. Thus, the African slave entering American society in 1619 endured centuries of inhumane treatment as a result of American enslavement and the resistance to such treatment which has led to a legacy of oppression for which his American descendants continue to bear costs today.

The “oppressive work and living conditions – the very long hours in all weather conditions, the lack of wages, the poor clothing (Feagin 2006:56) were the least of the costs – the inhumane treatment – that slaves endured. “Typically, those enslaved arose before dawn and labored until dark, with whips and chains as the means of control” (Feagin 2006:23); rape and forced breeding, predatory violence, physical torture (Feagin 2006) – torture referring to “the infliction of intense pain...to punish, coerce, or afford sadistic pleasure” (Feagin 2006:57). “Black bodies were exploited not just economically, but for an array of other shocking uses that some white minds conjured up” (Feagin 2006:24) – “the socially sanctioned coercive or sadistic inclinations” (Feagin 2006:57) of whites.

Frederick Douglass recounted, in the following illustration, his experience with the slave owner’s help, who was hired specifically to eliminate any thoughts of

resistance: “Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me” (Feagin 2006:57). The white mind, desensitized to the oppression inflicted upon people of color by whites in American society (Feagin 2006) simply justifies such violence and hostility toward others who were not considered human beings (Feagin 2006:21). Such justification and subsequent “breakdown of normal human empathy” (Feagin, 2006:27) is a key element of the white racial frame as this is required to maintain such a recurring system of oppression and discrimination.

Katznelson (2005:16), echoing this lack of remorse and guilt by whites for the infliction upon blacks a “tradition which had been twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness...whose dark intensity is matched by no other in our society,” further supports how African-Americans have had a significantly different trek in American society than his immigrant brother or any other people of color entering into American society.

While such intense oppression is an inherent part of systemic racism and the white racial framing of American society, it does not go unchallenged; rather, it constantly encounters resistance by those being oppressed (Feagin 2010). *Resistance*, then, is also a principal feature of racial oppression (Feagin, 2006:143). African-Americans, in their long struggle with racism in American society, have utilized a variety of strategies – some violent, some nonviolent – in confronting, challenging and

resisting oppressive treatment by whites to include the well-known bus boycotts, revolts and riots as well as challenges to institutional structures (Feagin 2006).

The original black in America – the African slave – *forced* into American culture – initiated the resistance to American structures and is substantially responsible for marked social changes in American society resulting in a more civilized American culture. African slaves in America challenged the inhumane and violent existence and expressions of whites in America during slavery through violent riots and rebellion, a tradition handed down to the freed slave in America, who forced a change in the legal and social structures that upheld the inhumane practices of slavery; thereafter their African-American descendants – born into American culture – continued the challenge of overt racist practices as well as the very foundational claims of American cultural ideals – equality, liberty and justice – by using the “rhetorical ideas of human equality in the Declaration of Independence and of social justice in the preamble of the U.S. Constitution” (Feagin, 2006:296). In engaging this method of resistance, African-Americans use the founding documents of this country to their advantage, expanding the boundaries of the documents, to bring about social change. No other group in American history has presented such a challenge (to include physical resistance) to the racist behavior and structures of whites, their ill treatment of racialized “others” and the prevalent *whiteness* of American society so vehemently and for so long as did the black African/African-American in America, nor has any group paid such heavy consequences for doing so.

Immersed against their will into American society, the free African in America had no desire to enter into mainstream American culture through the adaptation to the core values of white Americans – Anglo-Saxon conformity (Gordon 1964:85) – after all, such values of violence and inhumanity had proven inadequate for black existence and had been replaced by more civilized values as a result of black resistance. Thus, contrary to Gordon’s (1964:127) assertion that immersion of groups was the result of adapting to networks and institutions which were already *fixed* and in alignment with Anglo values, blacks – since they were forced into American society – sought entrance into an American society that had been *changed* and *altered* by their resistive actions against the old, pathological, uncivilized values of Anglo-Saxons.

This viewpoint, then, reflected an acknowledgement that blacks in America were partially responsible for the cultural modifications of previously existing patterns of behavior in American society. Furthermore, they realized that they were substantially responsible for the immense wealth that America enjoyed as a result of their labor throughout the inhumane system of slavery (Feagin 2006). As such, their contribution to American society has not been insignificant or inconsequential (Gordon 1964:76) but rather, they saw themselves as *co-definers* of American cultural values that had been *acted upon* by them; they were not merely *assimilators* of them. Thus, if they must endure forced existence in the society, they sought a cultural *blending* into American society – *melting pot ideology* – that reflected their contributions and influences “melted together” (Gordon 1964:115) with the cultural structures of Anglo-Saxons as a result of the interaction.

Such haughty expectations by blacks, however, were not in alignment with the predictable patterns of expectations within a white racial framing (Feagin 2006) which indicates that it is the White Protestant American that *inhabits* America (Gordon 1964:5); all others merely make up the groups that seek to live amongst *him*. Given that whites are the dominant group in American society – the one wielding the power – this white racist framing (Feagin 2006) of society is enforced and maintained throughout the various institutions within American society such that negative stereotypes and images are associated with blacks and other people of color while positive views and characteristics are associated with whiteness (Feagin 2006:26). Because of their power, whites take from others those significant contributions which produce benefit and advantage for white society, attributing those contributions as their own and becoming the owners of these ideas, efforts, labors, inventions and the products of all that is positively contributed to American society; all that is ill and negative becomes the labels that are attached to the psychological selves (Gordon 1964:26) of “others” within society. Thus, neither blacks nor other groups of “others” are viewed as worthy of joining in (melting into) or sharing in the privileges and advantages of whiteness, particularly the native black, African-American toward whom whites historically racist inclinations were directed.

Blacks, then, in their naïve expectations to *blend* into American society – and possessing a view that they were co-creators/co-definers of culture in America – were also met with resistance. Whites knew all too well that “eliminating such [black] resistance by means physical and psychological was essential to maintaining white

privilege and autocratic superiority” (Feagin 2006:57) and they perceived blacks as threats to the self-professed assumptions of superiority and to the advantages and privileges of whiteness. Such drive and desire for inclusion into the whole of white structures in America led whites to change the form/nature of their actions to control and ensure black exclusion (or surely not full inclusion); whereas inclusion of blacks through legal structures could be enforced by law as a result of changes in structure forced by black resistance, whites did not recognize governmental enforcement of personal attitudes and preferences (Gordon 1964:249). No longer able to legally control and subdue blacks physically through overt acts of inhumane treatment, white sought to engage in a type of social control which excluded blacks in ways that they are not fully aware of (Gordon 1964:237) – through a more systemic (and more covert) nature of racist and discriminatory behavior.

Thus, while foreign-born immigrants *voluntarily* enter American society as a result of their *desires toward* the pursuit of economic and educational achievement or as a means of *escape from* worsening conditions in their country of origin (Johnson 2008), such was not the case for the native black in American society. For the immigrant, entrance into American society provides a *benefit* that helps them to improve their social conditions; a benefit made possible by the resistance of their native-born brother, and a benefit that this native-born brother has yet to fully acquire. For this brother – the native, American-born descendant of the *original African* in American society, *forced from* Africa – entry into American society came at a *cost*; the hefty price paid (by the

native black American) for black immigrants and others who enter a much safer and much more democratic American society has yet to be understood or acknowledged.

Such markedly different migration patterns to – and experiences in – the United States significantly impact the perspectives of the native-born African-American and the foreign-born immigrant and serve as a pronounced source of tension; the root of such tension, however, a direct result of racial framing in American society that promotes dissociation with a native black, African-American identity, an identity which, possessing a view of being a co-creator/co-definer of American culture – a substantial contributor to the wealth of this nation and thus, deservedly, a substantial recipient of its benefits – poses the greatest challenge to structures of white privilege and power in America. This unique experience in American society by the native African-American – spanning generations – while rarely acknowledged by others, including the black immigrant, makes possible the foreign immigrants’ experience in America.

Racial Exposure and Interpretation in the Frame

Recall that American racial framing is such that negative stereotypes and images are associated with blacks and other people of color while positive views and characteristics are associated with whiteness (Feagin 2006:26). Thus, “American racial thinking, rigid in its designation of *blackness* and ascription of racial status fabricates a certain level of racial consciousness for all who cross its shores” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:20). Deaux et al. (2007) supports this notion that “stereotypes about black Americans are both known and endorsed by West Indians,” a finding also supported by Waters (1999). Given Johnson’s (2008) earlier assertion that these immigrants come to America seeking

to escape the poor conditions in their home culture, the research seems to suggest that immigrant blacks, seeking to enhance their conditions in America, intentionally dissociate themselves from native blacks in an effort to avoid negative characterizations and the consequences of being too closely associated with their African-American ancestor; indirectly as a means of avoiding a return to the poor conditions they left. Thus while they appear to recognize that in America there are consequences rooted in race for associations with/as African-American, because they emerge from a *home culture* (Feagin 2006) in their own land that lacks such negative racial experiences, they are unaware of how to engage or counter such experiences. As a result, “immigrants...come to the United States with well formed premigration, nonracial identities” (Johnson 2008), seeking to avoid racial experiences by establishing their foreignness (Johnson 2008) from those with whom association may lead to such experience.

Johnson (2008) further supports how the lack of exposure to race-based discrimination also plays a role in the tensions between native and foreign blacks in American society. While African-Americans readily recognize that race is an unavoidable part of American society, black immigrant exposure to race and/or racism is not a foregone conclusion (Johnson 2008). Thus, when they enter America with no context from which to draw on racist experiences, they exercise low levels of race consciousness (Johnson 2008). And even when they are impacted by racism and angered by it, they often explain it away as random or unfortunate violence (Johnson 2008). Unable to readily identify racial matters in America, unable to face their own

racial experiences in America, the foreign black immigrants' lack of exposure to environments of race-based discrimination appears to render him more or less unsympathetic to or unable to identify with the African-American struggle (Johnson 2008) and thus, tensions persist – disrupting associations between the native and immigrant black and subsequently interrupting identity processes; failure to identify with the struggles and experiences of African-American compel the negotiation of identities and behaviors rooted in racial structures designed long before the immigrant stepped upon American soil.

Given that foreign born blacks originate from environments “where negative stereotypes about Blacks are not part of the cultural representations” (Deaux et al. 2007), they tend to continue to identify with their land of origins; a space that readily accepts and embraces their images of *blackness* with boldness. Zachary (2006) describes the ways that black immigrants are *temporarily* negotiating their experiences and identities within American society while still tied to an African home culture; these African immigrants, while they “learn to negotiate a complex new culture, they cannot forget the beloved and blighted lands that sent them forth, yet call them back” (Zachary 2006:48). The African-American, on the other hand, has *never* had such an experience within the white racial constructs of American society which, for them, is home. As a result, whereas African-Americans may develop a thicker skin for countering racial incidents, black immigrants tend to possess a stronger sense of self-identity that is not easily shaken by the white racial framing of American society.

Less familiar with the racial frames that define social experiences in American society, immigrants are not as susceptible to the intended effects upon “the souls of black folks” to which W.E.B. Du Bois eluded. Thus, they do not always understand African-Americans’ preoccupation with racism and discrimination – holding whites responsible for a widespread lack of achievement by African-Americans in American society. They simply cannot understand how the racial practices instituted during slavery – where “Black fathers, mothers, and children could be bought or sold suddenly, and much like cattle, at the whim of the slaveholders...[who] ignored or rejected the basic human needs of those they enslaved, such as the need for enduring family relationships,” (Feagin 2006:59) – have given birth to generational legacies today. They do not understand how even today, though originating in the racial frames of slavery, “whites’ coercion has kept African Americans from doing much of what they need and desire to do for themselves and their families...[and] constantly asserts whites’ group interests over those of African Americans” (Feagin 2006:21). Thus they cannot empathize with generational inequalities that African-Americans experience as a result of the racial structures rooted in America’s slave past.

These differential experiences with the historical impact of slavery in American society and the racial frames that breed it, do indeed, produce tensions between the native-born African-American and the black immigrant in American society. Feagin (2006:21) reminds us in his conceptualization of *Systemic Racism* which encompasses the white racial frame, “Systemic racism at its core involves separating, distancing, and alienating social relationships.” This has been the case since the first African was forced

into American society. “The practice of separating children from their mothers...is a marked feature of the cruelty and barbarity of the slave system” (Feagin 2006:59). Thus today, when black immigrants enter American society with little to no familiarity – and often with little interest – in how this legacy of oppression has been socially reproduced generationally through the white racial framing of American society – tensions are bred with their African-American brother. Perpetual indeed, this frame – a centerpiece of systemic racism – is alive and well still today.

Perhaps the best example I can provide of how black immigrants – rooted in the “non”-racial structures of their home culture – interpret African-American behavior in ways similar to the white racial constructs is my recent discussion with a forty-five year old immigrant from Trinidad who is now an American citizen. Having grown up in Trinidad until the age of ten and moving to St. Croix, Joni came to America after graduating high school to pursue higher education. Anticipating her arrival, she was excited about the possibilities of finally being able to live in America. Even though St. Croix is an American territory in the Virgin Islands, she said that it was a tremendous culture shock coming here. There were so many white people! In her homeland, there were blacks everywhere and going to Michigan State for college, she understood that she was no longer in St. Croix.

Even more disappointing for her was the fact that few blacks here seemed to be in positions of authority. In the Caribbean, blacks were in charge and running everything. Her question immediately became, “What’s wrong with the blacks here?” It took Joni a number of years to understand that there was something *different* about

American society and its relationship with African-Americans. Still it was something about African-Americans that “bugged” her; she felt that they could do better. She had seen blacks do so much better – in her homeland – where “the Black personality is nurtured developmentally as well as situationally through the indigenous personal and institutional support systems” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) in which “it achieves vigorous and full expression in terms of a congruent pattern of basic traits (beliefs, attitudes and behavior) which affirm...the authenticity of its African cultural heritage” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62).

As she developed friendships with African-American students and church members, she began to notice their differential experiences – mostly as it pertained to the lives of their children, specifically with teenaged boys who seemed overwhelmingly and frequently mishandled by police and others in authority. Later, she came to be more aware of the messages of the education system – messages of subservience; this message synonymous with what she saw in the lives of African-Americans. Not only were these messages inherent in the public school experiences of children but she also noticed them in her own education. Comparing her experiences here with those in her homeland, she realized the difference between being in control and being controlled. She came to understand, she stated, “that when a people are unable to govern themselves, they can’t help but be subservient to those who govern.”

Like this black immigrant from Trinidad, I can only imagine that African immigrants may have a similar experience coming from a home culture where blackness is embraced. However, in American society, until black immigrants become familiar

with the racial constructs – instituted at the beginning of this nation’s history and the enduring legacies to which they have given birth – all black peoples in this society will continue to experience the separations that are an intended feature of such constructs. Until we realize that, from the *African slave* to the freed *African in America* to the *African-American* and now the *African immigrant in America* (including Caribbean immigrants who are also descendants of the slave trade and have origins in Africa), we share a common bond: our African ancestors in whose identity we garnished the strength to survive an institution destined for our destruction. It is from this shared identity that we must summons the courage to face our *perceived* differences within the racialized structures of American society today and the strength to master our future – together.

Identity Control Theory

According to Burke’s (1991:837) Identity Control Theory, “*the identity process is a control system.*” An “*identity is a set of ‘meanings’ applied to the self in a social role or situation defining what it means to be who one is*” (Burke 1991:837). Burke (1991) has identified the identity process as a self-adjusting system that is constantly operating. It is a loop consisting of various components – “a *standard* or setting (the set of self-meanings); an *input* from the environment or social situation (including one’s reflected appraisal, i.e., perceptions of self-relevant meanings); a *process that compares* the input with the standard (comparator); and an *output* to the environment (meaningful behavior) that is a result of the comparison” (Burke 1991:837). This loop generates feedback from the various parts in a manner that maintains a consistent operation of the identity process. Interruption of the system, however, can occur; when this happens,

mechanisms embedded in the system operate in such a way that small disruptions in the identity process are automatically adjusted to ensure a continuous flow of the processes. More significant disruptions can create distress for the system and serves as a signal that greater attention to the process is needed.

The goal of the identity process according to identity control theory is to maintain congruence between *inputs* or feedback from the social environment and the internal *standard* of who one believes him/herself to be (Burke 1991). This is accomplished when an individual, having an internalized *standard* of their identity, engages in behavior that they believe consistent with that standard and upon receiving feedback or appraisals (*input*) from others in the social environment, the individual automatically makes comparisons about the congruence of that feedback to the internal standard. If there is congruence, the system just continues on and the identity is maintained as before; if there is some discrepancy or incongruence between the *input* received and the *standard*, then *output* behavior is modified to attain desired feedback (*input*) which is consistent with the internal *standard* of identity and thus, the identity is maintained as before. Again, when the incongruence is small, this adjustment occurs automatically.

When, however, the discrepancy between the *input* and the *standard* “grows beyond the minimal discrepancies that are handled automatically” (Burke 1991:840), distress occurs signaling that greater conscious control of the system is needed. This requires that the individual must consciously seek alternative *output* behavior in an attempt to change *input* appraisals to bring them back into congruence with the internal

standard. When incongruence in the feedback loop becomes so much that neither the *output* nor the *input* can be adjusted enough to cause congruence between the *input* and *standard*, this incongruence itself becomes an *input* for a second-order feedback loop, resulting in a change in the initial identity *standard*; the changed identity *standard* serves as the adjusted *output* behavior in this second-order process in an attempt to restore congruence in the identity process.

While such distress created by incongruence “plays a major role in identity changes” in Burke’s (1991:846) analysis of the identity *process*, this study, however, argues that no such *change in identity* occurs for the larger population of African-Americans, but rather, because of the historical nature of “white-on-black oppression” (Feagin 2006) – rooted in America’s slave past – “***black identity***” ***serves as an incongruent identity standard within a white racially-framed identity process*** and thus, is incapable of yielding confirming *input* appraisals, no matter the *output* behavior. It must be stipulated here that while individuals possess numerous identities at any particular moment, the most salient identity to which this study refers to is that of a black identity entrenched in affirming value and qualities of *blackness* which are evaluated within a white racial construct. Furthermore, identity processes are viewed from a structural perspective – in terms of how racial structures impose and appraise identities based upon standards of white racial constructs.

“Within the framework of...Western wisdom and thinking, the identity of ‘blackness’ [is] problematic” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:23). *Black identity* then becomes crystallized as an outlier identity in a white racial frame. As such, an identity *standard*

rooted in the affirmation of such an identity is incongruent with the standards of the white racial frame and thus, this incongruence (distress) becomes the *input* for a second-order identity *process*. (Note the difference in the use of the terminology “identity *process*” and “feedback *loop*.” The feedback *loop* within a white racially-constructed identity *process* does not yield confirming appraisals for behaviors rooted in a black identity, thus, “black” behavior is kicked out of the feedback *loop* and black identity is kicked out of the first-order identity *process* forcing the creation of a second identity *process* rooted in black identity, complete with its own feedback *loop*). In this second-order identity *process*, it is **not** a *changed identity standard* which serves as the *input* for the second-order feedback *loop*, but rather, **black identity** itself – as the internalized standard – serves as a second-ordered identity *process* of its own. Thus, there are two identities at play; each with their own identity processes as behaviors associated with affirming characteristics of blackness are unable to receive confirming appraisals in the first-order process rooted in the white racial frame. (It should be noted that although I refer to black identity as a “second-order” identity process, I do so merely as a result of recognizing that the dominant structuring of American society is so constructed by the dominant group and thus, it stands to reason that the dominant, first- order identity processes would be rooted in white racial constructs.)

It is not difficult to understand, then, how others entering American society who find congruence with such an identity are unable to attain confirming *input* appraisals within the first-order identity process in which an association with *white identity* standards are essential. African immigrants and/or *any* other people entering American

society understand the consequences of association with *blackness*: they too will undergo the same distress as African-Americans. As African immigrants seek to avoid experiencing the stress of association with “Black” identity, they *temporarily* negotiate an alternative identity (Zachary 2006) that foregoes association with a “Black” identity in the white racial framing of American society in order to gain access to desired economic and/or educational resources they seek to improve their quality of life. Furthermore, given their significant ties to their home culture (Deaux et al. 2007), they do not readily buy into *any* identity within American society and thus, there is no particular standard to which they seek to adhere. In fact, few Africans, “seem...committed to ideas of racial separation or to doctrines of racial hatred. Since they came from cultures where black people were in the majority...they had no reason to believe they were inferior” (Appiah 1992:6). Rather they are firmly focused on the circumstances which motivated their travel to America in the first place and engage in behaviors that readily allow them to accomplish such. It is the white racial framing of American society that necessitates the association or disassociation with a particular identity. The decision, however, to disassociate with the native black identity creates tensions between African immigrants and African-Americans and creates stress (which can lead to disruptions) in associations, interrupting further identity processes.

Whereas social “stress has traditionally been viewed as an overload, where the demands made exceed existing abilities” (Burke 1991:846) of an individual to manage these demands, identity control theory posits the assumption that stress results “from disruption of the identity process” (Burke 1991:836). This research asserts that while

seemingly similar disruption (stress) occurs in both identity processes – those rooted in white racial constructs and those grounded in black identity – the disruption that occurs in first-order processes between white and black identities necessitating a second-order identity process is somewhat different than between African-Americans and African immigrants in second-order processes. Because of the white racial framing of American society, black immigrant groups must weigh *association* with and confirming appraisals within this second-order “black identity” loop against the need for confirming input appraisals from the first order process with which access to resources are associated. Given their focus on attaining a better life, they often must decide to forego *associations* with their native brother. This decision, then, disrupts advancement in the identity process in the second-order process, interrupting further identity processes.

Because African immigrants are only *temporarily* negotiating identity, they are more focused on the economic benefits of a social exchange motive; because they are not really tied to the racial constructs in America due to ties to their home country, they are more likely to opt for confirming appraisals in the first-order identity loop than seek associations or appraisals within the second-order loop rooted in a native black, African-American identity. Such “opting” for the confirming input appraisals of the white racial frame, disrupts associations and further identity processes between African-Americans and the African immigrant. Because the common identity with which both disrupted processes (first-order and second-order) occur is the black, native-born, African-American identity, it gives the appearance that African-Americans are the common source of tension in American society. In reality these tensions between African-

Americans and African immigrants persist as a result of the manner in which the white racial constructs of American society work to impose identities that garner confirming input appraisal for behavior and identities rooted in *whiteness*. Toni Morrison (1993:57), in the following quote, accurately describes the impact of the white racial frame upon American culture and identity processes as African immigrants, entering American society, negotiate identity within American society:

“Popular culture, shaped by film, theater, advertising, the press, television and literature, is heavily engaged in race talk. It participates freely in this most enduring and effective rite of passage into American culture: negative appraisals of the native-born black population. Only when the lesson of racial estrangement is learned is assimilation complete. Whatever the lived experience of immigrants with African-Americans – pleasant, beneficial or bruising – the rhetorical experience renders blacks as non-citizens, already discredited outlaws...It doesn’t matter anymore what shade the newcomer’s skin is. A hostile posture toward resident blacks must be struck at the Americanizing door before it will open. The public is asked to accept American blacks as the common denominator in each conflict between an immigrant and a job or between a wannabe and status. It hardly matters what complexities, contexts, and misinformation accompany these conflicts. They can all be subsumed as the equation of brand X vs. blacks.

Keep in mind that one of the intended effects of the white racial frame – since Africans were first brought over to America as slaves – was to “eliminate the characteristics of foreign origin” (Gordon 1964:64) and erase “any characteristics identifying [the African slave] with his former culture...any particular loyalties to his former culture” (Gordon 1964:66). In other words, any ties to their identity as Africans were discouraged to the point of beating it out of them. Who cannot recall how this process was so profoundly depicted in Alex Haley’s movie, *Roots*, which aired in 1977

and showed the slave, Kunta Kinte, being beaten with a whip to the point of his flesh being torn from his body simply because he refused to be called by the new name, Toby, given him by his white master. In the end, when Kunta finally succumbs to the brutality and calls himself Toby, it brings vividly to life Frederick Douglass' earlier-mentioned narrative in which he describes how "Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me" (Feagin 2006:57).

Such has been the historical consequences for holding onto "black identity" in American society. Yet, African-Americans have endured such consequences in their efforts to gain respect for and acknowledgement of their contributions to American culture as they "proceeded from a premise that equality means what it says and...taken white Americans at their word when they talked of it as an objective" (Feagin, 2006:196). Even when the individual black person knew that they would not benefit from their own resistance, they were willing to resist nevertheless, paying the cost – sometimes to the point of death – so that their children and grandchildren would be treated with the dignity, respect, equality and justice as every other American citizen. As a result, so too does the African immigrant – who voluntarily migrates to the shores of America seeking her resources – enjoy the benefit of the price paid.

Despite believing in the fundamental American values of *equality* and *justice*, in the white racial framing of American society, black identity is not met with confirming appraisals until it succumbs to becoming "this new man...an American, who leaving

behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receive new ones from the mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds” (Gordon 1964:116). That is, until he succumbs to behaving in ways that acknowledge the rank of *black identity* as negatively characterized, inferior, as in stark opposition to an identity characterized by whiteness (Feagin 2006) and as an identity with which to be “left behind” or “eliminated” as described by Gordon (1964); at the very least, it is an identity with which one should disassociate. Thus when African immigrants respond to African-Americans in such a dissociative manner, it breeds tensions that foster disruption in the identity process between African-Americans and African immigrants.

Identity Immersed in the Frame

Recall that Because race is so significant to American society, comprising a master status, or status-determining trait that often overpowers other characteristics which might run counter to it (Hughes 1945), most African-Americans and African immigrants are initially all lumped into one large category – defined as *black* or *African-American* – by most whites in society. Liberato and Feagin (2007) in their research of the racial experiences of Dominican immigrants and noting the impact of the white racial frame upon those entering American society reported, “When immigrant groups who are dark skinned or have some African ancestry enter the United States, whites usually view them in terms of this traditional racist framing” (203). One forty-five year old Dominican respondent in the study stated, “They think we are black. They all have the idea that Dominicans are black and treat us poorly, just the same way they treat black Americans (202).” Another respondent in the study remarked, White Americans think

we are an obstacle, a problem,” and another stated, “Many Whites think we are drug dealers... taking advantage of the system” (202). All of these metaphorical characterizations are typical of the negative imagery associated with *blackness* or identification with a *black identity* in a white racial frame.

“The narratives indicate that the respondents believe that white Americans see them as outsiders in U.S. society. In this, they are correct, for they have encountered the four-hundred-year-old white racial framing of society that was first developed by early European Americans seeking to explain to themselves and others how they as good Christians could enslave many Africans and African Americans from the mid-1600s to the mid-1800s. This white racial framing has continued from the era of vigorous legal segregation to the present day” (Liberato and Feagin:2007: 203). Thus this research tends to support the assertion that, *initially*, all dark skinned people entering American society may be lumped together and treated poorly as is characteristic for those assumed to possess a *black identity*. The immigrant then, arriving at America’s shores to enhance their life conditions, understandably seeks dissociation with such characterizations.

Other research, however, lends credence to the assertion that there is still something unique to a native, African-American, black identity that is particularly troubling within America’s *white racial frame*. Given the historical contexts of the construction of the white racial frame in American society dating back to the enslavement of African people in American colonies, the native black – the African-American – has had a substantially different experience in American society than other blacks emigrating to American society. The oppressive nature of the racial frames

against these early African slaves and African-Americans, along with the continued resistance to the structures of white power and privilege inherent in the *frame* by African-Americans, has positioned the native black as the central target of white-on-black oppression (Feagin 2006) in American society. Thus, when whites are aware of the differences between native black Americans and black immigrants, they prefer interaction with immigrant blacks over native blacks.

For instance, recall Waters' (1999) research with white employers which found that these employers, noting differences between African-Americans and black immigrants, preferred foreign-born blacks, viewing them as "more ambitious and hard working and African Americans as more troublesome" (Deaux et al. 2007:386-387); more troublesome perhaps as a result of their constant resistance to the oppressive white structures which assert white superiority and black inferiority. In addition, Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996), looking at employment practices in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, New York, found that local residents seeking employment and living in close proximity to private sector jobs in their neighborhood were often excluded from such jobs. "Local residents, particularly African Americans, often lacked social capital... Further, many local employers considered...residents undesirable employees for a variety of reasons including...racial discrimination" (180).

Thus, the "implicit rules" of the white racial frame play out in everyday interaction in American society, defining the meanings of what and who is most (un)desirable in social situations, shaping preferences as well as influencing identity processes as individuals socially interact with one another. However, much more than

the micro-level interactions of individuals, because of the extremely historical and pervasive nature of *race* within this white racial framing of American society, collective definitions of *whiteness* and *blackness* have become a crystallized part of a larger, structural, American identity. Recall that according to Identity Control Theory (Burke 1991), we produce behaviors in an effort to maintain congruence with an internalized standard of who we believe ourselves to be and the input appraisals from the environment. Thus, given the *enduring* nature of the racialized framing in American society and the deeply-embedded social meanings about race, structures throughout the society seem to provide confirming appraisal of the many manifestations of the frame in ways that ensure congruence with America's internalized racial identity. Thus, *race* and its framing serve to crystallize identities of *blackness* and *whiteness* in the larger society. It is as if the white racial frame shouts aloud, "This is who and what I am; tell me I am right" (Tittle and Paternoster 2000:449) and the whole of American social structure responds in acknowledgement – and thus the frame and America's racialized identity persists.

The frame does more than just define and shape identities in American society; it "explains and interprets the everyday world [and] implies or offers action in line with the frame's explanatory perspective" (Feagin 2006:26). Thus even when the facts do not fit the frame, the frame is not rejected but rather, the facts (Feagin 2006). Tittle and Paternoster (2000:449) puts it this way, "When a person's self is well crystallized, disconfirming evidence can usually be 'managed' in ways that preserve the original self-concept. For instance, the individual might cognitively deny the response, discount the

source of the reaction, ignore the reaction as aberrant, or the like.” Because the manifested racist behaviors of the white racial frame are so crystallized, when it is met with resistance, the source of that resistance – usually the native, black African-American – is merely discounted, ignored, denied access to resources within the frame or deemed somehow deviant and oppositional to existing structures.

Thus, when native black, African-Americans develop a positively-affirming internalized identity standard of *blackness* which becomes crystallized in their minds and they dare to shout “This is who and what I am; tell me I am right” ” (Tittle and Paternoster 2000:449), they are not acknowledged, but discounted, ignored, denied access to identity processes (within the first order), denied access to resources within this mainstream social structure or deemed somehow deviant and oppositional to existing structures. Because their sense of “self is well crystallized, disconfirming evidence can usually be ‘managed’ in ways that preserve the original self-concept...the individual might cognitively deny the response, discount the source of the reaction, ignore the reaction as aberrant, or the like.” So when African-Americans hold on to such a crystallized, positively-affirmed view of black identity, discounting and ignoring the constructs and meanings of the white racial frame (because such an identity goes against the crystallized beliefs and meanings of the white racial frame), it (black identity) is constructed as oppositional to mainstream identity constructs. Thus, it is constructed as an outlier identity, separate from the mainstream identity processes rooted in the white racial frame; it is an identity with which to disassociate if one is to be included in mainstream identity processes.

As long as black behavior fits the stereotypical racial frames about *blackness*, it serves to further confirm (Tittle and Paternoster 2000) the notions about *blackness* as dictated by mainstream identities rooted in the white racial frame. However, when blacks act in ways that do not confirm the exaggerated beliefs, stereotypes and characterizations of *blackness* (from a white racial frame perspective), whites' perceptions about blacks do not change; internalized beliefs are not disconfirmed (Tittle and Paternoster 2000) because the historical ideations about *blackness* have been crystallized in the American identity. One of Liberato and Feagin's (2007) Dominican respondents remarked how Whites think Dominicans are uneducated (given their associations with *blackness*), with very low coefficients of intelligence, and are surprised to find *professional* Dominicans. Despite their surprise, it has not changed the overall characterization of *blackness* within America's white racial construct.

And while it might seem that the black immigrants' disassociation with native blacks and the associations of blackness as characterized in American society and their reluctance "to assimilate into the larger African-American community can easily be misinterpreted as a wholesale rejection of the latter group" (Vickerman 1999:139), it actually "stems from an attempt to avoid the imposition of a more restrictive identity than to which they are accustomed" (Vickerman 1999:139). The black immigrant understands well that "blacks...are trapped in the social identity that needs to be negotiated because it is anchored in the host society's negative ideas about the black person" (Shaw-Taylor 2007:28). Less connected to American society or the racial frames that define social experiences in American society, they are not as susceptible to

the *intended* effects upon “the souls of black folks” to which W.E.B. Du Bois (2003) referred; thus it is easier for them to *negotiate* an identity that will yield them access to desired resources.

Social Exchange Theory

The *social exchange* perspective not only focuses on the benefits that people obtain from, and contribute to opportunity structures that regulate social exchanges but also avoidance of risks and costs associated with social interaction. Recall that “Social exchange theory analyzes how the structure of rewards and costs in relationships affects patterns of interaction. In its most common form...the theory applies to social interaction that meets the following conditions: (1) Actors are dependent on one another for outcomes they value; (2) actors behave in ways that increase outcomes they positively value and decrease outcomes they negatively value; and (3) actors engage in recurring exchanges with specific partners over time” (Molm 1991). In considering the first condition, Zachary (2006:51) explains that America offers African immigrants an escape from the plights and deteriorated conditions of their home countries and insurance against *having* to continue to live under those conditions; thus their American experience offers a valuable outcome in terms of securing a better future for themselves and their families. In exchange, America – seeking to entice more professional immigrants in its efforts at diversity (Shaw-Taylor 2007) as these immigrants tend to be highly educated and come from more privileged backgrounds (Shaw-Taylor 2007, Zachary 2006) – expedites the immigration process for many of these *professional* African immigrants who are capable of “subsidizing the economy of America” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:10).

These immigrants provide valuable professional services in America without demanding equal distribution of resources (because America offers better options than their home country), unlike the native African-Americans who constantly resist and challenge these unequal, racialized structures of white privilege and seek more equitable distribution of resources. Thus, the first condition is met as black immigrants interact with American society in a way that ensures valued outcomes for both.

Secondly, because these African immigrants understand that the quickest way for them to become more empowered to enhance and maintain their conditions for the better (positively valued outcome) is through success in America (Zachary 2006), they come to America in full “acknowledgement of the premium placed on Anglo conformity” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:14). As previously expressed by Johnson (2008), they also come with nonracial identities, seeking to *avoid* or decrease racial experiences (negatively valued outcome) by establishing their foreignness from those with whom association may lead to such experiences: the native black American whose resistance to the structures of the white racial framing sets him at furthest distance from images of *whiteness* and positions him as a unique target of oppressive treatment. In reciprocal fashion, America, seeking to enhance its global perception and increase diversity in America after the civil rights movement (Shaw-Taylor 2007) – yet still maintaining its historical structures of white power and privilege (positively valued outcome) – provided incentives for these professional immigrants to come to America through the implementation of a “diversity visa program” (Shaw-Taylor 2007:8) which expedited the immigration process for many of these Africans who might not otherwise get to come to America and further allows

immigrants to also bring extended family members to America (Shaw-Taylor 2007). This sort of “cherry-picking” of voluntary, professional migrants, then, allows America to *avoid* or decrease further challenges to structures (negatively valued outcome) while acquiring valuable and useful services.

Lastly, America and African immigrants, seeking to increase positively valued outcomes –attained through the reciprocal exchange with one another as described above – also seek to avoid negatively valued outcomes. Because negatively valued experiences for both actors appear rooted in exchanges or interactions with native black Americans, exchange relations appear to be better structured for acquiring positive outcomes when it occurs between America and immigrant blacks and when decreasing interaction or exchange with native black Americans; thus, recurring exchanges are likely to continue more often with black immigrants than exchanges with native African-Americans. Such exchanges, then, tend to, once again, position the native African-American as the common source of negative outcomes and present the picture for the black immigrant that American social structures are, in fact, legitimate patterns of interaction when it comes to the native black American.

What is significant about this theorizing within the current discussion of literature is that absent the racialized framing of American society – hierarchical and divisive – those entering into its borders would not feel compelled to avoid associations with any group of people; there would not exist the need to exact negative consequences for association with any particular group. However, because of the hierarchical, racialized structuring of American society, those entering America, seeking access to

valued resources which assist them in securing better life conditions *must* negotiate identities and associations, rooted not in any real sense of or lack of natural affinity for other groups of people, but based on which associations will garner them greater access to resources or those who control access to resources. Thus, at the heart of the social exchange motive – so far as it pertains to the current discussion – lays the racial and social extortion of the white racial framing of American society, imposing social associations upon immigrants seeking a better life and thus, disrupting further identity processes.

Another significant point in the conceptual and theoretical analysis of *social exchange theory* in reference to the relationship between native and immigrant black is how “Exchange networks give actors differential access to exchange relations that provide valued benefits, and differential control over what other actors value. This structure determines the relative dependencies of actors and, conversely, their potential power over one another” (Molm 1991:476). Therefore, in American society, where the dominant white group largely controls access to resources, it is logical to assume that they are the group that wields the power in society. Black immigrants coming to this country, then, seeking access to the valuable resources in America “are forced to create a distinctive relationship with...America” (Zachary 2006:51) in order to gain access to these resources. If associations with their native brother garnered them such access, there would be no need for this discussion. However, as it stands at the present time, native African-Americans do not wield the power in America and given their social

positioning in society, association with them, for the African (black) immigrant, decreases their chances of gaining the access they desire.

Thus, the “relation between dependence and power is at the heart of social exchange theory. Each actor’s dependence on another is a potential source of power for the other. Dependence increases with the value of outcomes that the other controls, and decreases with the availability of alternative sources of those outcomes” (Molm 1991:476). While a great majority of African and other black immigrants come to this country as professionals or seeking educational and other economic gains (Shaw-Taylor 2007) – providing a valued outcome for America in terms of their services and as contributors to America’s economy (Shaw-Taylor 2007) – these immigrant blacks, yield no power over whites in the exchange relations established between them. Given the historical racialized nature of American structures, African-Americans do not serve as an *alternate source of outcomes* – another source of power (Molm 1991:476) – for black immigrants, subsequently African-Americans lack power to provide immigrants with access to desired resources. Thus, engaging in exchange relations in America guarantees immigrants that dependence – for access to resources – rests in association with the dominant group as a “fundamental prediction of the theory is that the frequency and distribution of exchange in the relation varies with the amount and distribution of power” (Molm 1991:477). Unfortunately, in American society, as a result of historical constructs which delineate a power structure rooted in the white racial frame, association with his native brother guarantees him less access to those desired outcomes.

While the “black immigrant to the United States knows that there are limited options in the country he...may be leaving” (Gordon 2007:79), the native black American, those “against whom institutions are built, find themselves locked in or limited in terms of their actional reach. The social world does not, in other words, respond to his overtures or efforts at participation” (Gordon 2007:79); just as the journey across the shores to America was different for the immigrant than for his native brother, likewise, is the trek through America different for them. Yet what is true now and forever remains the same is that the *people* have not changed – we are both descendants of the slaves brought to America in chains, brothers of the American slave trade – that identification cannot be changed; the only thing that has changed is our *motivation* for navigating the structures of American society as we do given our differential journeys.

While America offers better options for the black immigrant as a result of the limitations he faces in his home country, his “error is to assume that the absence of those limitations in the United States means that there are no other limitations in everyday aspects of American social life” (Gordon 2007:79). That which he has the luxury of enjoying in America, he must remember came with a price – one paid, in advance, by his native brother. “That black people have posed much difficulty for the modern world is a sign of healthy consciousness. It means a refusal to submit to attempts of human erasure. It is not that all black individuals subscribe to such resistance. It is simply that enough resistance has existed” (Gordon 2007:76-77). The fact that African-American resistance *existed* makes the black immigrant’s trek in America possible. Given the “blending” and “blurring” of boundaries between native and immigrant blacks to which

Jackson (2007) spoke, perhaps the future will offer a more unified approach of America's racialized structuring – eventually.

Counter-framing the Frame

The white racial framing of American society promotes identity processes so vastly different for African-Americans – more than for any other group in American society – compelling the development of a black, *African-American*, identity that is put forth as oppositional to mainstream American values. Rather, it is an identity that runs counter to racial frames rooted in a system of racial oppression designed specifically for the subordination of *black identity* and/or elimination of its very existence. Because Burke's (1991) discussion of identity control theory assumes that an internalized *standard* is tied to the *input* appraisals it receives, in a white racial frame where associations with white identity and behavior are crystallized as favorable and receive confirming appraisals while those tied to images of blackness – deemed unfavorable – are not confirmed, in order for blacks in America to maintain an affirming self-identity, the characterizations by identity processes rooted in a white racial frame ***must be rejected***. Thus, when no such *change* in an affirming black identity standard occurs, behaviors rooted in this identity will never receive confirming *input* appraisal within a white racial construct – regardless of alternative output behavior – thus an *affirming* black identity *standard* serves as a catalyst for the formation of second order identity processes in American society.

An Africentric Paradigm: African Self-Consciousness

In order to appropriately evaluate and/or conceptualize about black behavior, one must employ valid and reliable instruments that effectively capture the authenticity of that behavior. An Africentric paradigm “assumes that Black behavior is culturally based being derived from and reflective of the distinct social realities of the African American community. Thus, African American social reality comprises its own values, norms and standards undergirding Black behavior...[it] projects a normalcy referent for Black behavior that is independent of Euro-American culture and Western racism” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). Such assertion supports the theorizing that there exists two identity processes at play within American society – one rooted in the dominant white racial paradigm and another (for those committed to an affirming black identity within American society) rooted in an Africentric paradigm where black identity and behavior is “in the service of the authentic needs and social priorities of the African community, i.e., towards its affirmation, enhancement, survival, positive development and fulfillment of its potential as a community (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62); thus appropriate instrumentation for the assessment of black behavior and experiences must be employed to project accurate evaluations of the behavior.

A closer analysis of these two identity processes indicates that they are distinctly different from one another, appearing even as stark opposites of one another. For example, consider how 1) in an africentric paradigm black behavior is evaluated independently of European (white) American culture and racism (Baldwin and Bell 1985) while in a white racial paradigm, black behavior is situated and evaluated directly

in the midst of European cultural values mired in American racism (Feagin 2006); 2) in an afri-centric paradigm, black behavior is focused on the affirmation, enhancement, and expression of its full potential (Baldwin and Bell 1985) whereas such behavior is not supported or encouraged in a white racial construct (Feagin 2006, 2010); 3) “normal Black behavior...is positively energized (under natural conditions) and ‘proactive’ in its thrust toward the affirmation and enhancement of African American life” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) within an afri-centric framework but are associated with negative characterizations and discouraged (often ‘reactive’ to racial and racist practices) in the white racial frame (Feagin 2006, 2010); lastly, a focus of an afri-centric process is on the “oneness of being” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) yet, the hierarchical nature of the process rooted in the white racial frame gives birth to divisions within and between groups of people based on race (Feagin 2006, 2010). Thus, the afri-centric paradigm and assessment instruments rooted in this paradigm are sensitive to the “normal thrust in the Black personality system as it influences African American behavior” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) and likely to yield different results than research processes rooted in the dominant paradigm of American society.

The core component of Black personality, representing “the conscious level expression of the...fundamental self-extension orientation of African people” is called *African Self-Consciousness* (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62); “partly biogenetically determined, it is also subject to social-environmental influences as well” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). When supported through institutional systems, “it achieves vigorous and full expression in terms of a congruent pattern of basic traits (beliefs, attitudes and

behaviors) which affirm African American life and the authenticity of its African cultural heritage” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). Because black behavior and identity does not represent traits congruent with the basic patterns of the white racial construct, it does not receive such support from the dominant white structuring of American society.

Baldwin and Bell (1985:63) identifies below four critical indices of the African Self-Consciousness (ASC) construct in assessing the level of African Self-Consciousness – “conscious level expression” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) of black personality and behavior – that individuals or groups possess:

- a. *The person possesses an awareness of his/her Black identity (a sense of collective consciousness) and African cultural heritage, and sees value in the pursuit of knowledge of Self (i.e., African history and culture throughout the world – encompassing African American experience).*
- b. *The person recognizes Black survival priorities and the necessity for institutions (practices, customs, values, etc.) which affirm Black life.*
- c. *The person actively participates in the survival, liberation and proactive development of Black people and defends their dignity, worth and integrity.*
- d. *The person recognizes the opposition of racial oppression (via people, concepts, institutions, etc.) to the development and survival of Black people, and actively resists it by any appropriate means.*

Overall, considering the conceptualizations of this current research, we would assume that African-Americans, more familiar with the white racial framing and countering its intended effects of delegitimizing black behavior, would possess higher levels of ASC as they are more likely to exhibit more *conscious-level expression* of behaviors associated with *blackness*, whereas black immigrants are *not tied* to any particular identity structure in American society as they “temporarily negotiate”

associations (not necessarily *identification*) (Zachary 2006) to access valued resources. While the black immigrant may not be fully aware of the intricate workings of white racial constructs in America, they are aware that associations with black behavior is not nurtured and supported in this society and so, is not to be fully expressed.

However, if we attempt to hypothesize about the nature of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks according to these indices – and within the context of the conceptualizations as posited within the current research – we should expect that on the first index, African-American and African immigrants should reflect similarities given that it is hypothesized that no disconnections in identifications exist between native and immigrant blacks. While associations – reflective of expressed behavior that takes into consideration the specific *motivations* for the behavior – may be disrupted and interrupt subsequent steps in identification processes, the supposition here is that no such “real” disconnections in identification occurs, as is likely to be reflected by native and immigrant blacks possessing and expressing similar personality traits and intrinsic affirming beliefs about black people and *blackness* as assessed by the ASCS. We should also expect similar results on the second index as native African-American and African respondents – as posited by this research project – would similarly exhibit a valuing of African-centered customs and practices which affirm Black life (more reflective of black personality which signifies values and beliefs rooted in the affirmation and survival of Black life and culture) because they do, in fact, identify with a shared heritage.

Careful consideration of the third and fourth indices gives us a better illustration of the difference in the behavior that black immigrants are likely to engage in as they

negotiate associations versus their intrinsic beliefs and values associated with a personality which affirms black identity. For instance, given the conceptualization as put forth in this current research, we should expect that on the third index as presented above, we will find similarities between African-American and African respondents in terms of active participation in the positive development of Black people to the point of defending the dignity and integrity of such practices. Even if the behavior occurs “within-group” instead of “between-groups,” because they both identify with a common African/Black heritage and possess an intrinsic belief (associated with personality) which affirms black identity, they will similarly promote the necessity for its survival. On the contrary, however, in terms of actively participating in the survival and liberation of Black people (the expressed behavior), we should expect that on the fourth index African-Americans will reflect higher levels of ASC than their African counterpart as the black immigrant to America is unfamiliar with the experiences in America that necessitate such resistant behavior. For them, their presence in America offers them better options than in their country of origin (Gordon 2007; Zachary 2006; Shaw-Taylor 2007) and “highlights the enormous changes in American society over the past 40 years while reminding us that for centuries Africans came to this country in chains” (Zachary 2006:50). For them, America offers real “change” in their life circumstances and they are hardly likely to resist the structures that provide them such opportunity.

The 4 indices mentioned above appear to be organized along 4 constructs (factors) within the ASCS and defined (see Scale in Appendix A) as follows: Factor I – *Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification* – refers to “a psychological disposition

reflecting a sense of collective African identity and a tendency to engage in activities that affirm one's African identity.” Factor II – *Resistance Against Anti-African Forces* – examines the “psychological disposition reflecting a tendency to resist, by any means necessary, any and all information which may be perceived (experienced/interpreted) as anti-African/anti-Black, or as a threat to African/Black survival in any way, shape or form.” Factor III, *Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions*, considers one's “psychological disposition reflecting a belief in the importance of Africentric/pro-Black-oriented/empowering organizations-institutions, practices, etc., that are under African/Black control based on African cultural definitions.” Lastly, the fourth factor, *Value for African Culture*, looks at the “psychological disposition reflecting a firm belief in the value/importance of traditional African cultural forms (practices, products-artifacts, etc.) for Africans (in America).” Of the 42 items on the ASCS, 39 of them are disbursed throughout this 4-factor construct and used in comparing levels of ASCS between groups.

According to Baldwin and Bell (1985:63), deviations from the patterns of normal functioning in African Self-Consciousness “are explained in terms of variations in the personal and institutional support systems characterizing the developmental and experiential life space of the individual.” Thus, the differential treks through American society as experienced by the native African-American and the African immigrant may explain why identity processes for African-Americans and African immigrants seem to develop in ways that appear to indicate a *disconnect* in their shared heritage. I believe that what is often characterized in mainstream literature as a lack of identification with a

shared heritage is this general lack of identification with a shared experience within American society. What is great about the African Self-Consciousness Scale, then, is that not only does it assert black behavior as positive, normalized behavior but it also captures the internalized intricacies of the black personality (expressed in our beliefs and values) that do not often find support for their full, outward expression in American society.

Because of the dominant white racial paradigm in America that exudes divisive constructs, based on notions of racial superiority and inferiority – specifically white superiority and black inferiority (Feagin 2006, 2010) – all the institutions of American society are immersed in these notions (Feagin 2006, 2010), to include manifestations throughout academia. So while much of the previously-mentioned literature provides significant contributions to the discourse regarding the relationship between native and immigrant blacks, some may reflect a misrepresentation (Baldwin and Bell 1985) given the means utilized in the evaluation of black identity and behavior. An effective analysis should take into account cross-cultural patterns of behavior and experiences of African-Americans in American society (Baldwin and Bell 1985) – reflective of normalized behavior – when assessing black behavior. Yet, social scientists such as Feagin (2006; 2010) and Baldwin and Bell (1985) acknowledge that most of the sociological and psychological tests used to conduct research and assess behavior within academia “are biased toward whiteness” (Feagin 2006:26); such is the norm within the white racial frame of American society and until we make evaluation of black behavior within constructs that support and affirm black behavior and personality in a normative manner,

we will continue to find research that depicts the relationship between native and immigrant blacks as engulfed in “distancing” and “conflict” given the divisive nature of the white racial frame.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I lay out my approach to examining the relationship between native-black African-Americans and immigrant blacks by studying the relationship between African-American and African students at a Historically Black University. As is customary, I chose a research method that I believed best fit the current research inquiry and in the remainder of this chapter, I provide a summation of my research methodology. First, I offer my rationale for choosing the method and design taken in this study – a mixed-method, on-line, survey approach. This rationale focuses on two particular points: 1) the need to address the language barrier encountered in engaging a number of the African research participants and 2) the need to engage a perspective that counters the historical, racially-socialized contexts (Feagin 2010) in which much of the examination of black Americans takes place. Then, I will discuss the particular research instruments used in conducting the research, including a discussion of the types of quantitative and qualitative data that the instruments lent themselves to collecting. Next I will discuss the remaining elements of the research process, addressing recruitment, the research participants, consent, to include the specifics of the on-line process as experienced by participants and some of the preliminary steps that were taken in constructing this particular research process. I will conclude the chapter with a summation of the benefits and limitations of this approach as it pertains to this study, lessons learned and plans to address the limitations.

Research Methodology

As discussed in the Introduction, the current literature examining the relations between native and immigrant Blacks in America motivated my interest in this research. As a result, I initiated a number of conversations (which I will discuss in greater detail later in this chapter in “Preliminary Methods”) with African-Americans as well as immigrants from South Africa, Somalia, Nigeria, St. Croix, and Jamaica as I navigated my way through studies in the area of racial and ethnic relations. Information obtained from some of these conversations helped me to construct my approach of the literature and ultimately resulted in the stated research question and conceptual analysis. Furthermore, this process not only helped me decide on the best instruments to utilize in my approach of the topic – the African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) with its disposition toward quantitative analysis and development of the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire (BROS Questionnaire) which allows for open-ended, qualitative analysis – they also assisted me in formulating many of the items included in the BROS Questionnaire as well as influenced the on-line design process.

The first thing that I noticed as I engaged in many of these conversations throughout my studies was the difficulty I sometimes encountered in understanding the dialect of many of the black immigrants. I found myself asking them to repeat themselves more often than I was comfortable with and sometimes I failed to understand what was being conveyed. Thus, in deciding to move forward in this research undertaking, while in-depth interviews may have been the preferred method in conducting such queries, I chose an on-line format where participants could provide

type-written responses to questions so as to alleviate this issue. Furthermore, this method addressed errors that might have been encountered in transcribing interviews as well as made for much more efficient and secure storage of the confidential materials provided by participants.

Aware of the prevailing discourse, rooted in American's historical racially-socialized contexts where the dominant racial framing often influences the "social reality" that is transmitted throughout society (Feagin 2010), and which consistently reports a marked and apparent "disconnect" – often labeled as "distancing," "divisive," or embroiled in some form of "conflict" – in the relations between native and immigrant blacks, I argued that no such disconnects in a shared identification exist in this relationship except that which is fabricated by these very same racialized structures. Given that much of the existing research fails to account for the white racialized contexts in which they evaluate "black" behavior and performance, this project sought the use of a counter-framed, Africentric paradigm (Baldwin and Bell 1985), which gave specific attention to such contexts in answering the research question: *Does a "disconnect" (a divide or separation) exist between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America such that they do not readily identify as having a shared ancestry and heritage?*

Since I was engaged in the examination of *black* behavior, *black* perceptions, beliefs and attitudes, I thought it significant that such an analysis proceeded from a framing where these behaviors, perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes could achieve "vigorous and full expression... independent of Euro-American culture and Western

racism” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) – as much as possible. Thus, assessment instruments needed to be sensitive to the positive and affirming nature of Black behavior that is often constructed as “negatively energized” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) in a white racial construct.

Research Instruments

The two research instruments utilized in conducting the current research study – the ASCS and the BROS Questionnaire (see Appendix A) – examined the relations between native and immigrant Blacks in America, specifically between undergraduate African-American and African students at a Historically Black University in Texas. Utilizing the instruments, I collected data from 40 participants – 20 African-American and 20 African participants in assessing their relationship to one another in terms of identification with and connections to a shared heritage, as well as associations with one another. Furthermore, instruments assessed the extent to which native-black African-Americans and black African participants shared common beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about blackness and interpretations of race in America.

The first instrument that participants accessed was the *African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS)* as developed by Baldwin and Bell (1985). This 42-item scale asked participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with (on a scale from 1 to 8, where 1=Very Strongly Disagree and 8=Very Strongly Agree) various statements which express certain beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Black people. It is an assessment scale that was developed, specifically to assess black behavior through a lens which asserts black behavior as positive, normalized behavior

while also capturing the internalized intricacies of the black personality (expressed in our beliefs and values) that do not often find support for outward expression in American society; thus it provides a more appropriate construct for assessing black behavior in a white racially-framed society. The African Self-Consciousness Scale has been tested for reliability and validity and has been used in other studies to assess and compare levels of *African Self-Consciousness* possessed by individuals and groups.

Recall that *African Self-Consciousness* refers to “the conscious level expression” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) of behavior rooted in an African orientation. It is the core component of the Black personality (Baldwin and Bell 1985) “which affirm African American life and the authenticity of its African cultural heritage” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). Assessing not only the conscious level expressions of behavior which affirm black culture, the scale also takes into consideration the beliefs, values and attitudes inherent in the Black personality which also affirm black cultural expression. Thus, for participants taking part in this research study, upon their completion of the scale, total scores (ranging from a possible 42-336 points on the 42 items) were computed for each participant to assess whether they possessed high, mid-range, or low ASC as denoted by specific ranges of scores corresponding to the following scale of scores: High ASC = 252-336 points; Mid-range ASC = 127-251 points and Low ASC = 42-126 points.

Participants chose the best response from the range of 1-8 on each item (statement) on the scale, denoting their level of disagreement (1) or agreement (8) with each statement. Because the scale is structured such that odd-numbered items are negatively weighted (a score of 1 is associated with high ASC) while even-numbered

items are positively weighted (a score of 8 associated with high ASC), odd-numbered items must be reverse scored before totaling up the scores on all items. For example, a response of 1 on an odd-numbered item must be converted to an 8, a response of 2=7, 3=6, 4=5, 5=4, 6=3, 7=2, and 8=1 then total scores can be computed. Group means were also compiled; a group mean was computed for African-American participants for comparison to the mean computed for African participants to assess comparative levels of ASC. Similar means were obtained for key questions on the 42-item scale corresponding to four factors identified by Baldwin and Bell (1985) that assess levels of ASC for Collective African Identity, Resistance against Anti-African forces, Value for African-centered development of black people, and Value for African Culture; this allowed for comparisons between respondents on these four factors.

A second questionnaire developed specifically for this research project, the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire, asked participants a series of questions to which they had the opportunity to provide *detailed* responses (providing examples as they were able) regarding their racial identities and experiences. This questionnaire consisted of 19 items, many containing multiple parts to solicit more detailed responses – an effort to make up for the inability to probe participants as would be available had interviews been the chosen method. In addition there were 2 concluding items that focused on the participants' evaluation of the instrument as well as any additional information they believed needed inclusion in any subsequent study of the this topic.

This questionnaire more specifically addressed with which racial/ethnic group participants most readily identify, the nature of associations between African-American

and African students on the campus of the Historically Black University, as well as their connections to our common ancestor – the African slave. Further, it included a series of vignettes intended to depict racialized incidents which seek to ascertain participants' exposure to and interpretation of racial scenarios. This information was aimed at assessing how participants readily identify and interpret racial events based on their prior experience with and exposure to an environment and events of racial discrimination (and perhaps, how readily they identify with others experiencing *race* in a society rooted in racial discrimination).

While the ASCS allowed a more *general* assessment of whether a shared identity exists between African-American and African students based on shared beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Blacks (Baldwin and Bell 1985), the Brothers of the Trade Questionnaire allowed for more in-depth analysis and interpretation of the most salient identities participants hold with opportunities for deeper discovery of the perceived sources of shared identities and/or potential disconnects. Thus, these research instruments readily lent themselves for use in a mixed-methods approach. The ASCS, with its likert scale design which allowed for computed scores and means between individuals and groups for comparison readily lent itself to quantitative analysis processes. The Brothers of the Trade Questionnaire, which allowed participants to respond more personally about their beliefs, identifications and associations, lent itself to a more narrative, qualitative approach capable of expounding the responses on the ASCS.

I believe the choice to administer the African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) as a means of more readily evaluating *black* identity in terms of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors rooted in an Africentric framework – unlike much of the previous research analyzing the relationship of black immigrants and African-Americans – was the best fit for conducting the quantitative piece of this research analysis. I further believe that the development of the Student Questionnaire which provided participants the opportunity to express, in their own words, their views and interpretations of racialized events in American society – unencumbered by the influence of white racial constructs or any such imposed structuring – also provided the best fit for conducting the qualitative portion of this analysis.

Recruitment

Recruitment for research participants began immediately upon securing final IRB approvals for the research process. Participants were recruited primarily through presentation of the project Announcement to the University's Student Organizations and Associations with known memberships of African and African-American-identified undergraduate students, e.g., the African Students Association and African-American Student Associations. Separate presentations were made to the Psychology Club whose members had a primary interest in research endeavors as well as a number of classes in an effort to reach eligible participants who were not members of these organizations. Finally, participants were recruited based on self-identification as African-American or African and enrollment as an undergraduate student at the University. Students

interested in participation provided email addresses so that the project surveys' on-line link could be disseminated to them for participation.

Research Participants

Once determined eligible for participation – current undergraduate students attending the Historically Black University who self-identified as possessing African-American or African identity – participants were directed to an online link via email to access the online questionnaire materials. Upon accessing the on-line survey assessment, they were immediately able to view the consent form and provide consent to participation by electing to continue on and complete the survey; all of which was explained in the consent form. Upon completion and submission of the questionnaires, which generally took approximately 45 minutes to an hour to complete, participants once again submitted their email address and their responses were automatically submitted to a secured, password-protected inbox that could only be accessed only with proper investigator authentication to maintain participant confidentiality. A random respondent identification number corresponding to the email address provided by the participant was generated and participants were able to print out a confirmation page verifying their participation in the project; this page could be presented to the principal investigator in exchange for a new flash drive that was provided to participants for their participation in the research process. For participants who did not have access to printers to print the page at the time of completion, I was able to access the online program and match their email address to verify their participation.

Preliminary Methods

Prior to the start of the research study, four African students and four African-American students, not connected with the study, were recruited for a very thorough testing of the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire questions and vignettes to determine whether these items captured the significant issues raised by the study and/or whether any significant items had been left out. This query also addressed potential language barriers for African students associated with the use of specific idioms of the English language which may have been inadvertently used in the questions and the vignettes; some questions were adjusted resulting in the final instrument.

However, it is significant to mention how my initial consideration of the literature and the specific research design method was also influenced by a number of conversations that I shared with immigrants from South Africa, Somalia, Nigeria, St. Croix, and Jamaica as well as African-Americans as I undertook studies in the area of racial and ethnic relations. As I spoke with these persons in various settings, sometimes in small groups at social functions and sometimes in one-on-one conversation, clarification and “translation” – to some extent – was often necessary as the dialect of many of the immigrant blacks made it difficult for me to understand clearly what they were saying. Thus, the difficulty was addressed as a result of these conversations which directly influenced my decision to utilize an online approach so that I might better document the responses of participants.

In these initial conversations, I began to notice certain themes emerge as I spoke with blacks (native and foreign-born) in America. While a number of themes emerged, I

eventually compiled them into the one stated research question so as to ensure that my reach in this process was not too broad. First, black immigrants and African-Americans rarely acknowledged identification with the other beyond “certain” physical characteristics and sometimes disagreed on that point. For example, whereas all were willing to identify as black, differences were noted as to how “black” (in terms of color pigmentation) some groups were in relation to others. African-Americans often disagreed that they shared the same physical characteristics as Africans other than color, noting even that Africans were “much darker” than them; two Jamaican immigrants readily identified with African-American cultural fads, but did not necessarily identify with having the same “mentality” as African-Americans when it came to racial issues, suggesting that African-Americans use “race” as a crutch for not achieving in American society.

A second theme that seemed to emerge was that the immigrant group members, regardless of whether they initially had a positive or negative view of African-Americans prior to coming to America generally expressed disappointment with African-Americans once in this country. One individual from St. Croix who was excited about coming to America where blacks (she thought) were doing so well actually admitted that she asked, “What’s wrong with the blacks (African-Americans) in America?” upon her arrival. Having access to all the resources in America for so long, she couldn’t understand why African-Americans were doing so poorly, why so few of them were “in charge” of anything. Other black immigrants from South Africa were also of the mindset – prior to coming to America – that blacks in America were “well-off” and had

truly “overcome.” Coming to America and seeing the plight of so many African-Americans, they “pitied” the way native-black Americans are treated in this country. Yet, the Jamaican and Nigerian immigrants with whom I conversed had no such “pity.” They blamed African-Americans’ “criminal” and “lazy” dispositions for their own plight in American society, believing that if African-Americans wish to receive better in this country, they should do better themselves – like they (black immigrants) do. The female immigrant from Somalia, who came to America with her father, was specifically warned by her father to avoid – as much as possible – contact with African-Americans for it was not good to be associated with them.

Amazingly, the one white South African with whom I conversed was the only one who seemed to understand the plight of the African-American in American society in relation to the extremely intense racialized character of American society. Having grown up in South Africa under the influence of apartheid, his family had often attempted to assist black South Africans subjected to racial discrimination and mistreatment under that system. Understanding the long-term impact of such racial discrimination, still today, he returns to South Africa regularly, engaging in humanitarian efforts at many of the country’s orphanages. When asked if he considered himself African-American, he responded, “Well...I guess I am” to which several African-Americans took offense.

Lastly, another theme that resonated with me and was most interesting was the differential interpretation of racialized incidents based upon the immigrants’ country of origin. Whereas African-Americans readily expressed familiarity and distress regarding

racially-discriminatory acts, black immigrants provided a variety of explanations and/or interpretations of racial events/incidents. For instance, the young lady from St. Croix, after being in America for some time, recognized that there was something about America that was different; that there was a “mindset” not only present in native-born blacks – to include young children and especially young black males – but also in whites in regards to how they dealt with African-Americans; this mindset, she noticed, was manifested throughout American society, especially in the educational system, as if all are somehow “indoctrinated” into it.

The Jamaican immigrants did not really concern themselves with the racial nature of any possible racial incidents that they experienced but were more concerned with the legitimacy of their own actions. If they were *not* engaged in any criminal, negative, or illegal behavior and were treated as if they had been, they saw it as injustice – though not necessarily because of racial issues. If they were engaged in any of the above-mentioned behavior and were treated as such, it was just and they would (and should) have to suffer the consequences of their actions.

The black South African immigrants, who were very familiar with race-based discrimination and also recalled experiencing blatant racial discrimination even here in America, also expressed that they did not expend much energy on such incidents as they were focused on enjoying a better life than that in South Africa – an opportunity that life in America offered them. The Nigerian immigrants, however, rarely interpreted incidents in terms of *race*. Those who had only been in America for a few years, seemed to almost go out of their way *not* to acknowledge or define any personal encounter in

racialized terms, especially when it involved a white person exhibiting the behavior in question. However, they were often offended by African-Americans who showed “indifference” to them and readily acknowledged that African-Americans showed more discriminatory behavior toward them than any other group. Interestingly, they readily identified experiences of racial discrimination while in France.

The one Nigerian immigrant who had been in America for almost 30 years – coming to America as a teen – while admitting to experiencing racial discrimination and acknowledging that it does exist in American society – also tended to downplay its impact on *achievement* in this country *if* one simply chooses *not* to be defined by whites and refuse to become dependent upon them for one's source of achievement; a flaw he believed African-Americans possessed to their own detriment.

Thus, these conversations and discussions with this diverse group of people not only assisted in the structuring of my research process in examining relations between native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America but also made me realize how significant are the influences of racial structures - so much so that many blacks, themselves, characterize images of *blackness* as negative. However, I believe that absent the white racial frames that construct such negative characterizations, blacks could fully express all the manifestations of *blackness* freely. Thus, this is why I decided to conduct the research at a Historically Black University.

Benefits and Limitations

The biggest dilemma in regards to the methodology chosen for this project lies in the use of the on-line process for attaining data from respondents on the Brothers of the

Trade Questionnaire. Overall, I believe that given the potential difficulty in understanding some of the African respondents' dialects, I believe this approach to have been the best choice. Given that the respondents' are of a generation in which technology is a chosen mode of communication, I believe that this method provided greater comfort not only in allowing respondents to more freely state their opinions on such a controversial topic (amongst black Americans). While face-to-face interviews may have been a better approach in obtaining more detailed responses, respondents may have felt more compelled to answer questions – even those with which they may have been uncomfortable if they queries occurred face-to-face. Furthermore, I believe respondents were better able to articulate their thoughts more effectively via the on-line process than if they were constantly stopped and asked to repeat their responses for clarification as in a face-to-face interview.

Despite the inability to effectively probe for greater details on questions where respondents may have been somewhat vague in their responses – a limitation that face-to-face interviews may have addressed more effectively – the use of multiple-part questions that solicited examples and explanations when/where possible was able to capture some of the data that may have been lost without that element in place. However, upon completion of the research process, respondents' will be contacted again via email and invited to a forum to be informed of the outcomes of this research process. We will share with them a general summation of the findings and seek – from these African and Africa-American respondents – pertinent information about their experiences in this project, their perception of the strengths and weaknesses of this

particular process, and most significantly, we will seek their input as to the direction that the dialogue between native African-Americans and black immigrants should take as we proceed further in this process. We would like to impress upon these students the significance of having native African-Americans and immigrant blacks in America define and influence the nature of the relationship between us as opposed to allowing the literature define it for us. Thus, we will have an opportunity to probe for additional information from those desiring a seat at the discussion table and allow these students to share in the new direction that this project hopes to take in the future in influencing the discourse.

A valuable lesson learned in this process is just how needed is the development of an afri-centric framework from which native and immigrant blacks are able to gain an accurate historical account of their ancestry. African-Americans are so removed from a true knowledge of our authentic African heritage; similarly African immigrants lack the knowledge of the native African-American experience in America – by way of the African slave. Once the African slave left Africa, their brothers left in the Motherland had no idea of the horrific experiences forced upon them in America; consequently, there is a disconnect in the *history* that binds the native and immigrant black together. We hope to be a part of the on-going process that helps to bridge this gap. Thus, this present research process provides but a basic preview of the in-depth and on-going encounter in the relationship between the native and immigrant black in America – these brothers of the American slave trade.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I provide analysis and discussion of the results obtained from administering the African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) and the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire (BROS Questionnaire) in answering the research question, “*Does a “disconnect” (a divide or separation) exist between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America such that they do not readily identify as having a shared ancestry and heritage?*” The instruments used in conducting this research readily lent themselves to mixed-method processes – the ASCS, with its likert scale design allowed for computed scores and means between groups for comparison suited to quantitative analysis processes while the Brothers of the Trade Questionnaire allowed participants to respond to open-ended questions about their identification and associations with each other as well as their racial experiences and interpretations of *race* in America.

The analysis provided herein will consist of a mixed-method analysis of data that provides a quantitative analysis in conjunction with qualitative, descriptive data that augments the quantitative analysis. Some elements of the BROS Questionnaire data will be presented in a quantitative fashion where this data lends itself to such an analysis such as when looking at respondents’ connection to and identification with a common ancestry, their associations with one another as well as analysis of their racial experiences. Other elements of the BROS questionnaire, however, such as when

considering respondents' interpretation of racial incidents, will be presented solely in the form of a qualitative, descriptive analysis of data. Analysis of the ASCS will occur along the line of the four factors previously mentioned which Baldwin and Bell (1985) identified as significant in terms of examining the scale values; these four factors entail 1) connection to and association with a collective African identity, 2) resistance to anti-African forces, 3) value for African-centered institutions (afri-centric development), and 4) value for African culture. Thus the qualitative data will extend the analysis of data presented in quantitative form where it lends itself to such analysis.

It is important to point out that although in the analyses of these various constructs of the ASCS, mean ASC scores for individual items (scale questions) are reported with comparisons drawn between both respondent groups – only in terms of whether these scores are indicative of strong/high ASC or not – our focus is not on the mean scores of these individual items; this process is merely to highlight some of the items within the construct that significantly pertain to this project. Our primary focus is on assessing whether or not there are significant differences between African and African-Americans on the overall construct which consists of all the items in the construct. In ascertaining this knowledge, total scores were obtained for both respondent groups – consisting of scores on all the items in the construct and with odd-numbered items reversed coded – and mean scores generated for each group. Then t-tests were generated to assess whether the differences between these mean scores were statistically significant or not. Therefore, it is based upon the construct-level analysis that statistically-significant comparisons are made. This chapter will then conclude with a

discussion of the results obtained on all four constructs which articulates the data's response to the critical research question regarding the connection to and identification with a shared heritage between native African-American and African respondents.

Mixed-Method Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative

The analysis in this chapter is based on data collected from 40 participants – 20 African-American and 20 African undergraduate students in attendance at a Historically Black College/University in rural Texas. African American participants ranged in age from 17 to 32 years with an average age of 21.7 years; African participants ranged in age from 17 to 22 years with an average age of 20. In all there were 16 males (8 African-American and 8 African) and 24 females (12 African-American and 12 African). All respondents participated voluntarily and were not obligated to answer any question with which they were not comfortable. Initially there were 41 respondents, however, because only students who identified as being of African-American or African ethnicity were eligible for participation, responses from one participant – identifying as Jamaican-American – were ineligible for inclusion in the study.

Before completing the BROS Questionnaire, participants responded to 42-items on the African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS). This 42-item scale asked participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with (on a scale from 1 to 8, where 1=Very Strongly Disagree and 8=Very Strongly Agree) various statements which express certain beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Black people. Total scores for the scale were computed for each participant (with odd-numbered items reverse scored) and levels of African Self-Consciousness (ASC) were assessed based on those total

scores. Recall that High ASC = 252-336 points; Mid-range ASC = 127-251 points and Low ASC = 42-126 points. Of the twenty (20) African-American respondents, two participants obtained individual scores corresponding to a high level of ASC, one male with a score of 265 and one female with a score of 262; the other eighteen participants obtained scores in the mid-range ASC level with scores ranging from 165-243 points. The mean score for African-American respondents was 214.67.

Of the twenty (20) participants, two obtained scores corresponding to a high level of ASC, one female with a score of 267 and one male with a score of 255; seventeen participants obtained scores in the mid-range ASC level with scores ranging from 149-230, and one participant obtained a score indicative of low ASC level as the participant only completed 14 of the items on the scale. The mean score for the African participants was 215.13. As shown in Table 1, t-testing indicated that there is no statistically-significant difference between African and African-American scores, overall, on the African Self-Consciousness Scale at the .05 level.

Table 1: t-test Analysis of total ASCS scores by Group

African			African-American			t
N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
15	215.13	27.31	15	214.67	29.24	.045

Connections/Identification

In assessing whether African-American and African students were connected to and/or identified with a shared heritage, elements on both the ASCS and the BROS

Questionnaire were considered. First, in looking at the ASCS, group levels of ASC were assessed along Factor I – *Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification* – for comparison between group respondents. This factor was a construct of 15 items on the ASCS reflecting a psychological disposition toward a collective African identity. Keep in mind that odd and even-numbered items are weighted differently so that when comparing group means, for Positive keyed items (even-numbered items), high scores (above 4.5) are reflective of strong/high ASC, and for Negative keyed items, low scores (4.5 and below) are reflective of strong/high ASC. For each item, group means were calculated and assessed, according to this scaling provided by the ASCS, as to whether the means were reflective of strong/high ASC or not.

Consideration of these 15 items showed that on 9 of the 15 items (60%), African-American and African respondents both exhibited high levels of ASC (see Appendix C for a listing of all items on each construct). For example, on item number 40 (even-numbered) respondents were presented with the statement, “It is good for Black people to refer to each other as brother and sister because such practice is consistent with our African heritage;” African-American respondents yielded a mean score of 5.80 and African respondents yielded a mean score of 6.22, both above the 4.5 marker that denotes high African Self-Consciousness. Another even-numbered item under this construct, number 14, states, “Blacks born in the United States are Black or African first, rather than American or just plain people;” this item yielded mean scores of 5.50 for African-American respondents and 5.80 for African respondents, again, denoting high ASC. Highest mean scores for African-American and African respondents were

obtained on item 42 which states, “Being involved in wholesome group activities with other Blacks lifts my spirits more so than being involved in individual oriented activities,” yielding mean scores of 6.30 for African-American respondents and 6.00 for African respondents, further indicating possession of high levels of ASC. Thus, it appears that African and African-American respondents not only exhibit a connection to one another from these items but furthermore, seem to value this connection.

Similarly, the only two odd-numbered items on this construct yielded high levels of ASC for both respondent groups; recall that odd-numbered items are negatively-keyed so values *below* 4.5 are indicative of strong/high ASC. Item number 1, which states, “I don’t necessarily feel like I am being mistreated in a situation where I see another Black person being mistreated,” resulted in a mean score of 3.85 for African-American respondents and 3.80 for African respondents. Likewise item 23, “Africa is not the ancestral homeland of all Black people throughout the world” yielded a mean score of 3.32 for African-American respondents and a score of 2.95 for African respondents, further indicating a sense of “oneness,” to which Baldwin and Bell (1985) referred, not only in circumstance, but also in origin.

Item number 12 resulted in a mean score for African respondents of 4.75 – denoting high ASC – and a score of 3.42 for African-American respondents, below the “4.5 and above” standard for even-numbered items. This item states, “As a good index of self-respect, Blacks in America should consider adopting traditional African names for themselves.” Given African respondents greater familiarity with authentic African names and the meanings associated with them compared to African-American

respondents' familiarity with such knowledge, this result is understandable. Two other such items within this construct on which African respondents obtained a mean score congruent with strong/high ASC while African-American respondents did not include items 6 and 36.

Item 6, which states, "Regardless of their interests, educational background and social achievements, I would prefer to associate with Black people than non-Black people" is discussed below as it pertains to *associations* between African and African-American respondents; suffice it to state here that on this item, African respondents obtained a mean score of 4.60 (high ASC) while African-American respondents did not exhibit strong ASC, obtaining a mean score of 4.05. Perhaps one explanation for African-American respondents' responses lies in the discriminatory tone of the question; African-Americans having been historical victims of segregated and discriminatory treatment tend *not* to engage in that sort of behavior against others; recall that an identity rooted in an afri-centric perspective emanates from a focus on the "oneness of being" (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) which distinguishes it from the divisive focus of white racial framing. Furthermore, the fact that African respondents agreed more with this statement – *preferring* associations with Blacks over non-Blacks – indicates that no such "social exchange motive" is at work for these respondents and thus, they do not seek to forego associations with native Blacks.

Similar patterns are also found on item 36 which states, "African culture is better for humanity than European culture." While African respondents' mean score of 4.53 does exceed the "4.5 and above" standard for high ASC, African-American respondents'

score of 4.45, again, does not meet that standard. Again, a black identity rooted in an afri-centric perspective yields greater tolerance and less judgment for the expression of other identities. Furthermore, recall that from the *African-American perspective* as put forth in the conceptual framework of this project, African-Americans seek a “blending” of cultural forms in American society where each is valued for their unique contribution to the society.

There were two items on which African-American respondents attained mean scores corresponding to strong/high ASC while African respondents did not attain such scoring. In response to item 18, “Blacks should form loving relationships and marry only other Blacks,” African-American respondents attained a mean score of 4.90 denoting high ASC whereas African respondents only attained a mean score of 3.42. In regards to African respondents, this result was inconsistent with much of the literature’s portrayal of African immigrants’ “clannish” nature, which often suggests that they tend to stick largely to members of their own ethnic group; behavior often used as the basis for characterizing the relationship with native blacks as “distanced,” “divided” and rooted in “conflict.” As for African-American respondents, while it may be well to blend and be tolerant of others’ contributions to society, when it comes to the intimate relationships based on a greater need for trust and nurture, they recognize that these relations should exist between those most intimately connected to and supportive of them.

The second item on which African-American respondents attained mean scores corresponding to strong/high ASC while African respondents did not, item 30, states,

“White people, generally speaking, do not respect Black life,” African-American respondents’ mean score of 5.20 is reflective of strong African Self-Consciousness while the score attained by African respondents – 4.39 – does not exhibit a high level of ASC; these results indicative of the differential experiences with whites within American society in which black immigrants lack familiarity with and exposure to the intended effects and implicit meanings of America’s racial structure. African-Americans, however, possessing greater racial consciousness due to their constant exposure to these constructs, readily recognize such lack of respect for black life as is explicitly acknowledged in this comment by an African-American respondent as reported on the BROS Questionnaire:

White America doesn't like competition from anyone of African descent and they cringe when they see Blacks have their own businesses. Fear of the Black intellectual who will mobilize Blacks is what propels them to be hateful towards us. With lack of respect for Black life, they could care less about us having great medical care and counseling. I truly believe that if they could send us back to Africa and wash their hands with us they would just as they did the Mexicans in 1967 after they exploited their labor.

Lastly, the only item that both respondent groups exhibit mean scores below the standard for strong/high ASC is on item 4 which states, “Blacks who are committed and prepared to uplift the (Black) race by any means necessary (including violence) are more intelligent than Blacks who are not this committed and prepared;” African respondents acquired a mean score of 3.60 and African-Americans obtained a mean score of 3.40. I believe this idea of *violence* dominates the question and thus, promotes means of challenging structures with which the respondents’ generation is not familiar; further, connecting “intelligence” to such “violence” may not go over well with *college* students.

It should be noted here in the discussion of the connectedness between African-American and African respondents to a shared heritage, another item – though not an item under consideration in this first construct – item 31 (negatively-keyed), which states, “Blacks in America should view Blacks from other countries (e.g., Ghana, Nigeria and other countries in Africa) as foreigners rather than as brothers and sisters,” yielded strong levels of ASC for both African and African-American respondents, with mean scores of 2.44 and 3.40 respectively. This is similar to the even-numbered item, number 40, discussed above which was given positively weighted scoring (with groups obtaining scores of 5.80 and 6.22). Both respondent groups exhibited strong levels of African Self-Consciousness in terms of a common and shared ancestry on both of these items, acknowledging that they do, in fact, believe themselves to be brothers – and sisters – of the same ancestry.

The BROS Questionnaire echoes this sentiment as well. In response to the question, “Do you feel any connection to Africans who were brought to this country centuries ago and were forced into slavery in the U.S.?” 73% (11 of 15) of the African respondents and 72% (13 of 18) of African-American respondents answered “yes.” The following comments from an African-American and an African respondents attest to the connection felt:

Yea. They are the reason why I'm here in America today. As descendant of those who were shipped here against their will It is hard for me not to feel a connection to whose blood I have running in my veins. The connection isn't a forced one rather it's innate, built into my DNA. It even shows itself when I speak, retaining that West African speech pattern, most African Americans speak with. So yea, I definitely feel a connection. (African-American)

I do, because if it wasn't for them I would not be here today. (African-American)

I do now, I never realized how much passion, and strength our culture had until I enrolled in college, and especially since I went to Africa. Growing up in San Antonio I never had the chance to understand, even in the schools that I attended. (African-American)

Yes I do feel a connection with the Africans who were brought to this country centuries ago because we all originate from the same continent. (African)

Yes, because we all have the same roots. (African)

yes i feel somewhat connected to them beacuse we're all the same, came from the same places so it'll be wrong to say we dont have any connection (African)

yes i do feel a connection woth i do feel like they part of us as much as we are part of them (African)

I do have a connection. Most of the things they did, how they lived is part of what people do in Africa. There are a lot of value we share with those people. (African)

These respondents all acknowledge their connection to this common ancestor is not “distanced,” but rather “innate;” the blood of this ancestor running through their veins, the culture of their ancestor inherent within them today and emanating from a common origin. They understand and acknowledge that if not for the African slave in America, they would not exist.

Furthermore, when asked, “Which group do you believe is more connected to that slave past, Africans or African-Americans?” 53% (8 of 15) of the African respondents believe African-Americans are more connected to the African slave in America, 40% (6 of 15) of these respondents believe Africans are more connected to the slave, and 6% (1 of 15) believed that both are connected to the slave. For African-American respondents, 39% (7 of 18) believe that African-Americans are more connected to the slave past, 39% (7 of 18) believe that Africans are more connected to

this past, 16% (3 of 18) believe that both are connected to this past, and 5% (1 of 18) believe that neither group is connected to this past.

It is interesting to note here the high percentage of African and African-American respondents (73% and 72% respectively) who feel a connection to the *same ancestor* – the African slave. Furthermore, while 73% of African respondents feel a connection to the slaves, more than half of them (53%) believe African-Americans to be more connected to that slave past. Thus, they believe African-Americans to be more connected to the *same ancestor* to which most of them (73%) feel a connection.

The following comments are a testament to the manner in which American slavery – while its intent to “eliminate the characteristics of foreign origin” (Gordon, 1964:64) and erase “any characteristics identifying [the African slave] with his former culture...any particular loyalties to his former culture” (Gordon, 1964:66) – has impacted the identification to a connected *history* between African immigrants and African-Americans (due to their differential trek *to* and *through* America); it did not, however, achieve its intent in erasing the connection to a common *heritage* between the native African-American and black African immigrants in America:

Yes I feel a connection with the Africans who were brought over here. But I don't feel any connection with the ones that come over here just because. (African-American)

I do feel a connection to Africans who were brought to this country centuries ago and were forced into slavery in the U.S, especially if the express who they are and their heritage. (African)

While both of the respondents feel a connection to the same ancestor (thereby making them connected as well), the disconnect in the history as a result of slavery

causes confusion. The African-American respondent suggesting that because the African immigrants' experience is different from the African slaves' experiences, this somehow eliminates the connection. Similarly, the African respondent suggesting that native African-Americans who do not express an African heritage are somehow discounted from the connection. These respondents, focused on the historical journey that *separates* the African slave experience from the differential experiences of the African-American and the African immigrant in America today, have not considered the fact that just because brothers are separated in their youth does not change the fact that they are still brothers; their experiences may be different as a result of the separation but one cannot deny the common biological heritage simply because of those differential experiences. Such focus on how these differential experiences *separate* is indicative of the impact of the white racial frame which is shrouded in *division*. Thus in order to bridge this divide, there must be a concerted focus on connecting the historical trek of the slaves' journey to the history of African-Americans and African immigrants in America today, to include the significant meanings of this trek for each respondent group.

Associations

In terms of *associations* between African-American and African respondents, on item 6 on the ASCS (still within the Factor I construct), "Regardless of their interests, educational background and social achievements, I would prefer to associate with Black people than with non-Blacks" African respondents attained a mean score of 4.60, denoting strong or high ASC while African-American respondents acquired a mean

score of 4.05, failing to meet the “4.5 and above” standard which denotes strong ASC on this item. Similarly on the BROS Questionnaire, when asked how they would describe the relationship between African and African-American students on the campus, 67% (10 of 15) of African respondents described the relationship in a positive light (“good,” “fine,” “close,” etc.) as noted below:

I think that the relationship between African and African American students on XXXXX campus is fairly good because African-American students do show interest in learning about African culture

it is fine, though most people don't really know much about Africa, the culture and more. They don't really know what Africa is, besides what is shown on the television. I would feel that they would know more than that since we share a common ancestry

They are all close to this African American generation natural high tolerance of difference,

20% (3 of 15) described the relationship negatively (“poor,” “disappointing” or “no interaction”):

Very Disappointing because some kids were not taught their true background especially African Americans who think their just BLACK!

The relationship between African and African-American students on campus is very poor, being that there is little understanding and differences in the sociological background and the lifestyle of the African and the African-American students.

On the other hand, 39 % (7 of 18) of African-American respondents described the relationship as positive, 33% (6 of 18) described it negatively, and 28% (5 of 18) did not believe they could properly assess the relationship as they did not personally know or associate with any Africans on campus or they characterized group members without stating the relationship between them. Some of the responses included:

Black-American and African students seem to have love for each other. I have worked with African students and have seen where everyone has been working together well. I have been directly tutored by an African student and he made everything easy for me.

There is no relationship between the two as far as I know. I tend to see Africans hanging out with those who speak their native language

I personally do not know any Africans here on our campus. so i cannot explain the relationship.

While some respondents (of both respondent groups) were somewhat ambivalent in their description of the poor nature of the interaction between native and immigrant blacks, for instance describing the interaction as “Strained,” others were quite adamant in their description of the relationship as illustrated by this African-American respondent:

A testament to the disconnect between the two cultures is the fact that I don't hang out with or know very many Africans. The visual rhetoric also shows me that we are disconnected; always seeing Africans walk about the campus in clicks void of African Americans and vice versa.

Further examining associations, African and African-American respondents were asked to estimate how comfortable and relaxed they were in interacting with different groups (African-Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, Africans, White or European Americans, and Asian Americans) on a scale from 1-7 with 7 denoting the greatest comfort. African respondents were most comfortable with other Africans yielding a mean score of 6.60 in terms of their comfort with members of their own group; the following scores indicate the average values for their levels of comfort with the remaining groups: African-Americans (5.67), White or European Americans (5.07), Hispanics or Latinos (4.80), and exhibiting least comfort with Asian Americans (4.27). African-American respondents also showed greater comfort with other African-

Americans with an average value of 6.39 in terms of comfort with their own group and comfort with other groups as follows: Hispanics or Latinos (5.39), Africans (5.17), White or European Americans (4.50) and, as African respondents, expressed the least comfort with Asian Americans (4.11). Thus, on every index of *association*, it is African-Americans who appear to display lower levels of ASC (item 6), who describe the relationship of associations between Africans and African-Americans more negatively, who report lack of associations with African students more often, and who report lower values indicative of their comfort with Africans in comparison to African respondents' reports of comfort with African-Americans, thereby dismissing the idea that black immigrants seek dissociation with native blacks. Perhaps what this finding does elaborate is the influence of white racial structures in the larger society whose expression is less pronounced in the context of this HBCU, thus lending support of the assertion that absent the influence of the white racial frame, immigrant blacks would freely seek association with native blacks in American society.

Overall, in assessing levels of African Self-Consciousness between African and African-American respondents on the Factor I construct, there were no statistical differences between the two respondent groups (See Table 2 below). Possible score values on the 15-item construct ranged from 15-120 points; high range (75.5-120 points) and low range (15-75 points). African respondents attained a mean score of 75.35 and African-American respondents a mean score of 76.75. Although there is a difference in mean ASC values on the Factor I construct, the difference is not statistically significant given the significant value of .777 ($t = -.286$) which is not less than or equal to .05.

Thus, there is no statistical difference between Africans and African-Americans on the Factor I construct in terms of a collective African identity.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of ASCS - Construct I - by Group

African			African-American			t
N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
17	75.35	13.73	16	76.75	14.36	-.286

Construct I - Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification

Resistance to Anti-African Forces

Analysis of Factor II – *Resistance against Anti-African Forces* – considers 11 items on the ASCS. Most of these items are negatively-keyed (odd-numbered, strong/high ASC = below 4.5) with only two of them being positively keyed (even-numbered, strong/high ASC = 4.5 and above). African and African-American respondents exhibited congruent levels of ASC (both high and/or both low) on 10 of the 11 items considered within this construct; on 8 of these 10 items, they both exhibit strong/high ASC and on 2 items, they both exhibit low ASC. There is only one item on which the levels of ASC differ. See Appendix C for a list of all items on each construct.

A closer analysis of items on which both display strong ASC shows that African-American respondents exhibit strongest ASC on items 33 and 15. Item 33 states, “Religion is dangerous for Black people when it directs and inspires them to become self-determining and independent of the White community;” African-American respondents obtained a mean score of 2.35, denoting strong/high ASC. African respondents, also exhibiting high ASC, obtained a mean score of 3.16 on this item. The

other item, number 15, on which African-American respondents attained their second strongest level of ASC with a mean score of 2.45, states, “Black people who talk in a relatively loud manner, show a lot of emotions and feelings, and express themselves with a lot of movement and body motion are less intelligent than Blacks who do not behave this way.” It is clear from their response that such behavior – as is often attributed to blacks – finds support in its expression from African-American as well as from African respondents, who also yielded their second strongest level of ASC on this item within the Factor II construct with a mean score of 2.95. This result may also be indicative, as previously mentioned, of the salient identities of respondents rooted in an afri-centric view that is less judgmental of others, in terms of “intellect” in this case. Also, African respondents displayed strongest levels of ASC on item 31 – as discussed in the previous construct – which states, “Blacks in America should view Blacks from other countries (e.g., Ghana, Nigeria and other countries in Africa) as foreigners rather than as brothers and sisters;” African respondents attained a mean score of 2.44 while African-American respondents, also exhibiting high ASC, attained a mean score of 3.40; both clearly indicating that they recognize the connection to a common ancestry in which they view each other as brothers and sisters.

There were only two even-numbered items within this construct; they were items number 8 and 32. Item 8 states, “It is not within the best interest of Blacks to depend on Whites for anything, no matter how religious and decent they (the Whites) purport to be;” both African and African-American respondents exhibited strong ASC with mean scores of 5.25 and 5.05 respectively. The other item, number 32, states, “When a Black

person uses the terms, 'Self, Me and I,' his/her reference should encompass all Black people rather than simply her/himself;" both respondent groups yielded scores that were demonstrative of low ASC with mean scores of 3.70 for African-American respondents and 3.53 for African respondents. This result, however, is in alignment with both respondent groups' responses to item 17, the only other item within this construct that yielded low levels of ASC for both groups. Item 17 states, "In dealing with other Blacks, I consider myself quite different and unique from most of them;" African-American respondents obtained a mean score of 5.05 while African respondents attained a score of 5.53. Perhaps for African-American respondents, such responses reflect the black experience in America of feeling pressure to conform to identities imposed by whites, thus they choose not to do the same to others, but instead, allow themselves and others the room to uniquely identify as they so determine for themselves. For African respondents, perhaps this is indicative of the impact of attending an HBCU where the influence of the white racial frame is relaxed and thus, they feel more freedom to engage in the full expression of who they are uniquely, thus avoiding "the imposition of a more restrictive identity than to which they are accustomed" (Vickerman 1999:139).

Both respondent groups tend to further reject assertions that restrict expressions of valuing the life experience of blacks and which portray such expressions negatively. On item 9, both respondent groups yielded mean scores indicative of strong ASC in response to the statement, "Blacks who place the highest value on Black life (over that of other people) are reverse racists and generally evil people;" African-Americans obtained a mean score of 2.85 on the odd-numbered item and African respondents

attained a score of 3.65. Furthermore, in considering item 3, “Blacks who trust Whites in general are basically very intelligent beings,” African-American respondents exhibited strong ASC in response to this statement, attaining a mean score of 3.40 with their African counterparts, concurring, also displaying strong ASC with a mean score of 3.15.

The only item within this construct which yielded different results in terms of the levels of ASC between African and African-American respondents was on item 37. This item states, “Black people’s concern for self-knowledge (knowledge of one’s history, philosophy, culture, etc.) and self (collective) determination makes them treat White people badly.” On this item, African-American respondents obtained a mean score of 3.65, indicative of high ASC, while African respondents attained a mean score of 4.74, failing to meet the “4.5 and below” standard on odd-numbered items indicative of strong ASC. Perhaps, again, this item is reflective of the disjuncture between the respondent groups in terms of identification with a common *history* given their differential trek through America as discussed earlier.

African-American respondents may disagree more with this statement given their greater knowledge of and experience with the historical racial constructs within America. More aware that while the goal is to effectively challenge, to change and to influence the dominant ideology – in the quest for collective determination, the desire is not to dismantle one oppressive frame and replace it with another, but rather to construct a frame that proceeds “from a premise that equality means what it says” (Feagin, 2006:196); democracy imagined as “the right to be treated...as a person equal in dignity

and promise to all others...to share fully and equally in American society” (Santa Ana, 2002:107). Thus African-Americans do not seek to treat badly, devalue or demean in any way the value of *whiteness* but recognize it as but one contributor to society as all others are also contributors. Furthermore, African-Americans do not possess the power to treat whites badly in America.

As for the African respondents, given that their experiences in American society have been so different – removed from the historical racist and discriminatory treatment of blacks by whites in America – perhaps they believed that the “Black people” to whom this question refers is the native-black African-American as they (Africans) have little motivation to treat whites badly. Even if they assumed the question directed at the immigrant black in America, their agreement with the statement more (in comparison to African-American agreement) is perhaps indicative of the fact that they seek greater “self-knowledge” in understanding their “fit” within American structures than do the native African-American whose persistent and vehement struggle for collective determination has yet to lead to whites being treated badly.

Despite any differences that may have been noted on individual items within this construct, analysis of the Factor II index did not yield any statistically significant differences between African and African-American respondents in terms of their resistance to all forms of information that may be perceived as a threat to African/Black survival. In the range of possible scores on this construct – 11-88 points (55.5 - 88 points denoting high ASC and 11-55 points indicative of low ASC) – African respondents obtained a mean score of 57.22 and African-Americans, a score of 59.00.

Although in Table 3 you can see a difference in mean ASC between respondent groups, the significant value of .557 ($t = -.593$) is not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of ASCS - Construct II - by Group

African			African-American			t
N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
18	57.22	9.12	19	59.00	9.11	-.593

Construct II - Resistance Against Anti-African Forces

Africentric Development

The third construct within which the items on the African Self-Consciousness Scale are situated – Factor III - *Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions* – looks at the importance of pro-Black or Africentric organizational and institutional practices that are controlled by Blacks and based in African cultural definitions. Eight items comprise this construct; both respondent groups display congruence in the levels of ASC (either high or not) on *all* items within this construct. On 6 of the 8 items (75%), both respondent groups exhibit strong/high ASC; on the other 2 items, neither group meets the standard for strong or high ASC.

Closer examination of these items found that, in response to item 20, “It is intelligent for Blacks in America to organize to educate and liberate themselves from White-American domination,” African and African-American respondents attained mean scores indicative of strong ASC – 4.89 and 5.75 respectively. Item 25, which states “I feel little sense of commitment to Black people who are not close friends or relatives,” yielded similar results with African-American respondents attaining a 4.30 mean score

and African respondents a score of 4.21, both also representing high levels of ASC, meeting the “4.5 and below” standard for odd-numbered, negatively-keyed items.

Item 22 elicited the strongest level of ASC within this construct from African-American respondents; this group acquired a mean score of 7.20 in response to the statement, “It is good for Black husbands and wives to help each other develop racial consciousness and cultural awareness in themselves and their children.” African respondents followed suit, achieving a strong level of ASC with a mean score of 6.32. The results on this item corroborate the overall results from another item that fell within the first construct (Factor I) – item 16 – that deals with this issue in similar fashion. Item 16 states, “Racial consciousness and cultural awareness based on traditional African values are necessary to the development of Black marriages and families that can contribute to the liberation and enhancement of Black people in America;” it yielded mean scores of 5.89 for African-American respondents and 5.68 for African respondents, both indicative of strong ASC.

It should be noted that on both of these questions relating to *racial consciousness*, African-American mean values tend to be slightly higher, indicative of stronger ASC on these items, however this difference is only statistically-significant on item 22 (see Table 4 below). Thus, the hypothesis that African-Americans would possess greater racial consciousness than black immigrants given their greater exposure to race-based discrimination and environments which dispenses negative consequences for race, this assumption finds some support based on the results of these two questions on the ASCS which speaks to racial consciousness.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of *Racial Consciousness* by Group

	African			African-American			t
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Item 16	19	5.68	1.34	19	5.89	1.49	-.459
Item 22	19	6.32	1.97	20	7.20	1.01	-1.777*

* Significant at the .05 level, $t = -1.777$ with sig. value of .019

Overall, scores obtained on all of these items appear to indicate that both African and African-American respondents value and deem important the need for afri-centric institutional and organizational practices that affirm blackness. Furthermore, analysis of data on this construct tends to indicate that the view from an afri-centric paradigm does not just affirm *black* behavior. There is specific (and necessary) focus on affirming *black* behavior given its negative characterization in the dominant framing within American (Western) society and thus, there exists a need to counter such characterization if black identity and behavior is to possess positive, affirming, and sustaining qualities. However, consider responses to item 39 which states, “If a good/worthwhile education could be obtained at all schools (both Black and White), I would prefer for my child to attend a racially integrated school.” Neither African nor African-American respondents exhibit strong ASC on this item given their significant level of agreement with the statement, yielding mean scores of 6.63 for African respondents and 5.80 for African-American respondents. Thus as this item illustrates, while not exhibiting a strong sense of African Self-Consciousness, the view from an

africentric perspective is not *divisive* like the white racial constructs that define the dominant American paradigm. Both respondent groups prefer *inclusion* of all races, not segregation, separation or any such divisiveness. Such is also the view that can be expected within those second-order identity processes, rooted in an affirming Black identity as described in the conceptual framework section of this paper and accurately reflected in the following comment from an African-American respondent:

History proves we have come a long way from slavery but we have some time to go because racism is still alive and present. America was built on the backs of all races where its blacks, hispanics, or aisiens and even Native Indians provided land and cultivating for the Eroupeans who left their land. African culture has history of great people.

While illuminating the greatness of African culture, the respondent appropriately acknowledges that all races of people in American society has contributed to making America the country that it is; all should be acknowledged and should share in the benefits of American society.

To further illustrate this point, consider another item within this construct that yielded the greatest level of agreement with a statement on the entire scale (by African-American respondents) though mean scores for both respondent groups were indicative of low ASC given its negative keying. This item, item 27, states, “Black children should be taught to love all races of people, even those races who do harm to them.” African and African-American respondents strongly agreed with this statement, yielding very high mean scores – 6.63 and 7.30 respectively – but indicative of low levels of ASC on this item. These results seem to support the earlier assertion made in reference to the Factor II construct that blacks, engaging an africentric perspective, do not seek to treat

badly whites or other races of people; this is one of the primary ways that an afri-centric paradigm operates *counter* to the white racial frames inherent within American society from which dominant white culture operates. In fact, this is such the case that, amazingly, African and African-American respondents react more extremely to this item than to any other item on the scale, even to item 34 within this current construct, which states, “Black parents should encourage their children to respect all Black people, good and bad, and punish them when they don’t show respect.” On this item, although both groups exhibit high ASC (even-numbered and positively-keyed) – their mean scores are 4.75 for African-American respondents and 5.61 for African respondents – *respect for Black people* acquired lower levels of agreement from all respondents within both groups than did *love for all races* of people.

While some may view this as the enduring influence of the white racial frame upon *all* who dwell within American society – as love for the values of *whiteness* and the structures within which it operates – it is indicative of much more than that. Simply put, that the nature of black people in this country is still so *loving*, despite their characterization as overly aggressive and violent by white racial structures – in particular the native-black African-American – given the “harm” of racial degradation and discrimination experienced historically at the hands of whites (and continue to experience in American society today); that they are so *forgiving* despite being charged constantly with “not getting over” and “not letting go” of the past, and that they are still *connected* to their African heritage and ancestors despite the intent of white racial structures initiated during slavery (persisting even today) to characterize them as “un-

bondable” – the common source of tension for America and the black immigrant – is an awesome testament to the enduring spirit that still dwells within these *brothers* of the American slave trade; a spirit still connected to the African ancestors of old, the African slave in America.

It is precisely these sorts of findings that an afri-centric paradigm is capable of eliciting unlike the assessment instruments commonly used in assessing black behavior which tend to be biased toward whiteness (Feagin 2010); such instruments are thus, inadequate for assessing black behavior. Operating from a position that is rooted in the negative characterizations of blacks as discussed above, those instruments are not interested in extracting information that associates black behavior and identity with affirming value. Therefore, it is important to develop, not only assessment instruments, but also institutional practices (such as in academia) which affirm the value of African/Black culture.

Surprisingly – statistically speaking – neither African nor African-American respondents exhibited significant value for such development; further there were no significant differences noted between African and African-American respondents’ value for the development of afri-centric institutional practices that affirm black culture (see Table 5 below). African respondents attained a mean score of 38.22 and African-Americans, a mean score of 39.30, indicating no statistically-significant difference at the .05 level. Given that possible points ranged from 8-64 on the construct with strong/high ASC ranging from 40.5-64 points and low ASC ranging from 8-40 points, neither respondent group achieved the standard indicative of strong ASC on this construct.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of ASCS - Construct III - by Group

African			African-American			t
N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
18	38.22	4.53	20	39.30	7.35	-.537

Construct III – Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Practices

Value for African Culture

The last construct within which the items of the ASCS are situated is Factor IV – *Value for African Culture*. This construct is comprised of only 5 items from the ASCS; only 1 item was an even-numbered, positively-keyed item – item 28. African and African-American respondents both exhibited high ASC on 4 of 5 (80%) of the items associated with value for African culture and demonstrated differing levels on only 1 of the items. In response to whether “It is a good idea for Black students to be required to learn an African language” – item 7 – both respondent groups exhibited high ASC with mean scores of 4.45 for African-American respondents and 3.10 for African respondents. On item 5, “Blacks in America should try harder to be American than practicing activities that link them up with their African heritage,” both groups of respondents disagreed considerably with this statement yielding mean scores of 2.30 for African-American respondents and 3.10 for African respondents, once again corroborating the connection to a shared heritage.

Item 21 yielded similar results, with African-American respondent acquiring a 3.00 mean score in response to “There is no such thing as African culture among Blacks

in America” while African respondents attained a mean score of 3.26, both indicating strong ASC. Both respondent groups seemed to clarify the results garnered in item 21 in their response to item 19, “I have difficulty identifying with the culture of African people,” to which both groups responded that they do, in fact – overall – identify with a common culture, although it should be noted that – as should be expected – African respondents exhibited a considerably higher level of ASC on this item with a mean score of 2.11 in comparison to their African-American counterparts who attained a 4.10; both, nonetheless, exhibiting high levels of ASC.

Respondent groups differed, however, in levels of ASC displayed in response to item 28, “Blacks in America who view Africa as their homeland are more intelligent than those who view America as their homeland.” Not surprising, African-American respondents displayed a low level of ASC on this question with a mean score of 2.65, compared to African respondents who attained a 4.53 mean score. Given the manner in which the question was worded, African-Americans, in order to acquire a high level of ASC, would have to agree that they are “less intelligent” simply because America happens to be their homeland; such a response would hardly be elicited from respondents who assume a certain level of intelligence merely given their status as *college student*.

Given that both respondent groups exhibited high levels of ASC on 80% of the items in this construct, one might think it safe to assert that both respondent groups place high value on African culture. However, not only is this the only construct in which African respondents garnered a higher mean score than African-American respondents,

it is the only construct in which the differences between the two respondent groups are statistically significant. Of the total possible points that respondents could attain on this construct – 5 - 40 points, with high ASC ranging from 20.5 - 40 points and low ASC from 5 - 20 points – African respondents attained a mean score value of 28.74 and African-American respondents obtained a mean score of 24.80, both indicative of high ASC. Table 6 below illustrates, however, that t-test analysis shows that the significant value of .047 ($t = 2.051$), at the .05 level, indicates that a statistically-significant difference exists between the group means that is not due to chance variation in the sample. Thus there is a significant difference in groups' value for African culture.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of ASCS - Construct IV - by Group

African			African-American			t
N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
19	28.74	6.85	20	24.80	5.05	2.051*

Construct IV - Value for African Culture (* indicates significance at .05 level)

Racial Experiences

Data regarding racial experiences of African and African-American respondents were obtained from responses to questions on the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire, an instrument developed specifically for this project and designed to examine how frequent are racial experiences and why respondents identify these experiences as “racial” as well as how they interpret other racial incidents. When asked the question, “Have you ever experienced any racial discrimination while on campus?” 76% (13 of 17) of African-American respondents answered “no” to this question; one of

the respondents answering “no” went on to describe an incident of discriminatory treatment experienced on a different college campus with a white student (as if to point out the differing elements that are involved in acts of discrimination) and yet another respondent pointed out that white students at this HBCU are often discriminated against and their comments in class disregarded simply because they are white.

Of the respondents answering in the affirmative, 12% (2 of 17) seemed to describe incidents of stereotypical behavior aimed at them or their friends based on “acting white” or alluding to discriminatory treatment based upon sexual preference, not race. The remaining 12% (2 of 17) also described incidents experienced by their friends; one referring to the only white student in class who felt singled out each time the instructor spoke about discrimination against blacks by whites (the instructor would look at her), and the other respondent related an incident of a Nigerian student stating she could not marry a “black boy” but had to marry another Nigerian.

As for the African respondents, 69% responded “no” to the question of experiencing discrimination on campus while 31% “indicated” an affirmative response. More substantive probing of the question (through use of multiple-part questions) indicated that most of those providing an affirmative response generally described incidents of comments made by fellow classmates regarding stereotypical imagery of Africans; for instance:

all the time it was by a student talking bout my race and what i was

Yes a person in my building once said, "That guy has flies always flying around him" "all flies come looking for you because you from Africa." he said that because I was eating lunch and a fly flew knew me and I tried to slap it away

alot of african students have accents some of times when they speak in class people tend to laugh at them beacuse they dont tend to understand what tehy saying.

I was speaking in front of the class, and after say my name someone else called me another offensive name that was not the one i told them.

These incidents more accurately reflect incidents of *stereotyping* as a result of inadequate knowledge of authentic African culture rather than the disparate, unequal, and unfair treatment as a result of racial qualities and characteristics judged to be inferior.

However, when asked, “Have you ever experienced any racial discrimination in any other setting outside of campus?” 78% of African-American respondents answered, “yes” compared to 31% of African respondents answering in the affirmative. Of the 22% of African-Americans answering “no,” one of the respondents went on to explain that while they had not experienced racial discrimination personally, they are aware that it occurs; in contrast, 69% of African respondents stated that they had not experienced racial discrimination outside of campus.

Thus, the campus of the HBCU is assumed to be somewhat insulated from the influence of the white racial frame given its role “in the service of the authentic needs and social priorities of the African community, i.e., towards its affirmation, enhancement, survival, positive development and fulfillment of its potential as a community” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62); absent the direct influence of white racial constructs, students are allowed more full expression of their potential (Baldwin and Bell 1985) as black people. This insulating effect was pointed out by several of the

respondents in response to the question of discriminatory experience on campus. For instance, a couple of African-American students stated:

I don't recall me or my friends experiencing any racial discrimination on campus. This is a predominantly black school, so I doubt there will be much of that going on (not saying it cant happen)

I havent experienced any racial discrimination on campus and I believe that is mainly because we are all African based.

There are, however, tremendous differences between African and African-American respondents' rates (and nature) of experiences reported when removed from the protective forces of the HBCU and into the larger society which operates under the auspices of the white racial frame. The fact that rates of experiences on campus versus off-campus did not change *at all* for African students conceivably speaks to the differential experiences with historical racial structures which renders them less familiar with the workings of the white racial frame and thus, less focused on these workings. For example, one African student, making the following statement seemed uncertain as to whether he had actually experienced discrimination or not:

I haven't experienced any racial discrimination in any other setting outside of campus, not that I can remember.

Less familiar with racial structures, these African respondents are less likely to identify incidents in terms of *race*, thus making the respondent unclear about whether they had actually experienced a *racial* encounter.

Of those African respondents who did report experiencing racial discrimination outside of the campus setting, one respondent reported an experience that is similar to experiences often reported by native African-Americans. He comments,

Yes, One day I was in front of my house waiting on him to come outside when some police officers pulled up got out of their car and manhandled me onto a car. they threw everything I had in my pockets out and placed handcuffs on my and told my my name was something I neve heard before. After, they found out I was not that person they told me I fit the discription and and left.

Other experiences reported by these respondents included:

yes a store clerk had aan attitude because of my accent she couldnt understand me

Yes when i was in elementry and middle school. I was always made fun of for being an African mostly by African-Americans. I would be called all kinds of names. They would make rude comments about africa and i would get so mad and sad for them because they didnt understand the fact that they are Africans too just like me....the only difference is that they have people that their ancestors were brought here from africa and never returned back, and started families here.The funny thing is alll the time when some one makes fun of me, it would always be an African-American, and not a caucasian. Thats interesting.

Once before when i was taking a African-American class, the students and sometimes the professor would ask questions such as "Joshua,you, don't know the answer??" as if I'm suppose to know the answer just becasue I am of African Descent.

Lacking a more complete understanding of how the racial structures of American society operate and the extremely racist forms (violent) these experiences can take, these African respondents have greater difficulty distinguishing discriminatory incidents from someone “getting an attitude” with them and being “made fun of.” Often, their description of “being made fun of” by African-Americans amounted – in their minds – to racial discrimination. Unaware of the very real consequences – generational consequences – of racial discrimination in America, these respondents view the consequence of “being made fun of” or someone getting an attitude” as discriminatory. When racial discrimination takes on such a benign meaning as this – unlike the historic form exhibited against the native African-American who had to endure the violent and

inhumane institution of slavery (an institution meant for their total destruction) as well as the utter degradation of the segregated Jim Crow South – it is perhaps easier to disregard its manifestations. Furthermore, with such a description of racial discrimination in America, it is easier to understand how these African respondents could view African-Americans as just as discriminating as whites.

For African-American respondents, however, such confusion was not the case; while 76% did *not* report any discrimination on the campus, 78% of these respondents *did* report such experiences of discrimination outside of their campus. This finding lends support to the assertion that the racialized structuring of America (so structured by elite *whites* whose self-imposed position of superiority situates those associated with *blackness* as stark opposites of whites and thus, as inferior) uniquely positions the native African-American as its primary target given their historical and continual challenges and resistance to these structures of white privilege and power.

While participants in both respondent groups exhibited some difficulty in separating *stereotyping* from *discrimination* in some instances – on campus – the incidents of discrimination experienced by African-American respondents outside of campus clearly indicate their familiarity with differential treatment due to their race or “color of their skin;” the rich details of such encounters attest to the familiarity. First of all, they were readily able to describe the incidents in distinctly *racial* terms. For instance, one respondent stated:

I was pulled over by a white state trooper and was issued a ticket because i was told when i was pulled over i didnt have my seat belt on, when it had been on the whole time. when i mentioned to the officer that my seat belt had been on the

whole time he stated " it wasn't on 4 blocks ago" and started to laugh as he handed me my 200 ticket.

Another respondent added:

Well on Facebook a lot of white people posted racists comments about black people after Obama became president. They were referring the comments to all blacks, so I felt like I was included. Some of the comments were, "It's called the WHITE HOUSE, not the black house!", "Blacks didn't even vote until they found out Obama was running for president. They should just stay home and eat their fried chicken and watermelon!"

Still other respondents commenting on the specifics of their experiences, noted:

Yes, I worked for the YMCA as a Lifeguard in the summer of 2008. My supervisor, a white lady, told me that I should have kids with a White girl because my kids would come out really "adorable". She later mentioned to her co worker, "you should have seen him before he started sitting in the sun, He was more fair skinned then."

My sophomore year in high school my biology teacher was racist toward the African-American students. She has no problem in letting them fail her class but would do all that she could to make she the white kids did there part and passed.

I have a best friend that is white and her mom loves me but does not want her daughter dating black guys. for me thats realy hard because im so close with her family. I always wondered how she would take it if i dated her son. Me and a friend went to cypress to eat dinner at this place. We stood in line and waited to be seated and the people ignored us. They even helped people that came in behind us. We were the only two black girls in there. There were tons of white people and the restarunt workers were blantly ignoring us.

I am a machinist by trade witch is a predominately white occupation.I was looking for work in Texas moving from Georgia when I had an interview where the employer hiring me had questions refering to me as if I should not know the information I knew. I started with one person interview which ended with 5 people from HR to shop lead man. Before I left the interview I new they way it went that I was not going to be working for that company.

A few years ago, when i was still in high school, on my first day at my new job at a movie theater. A older white woman and her husband came up to the reister that i was working at and ordered some snacks before their movie. While i was preparing their stuff the woman became unruly and started screaming at me to hurry up. i hadnt been preparing her things more than two mintues. When I

finished she began to curse me out, when caused even more of a scene. Before she left she belted out "you n***** arent good for anything!"

These respondents understood precisely the meaning of racial experiences which occurred outside the setting of the HBCU campus. Very familiar with the racial constructs and frames within which the larger American society operates, they were readily able to relate their experiences in racial terms, denoting the race of those discriminating against them and conveying that the encounters occurred as a result of their race as well.

Furthermore, African-Americans tend to understand that in American society, the racial structures are designed to produce divisions between groups based on race. Thus, the respondents appear to understand that as a result of the way that African-Americans uniquely experience race in America as a result of its racial framing, other groups of people – discouraged from associations with native African-Americans – are also prone to discriminate against them due to the impositions of these racial structures. Consider the following comments:

Im from San Antonio so there was always some sort of miseducation for my race. I wasn't educated, I only knew I was different because of the color of my skin. A lot of mexicans were my friend and luckily they didn't treat me any different, but there were some places where my friends parents weren't comfortable with me and i believe that was just by thee color of my skin

Yes, I have. I was in the store, and it was owned by asian people. The workers of the store followed me around the store as if I was going to steal something out of it

The owner of a hispanic restaurant came over with security and told me my family, and friends that we had to leave because "he doesn't like black people"... But every racial incident whether minor or major still has the same impact...

For these young respondents, they know all too well the intended effects of the white racial frame and its consequences for African-Americans; consequences that are much more pronounced than for any other group in American society. Furthermore, as a result of the social hierarchy produced by the white racial frame – given the white-black continuum in which groups are situated within American society – these respondents seem to speak to the fact that others entering American society are prone to the same type of discriminatory practices (engaged by whites) against blacks as they jockey for position within the continuum.

Interpretation of Race

In an effort to discern whether or not African and African-American respondents were readily able to interpret racial incidents, two methods were employed on the BROS Questionnaire. First, in asking respondents to describe their racial experiences, two follow-up prompts were given to gain an insight into their interpretation of the incident. The first prompt was, “What was it about the incident that made you feel you were being treated differently because of your race? Please provide specific details.” The second prompt was, “Did the incident change you or your perceptions in any way? If so, explain how.” Then to further assess their interpretation of *race*, a second method used on the questionnaire was to provide a number of vignettes depicting actual racially-discriminating incidents to elicit the respondents’ explanation of the discriminating behavior.

In looking at the two prompting commands concerning the racial incidents reported by respondents, one comparison quickly jumped out past the others. Recall

from above the African and African-American respondents who reported racial experiences with police officers. When prompted to provide details of what made them feel they were being treated differently based on race, the African respondent merely stated, "The only reason I was placed in that situation is because I am black." When given the second prompt and asked if and how his perceptions were changed as a result of the incident, he responded, "Yes, I realized then that no matter where you go there is ignorance in this world." The African-American respondent in describing what specifically made him feel he was being discriminated against because of his race, responded, "well looking at the last name of the officer "lynch" i knew it wasnt going to be a pleasent incident" and further acknowledging that the incident had so changed his perception, he responded, "i now hate white cops."

Even though the incident described by the African respondent seemed much more violent and harmful than the one described by the African-American, the effect and interpretation of the incident by the African-American was much more profound. While the African respondent was able to merely comment on the police officer's ignorance, the racial event for the African-American took on a much deeper meaning. African-Americans, more familiar with the intended effects upon blacks are much more attuned to the "implicit rules" that shape and define the meanings within the contexts of their racialized experiences. In reality, as the young African-American respondent reminded us previously, "every racial incident whether minor or major still has the same impact." However, the African respondent, lacking sufficient knowledge of and experience with the social contexts within which "race" is defined in America, does not develop the same

interpretation of the racist incident as do the African-American respondent and thus, (racial) incidents do not take on the same meaning.

Another African respondent, when prompted to describe what was it about the racial experience outside of campus that made them feel they were being treated differently based on their race – describing an experience that occurred with an African-American student – responded:

“Because they called me names like "AFRICAN BOOTY SCRATCHER OR AFRIACN CHEETO". in elementary i remeber this bot who hated it every time our skin tuoched....he would tell me "ewww get away from me, you have the African disease".”

Responding to whether the incident changed her perceptions in any way, the respondent replied,

I felt like African-Americans were so naive because they dont understand the fact that they are africans too. But all these things that happened was when i was younger. As i got older like in the later teens early 20's, my relationship with african-americans changed i feel there is more of an understanding between us. I interact more with the African-Americans

Still another African respondent described, “the attitude she gave me” in referring to what made her feel she was being discriminated against based upon her race in a racial incident with a store clerk.

While this was the nature of the responses provided by African respondents in interpreting their racial experiences, African-American respondents were much more vivid in their descriptions and interpretations of racial encounters as recounted below:

We were the only two black girls in there. There were tons of white people and the restarunt workers were blantly ignoring us.

The fact she called me the N word and automaticly started saying i was incompetant made me feel that i was being treated differently.

What made me feel uncomfortable was the fact that they followed me around the whole time. From when I walked in till I left. It made me feel like I am criminal because of my skin color. No other person was followed around in the store but me.

i just felt like because i was black i wasnt good enough for her family.

Because of the fact that she failed to mention that there were Black Women that I could reproduce with that could allow my child to look "adorable". Because I am fair skinned I feel as though she only made that reference because I was already, in her mind, closer to an "acceptable" complexion that would make my children look more European, thus raising my and my children status, so to speak, in society.

Again, these interpretations of racial events are much more intense in their descriptions of the implicit meanings of race, noting that the implicit meanings of being “acceptable” or not, of being perceived as “competent” or not, or of being labeled as a “criminal” or not, are based purely upon the color of one’s skin in a white racial construct where negative characterizations of qualities are always the first assumption when encountering blacks.

Despite these racial experiences, however, 50% of African-American respondents report that the incidents did not change their perceptions in any way. For example, some of these responses included:

No. It didn't change who I am as a perosn. I'm still me, no matter what. I try not to hold grudges against people, no matter what they've done to me. I try to forgive, just like the Lord wants us all to do.

Not really. I know this country has a long line of social stigmas and misconceptions about every cultural group. It did not make me dislike the entire hispanic race of people because of that incident, but I will not ever go to that restaurant again.

No not really it just made me upset.

It didnt completly spoil my view of all hite people but it did open my eyes to the fact that some people wont learn to adapt to the changes in society.

It did not change my perceptions of the next employer because that is how I am I judge individual not the group.

No not really I knew thats how society thinks at times.

No. I have dealt with rascism my whole life. It just made me not want to go in there and to tell other people not to go in there.

No it did not change my perceptions, but it did make me try stronger to prove to her that I wasn't going to fail her class

These respondents illustrate repeatedly that while they are aware of the ways in which race plays out in American society, they were still rooted in their black identity – “It didn't change who I am as a perosn. I'm still me, no matter what.” Given America’s example of how treatment of different cultural groups is meted out in American society – stereotypes projected onto the whole groups based on individual actions – these respondents possess the ability to recognize, and act in accordance with that recognition, that the action of an individual group member is not indicative of the entire group and thus, generalizations about the entire group cannot be assumed. Learning to navigate around these racial structures, respondents seem to engage in their own form of resistance by not contributing to the economic advancement of establishments that treat them in such a discriminating manner; this akin to the action taken during the bus boycotts of the 1950s and 1960s which impacted America’s economic and social structures – albeit the actions of respondents are on a more subtle and benign level.

Other respondents, however, were not as forgiving; one respondent previously mentioned, responded, “yes i now hate white cops;” another stating, “yes it opened my

eye to the world and the people i will come into contact with.” Still another respondent commented:

It changed my perception of what White people think about Black people. Before the incident I didn't know that they actually take into consideration the complexion of Black people and their intermixing of it to make "better looking black people". The subliminal I got from that message was one of a White America obsessed with vanity and racial prejudice.

American racial prejudice, however, runs much deeper than the “subliminal” messaging as suggested here. It is part of the “implicit rules” of American racial structures and the white racial framing of American society which creates and maintains divisions between groups of people, setting up a system of social hierarchies based on ideas of racial superiority and inferiority (Feagin 2006, Marger 2009). The obsession to which the respondent refers is indicative of America’s obsession with African-American inferiority through white-on-black oppression (Feagin 2006) which has uniquely positioned African-Americans as its primary target given their vehement resistance to the notions of white superiority and supremacy.

In further assessing the interpretations of racial events, we turn to the vignettes depicting racial incidents and examine how respondents interpret these incidents based upon their exposure to and experiences within racially-charged environments. First, respondents are provided a scenario to examine their level of commitment to their racial identity in the context where this commitment could be an impediment to access to valued resources. They are presented with the following scenario:

The job you want that can help move your career forward is finally posted on a U.S. company’s website. You really want this job! Would you intentionally misrepresent your identification as African or African-American on the

application in the hopes of getting an interview? (Please provide a detailed explanation for why you would or would not engage in such misrepresentation)

On this question, 94% of African-Americans and 87% of African respondents report that they would not misrepresent their racial identity in order to obtain an interview. Some of the explanations provided by African-American respondents included:

No, I would not. I am proud to say that I am an intelligent young black woman. I can do the job just as good (or maybe even better) as everyone else applying. The boss should be focused on my skill, not the color of my skin.

No, I feel that if I am applying for my dream job they should not that I am African-American up front. What's the point in being able to have a dream job if you can't be yourself.

No, if I have to try and misrepresent a major detail about who I am then the job is not for me

No I would not. I have been in this position before and they will find out your black at the interview. Might as well be honest. I am also not ashamed to be black so I would not hide the fact. I don't want to work for a company that is not diverse anyway.

One African-American respondent answered, "If the application stated that identifying your race was optional I'd leave out my race. Knowing that as an African American I'm discriminated against I'd rather leave them to judge me by my credentials and not my ethnicity alone." These respondents represent the large majority of African-Americans who report they would not misrepresent themselves, clearly indicating that they are tied to an affirming black identity despite the characterization of such an identity in a white racial construct.

African respondents, also fully committed to their ethnic and racial identity and adamant that "there is no way I would try to misrepresent myself or identification as African or African-American", commented as follows:

No i would not misrepresent my identity. I would be honest with my nationality because there should be no reason for me to be profiled based on my race, as long as i can get the job done. In fact i would think that me being multicultural would make me more marketable.

No, there is no way I would try to misrepresnt myself or identification as African or African-American on a application in the hopes of getting an interview because I strongly believe that I am a decent human being and I was brought up on integrity and honesty.

I will never do that because i believe that is denying my race which is not true.

i wouldnt do that because its not right..if they dont want me because of my ethnicity than thats not the job for me. this is who i am.

As did African-American respondents, so do the large majority of African respondents demonstrate a deep tie to their black identity. However, clearly lacking as much familiarity with racial structures, they assume that their “multi-cultured” status makes them more ingratiated in American society rather than the economic benefit that their presence (or their parents’ presence) serves for America; they were not allowed to immigrate to America because America so desired their black skin. Furthermore, they believed that simply possessing the values of integrity, honesty and basic decency makes them more accepted in American society; the nation is full of native blacks who also possess these qualities in larger quantities than are often exhibited by whites – Martin Luther King, Jr., President Barack Obama, Shirley Sherrod, who went out of her way to help a white family save their farm, Harriet Tubman, the man in my neighborhood who takes care of maintenance for the elderly in the neighborhood at no charge, the teacher who provides services to neighborhood kids after school – yet none of these individuals escape the impact of America’s hurtful, racist practices. Unfortunately, being profiled based on race is, precisely, a common practice within the white racial frame.

One African respondent, truly unaware of the racial constructs in America and their consequences provided the following comment:

I would misrepresent myself as African-American because sometimes when people see that you are african they think you really wouldnt know anything because your from africa. But when they see that that you are african-american they consider you as 100 percent american.

In fact, taking this response a bit further in response to a second prompt, he stated:

Yes i do this all the time on applications because of the simple fact that i never see anything that says "African". It usaly say "Black or African-american", but even if it did say african i would probably choose African-Amaerican because I really want the job.

Given the research conducted regarding employer preferences for black immigrants over native African-Americans as a result of the “troublesome” (Deaux et al. 2007) nature of African-Americans, however, this respondent may be doing himself an injustice. If he understood the manner in which the racial structures operated more clearly, he would understand the folly of his actions; he would understand that African-Americans are uniquely positioned as targets of America’s white racial structures, bearing more oppressive treatment than any other group in American society given their persistent resistance to these structures of white power and privilege.

Another African respondent admitted, “Honestly yes, I would do whatever it takes to get the job then I will correct it if I got the job. Thats just how it is in America.” While this respondent’s comment is indicative of the social exchange motive as conceptualized within this project, this view is, by no means, indicative of the position taken by the group of African respondents. Most African respondents clearly show that

they would not disconnect from their racial or ethnic identities even for this most valued resource – their dream job.

The second scenario is one of a racial incident. It is presented as follows:

A Black man is pulled over by several police officers and asked to step out of his car. As he is pulled from the car, a white police officer is videotaped badly beating the man. Even after being beaten to the ground and unable to defend himself from the strikes, he is continually hit over and over again. What do you believe happened to cause the police to respond in this violent manner?

Seventy-six percent of African-American respondents specifically noted *race* as the issue underlying the police officers' behavior and 62% of African respondents cited *race* as the cause. Fully convinced that racism was clearly the motivation for the action of police officers, African-American responses included:

Just by being a black man. Officers (especially white ones) are trained to believe that all black men are bad or dangerous. They're trying to get rid of as many black men from the streets as possible.

The cop was just being racist

The police respnded in this manner, because they were racist and wanted the young black men to feel their hatred towards them.

Nothing. The black man probaly didn't provoke him in anyway. This happends all the time white police offices are trained to think that black men are going to hurt them. So out of fear and hate they do things like this.

I beleive that the officer clearly was prejudice against blacks and took the oppurtunity to release personal frustration and hatred towards blacks on this particular black man.

pure hate for the man, I believe just because of the color of his skin.

Such pure hate was the overriding factor that emanated from the descriptions by African-American respondents. It is clear that the majority of African-American respondents (76%) clearly interpreted the incident as a racially-motivated incident – as white police

officers meting out their hatred for blacks within the white spaces of American society, a space whose institutional practices of racism often find its way to individual expressions, as noted by one African-American respondent:

The police was either trained to be violent towards the man by the Law enforcement department or he allowed his personal views of Black people override his professionalism. Either way he is performing out of hate, learned or innate. White people have an inner disdain toward Blacks for some reason and often times the most aggressive of Whites like to be in positions of power to exercise this hate.

Not all African-American respondents were as adamant about the positions of race. A couple of these respondents, although duly noting race as the likely cause for police action, didn't seem to want to clearly identify race or to believe race to be the motivating issue but seemed to search for cues in the social contexts to find some other plausible reason for the police officers behavior. Responses provided by these respondents included:

I strongly believe that this was a power incident. It doesn't seem like the man did anything wrong. The police officer seem to be a racist and felt the need to show an innocent man that he has power.

They could believe he is armed but i doubt it. They may very well just be racist.

After reading the scenario it seems as if the police officer is beating the man due to his race. Since it didnt state that the officers felt threatened that the black man would harm them or that he was resisting arrest, then i would have to conclude that some type of racial discrimination was taking place.

Either the person who got pulled over said something wrong to the officer that offended him and made him react to beating him or he put his hands on him. I would really hate to say that he beat him because he was black.

Strikingly, 38% of African respondents attributed the police behavior as somehow a reaction to something that the black man had done to provoke the action

from police. These comments are different from the ones from African-American comments immediately above as these comments do not even consider race as a motivating factor; comments of this nature included:

I dont see any reason that will make the policeman react that way unles the black man had threated his life in any way.Other than that,there is no reason why the he would act that way

person was denying orders

The Black Man must have reached for his wallet or something causing the white police officer yo beat him.

I feel that there is a reason for action, but for the officer to continually beat the person in a defenseless position is unacceptable. There is no excuse, this is a action of anger, no matter the race.

he probally thought he was pull out a gyn

Apparently, these African respondents are not familiar with the crime of “D.W.B driving Black” as pointed out by one African-American respondent. Unfamiliar with the racial framing of America, they fail to see how – given the “implicit rules” of social situations involving blacks and whites – race, unfortunately, is always contemplated in attempting to define and interpret these situations. African-Americans, quite familiar with these racial contexts in America, recognize these meanings, not only in the consequences for blacks but also the definitions and consequences for whites; such definitions and consequences are often very different as noted by one African-American respondent:

Usually when a cop pulls over a white person, they just give them a ticket or a warning. When they pull over a black person (especially black males), they search the vehicle like that person has drugs or a weapon.

Thus, there are two sets of rules constructed as a result of the white racial framing of American society. Given the focus on a black-white continuum, these rules play out

such that there is one set for “whites” and one for those associated with “black” identity. Because an affirming black identity does not receive confirmation in a white racist construct, expression of behavior emanating from such an identity does not attain support in mainstream American society. Thus, if black behavior is criminalized in these mainstream social contexts, treatment of blacks in such a manner is justified, making the treatment of blacks distinctly different from the treatment of whites an accepted and commonplace occurrence.

The third scenario, another racially-charged scenario, states that “A judge sentences a young black male who is a first-time drug offender to 2 years in prison for having crack-cocaine. This same judge sentences a middle-class white male, who has a previous drug offense, to 2 years probation for having powdered cocaine. Why do you think the two men got different sentences?” On this question, 69% of African respondents reported race as the motivating factor for the differential sentencing while 67% of African-Americans alluded to race. African respondents readily recognized race in this incident, noting,

Because he is black. I see this in news all the time, a black man does something and he gets a great punishment, but then a white man does something even greater and his punishment isn't as much as the black man. There are still racist people out there.

It is significant to note here that while appropriately recognizing the role of race in this incident, it is not from a position of *experience* with this sort of situation but something that the respondent has seen played out on the news. Other African respondents, however, speak to this scenario with a sense of clarity and consciousness about the social meanings of racial structures in American society:

I think the two men got different sentences because of their different races. The white men always gets a slap on the wrist while the black men gets his head chopped off. I think this was only because I'm consciously aware of how alive racism still is.

Sounds self evidence in racial profiling, as well as racism. Both situations invole possession of crack, why should one be sentence to jail for 2 years, if the next man has the exact same possession with multiple cases? Racism!

the color of the skin

In this part of the globe Blacks are feard and receice the short end of the stick in most if not all cases.

An element that stood out in African-American respondents' interpretation of this scenario is the characterization of the incident as part of the systemic nature of racism in America that flows throughout its institutions; such practices are subsequently manifested in the everyday interactions of society. For example, comments included:

Because one is black and the other is white. Simple as that. Sadly to say, but that really is how the system is working today. Whites get away with more than blacks do. Recently, rapper, T.I. got caught with drugs and was sentenced to 11 months in prison. Lindsay Lohan and Paris Hilton got caught with drugs and they had the choice of going to jail or rehab! The system does not like black males/people!

Because the judical system is set up to put black men in jail. They feel like they are lost causes anyway. A case like this is happening in the news were a white man murdered two people and spent like a year in jail and he was out on probation and he murdered again. A black man would have been put to death.

Because the system is set up for Blacks to be put in jail. Americas general view of African Americans, especially men as a problem to society and so We are targeted more by law enforcement to control the population of Black men. It's truly a racist social structure.

Because in the media Blacks are shown in a different light (not saying that drugs are good) but if a black person is shown on television or through the media it makes our culture look rough, but most of all it is bad for our society. On the other hand even though we all know the white community is doing more dope than any other race in this country, it isnt as focused on in the media.

These respondents echo the assertions made by Feagin (2006, 2010) that the racial meanings and practices are embedded throughout society and persist throughout all of its institutions. Clearly these respondents recognize that the systemic nature of racism in American structure is prevalent throughout the criminal justice/judicial system as well as a pervasive element of American media which spreads to all the other institutions.

The other 33% of these African-American respondents cited *class* as the overwhelming determination of the differential sentencing noted in the scenario with responses such as:

Crack-Cocaine is weighed with a heavier sentencing than powdered cocaine. The fact that Crack is more common in Poor minority neighborhoods so i believe the system is designed so that when these minorities come in they will get punished more severely. powder cocaine is seen as a white peoples drug.

I feel the punishment is wrong. Regardless of the substances he should treat the two the same... Cocaine or Crack-Cocaine should be treated the same. They sentence harder because most Blacks cannot afford Cocaine.

Still one respondent, while contemplating a couple of reasons for the differential treatment, did not identify race as a consideration at all, noting,

There are different reasons why they got two different sentences. The first reason may be because of the difference in drug, the crack-cocaine maybe considered to be more a powerful drug than powdered cocaine, so it would be given a heavier sentence. The second reason might be that the judge feel that the only way to straighten out or scare the young man is to send him to jail (eventhough most young people who get sent to jail for those types of offenses are likely to become repeat offenders), he might give the other guy probation if he is middle aged and has a family at home to support.

On the last vignette designed to ascertain respondents' interpretation of racial incidents, respondents were asked to decipher the motivations of a business ownwer in the following scenario:

A Nigerian doctor opens a medical office in a low-income neighborhood. He asks a white businesswoman, who owns the local store down the street from his office, if he could place a sign at her store announcing low-cost medical services for local residents. The doctor's request is quickly denied. Why wouldn't the businesswoman allow the doctor to put the announcement at her store?

This question raised a very interesting dynamic. While 75% of Africans identified *race* as the leading factor in this scenario – agreeing with the notion that the business owner “does not want to direct customers to the black doctor probably because of racial hatred” – three respondents referring to specific hatred or lack of support for Africans as “They are mad that some one straight from Africa could make it and be a doctor, he is not even african-american but and african, that makes it even worse. So they dont want him be successful in america.” Another reported that the business owner probably thought the doctor was engaged in some type of “fraud.”

What was astounding about the responses to this question, however, was that only 56% of African-Americans interpreted the incident as racially-motivated. One respondent understanding the incident to be clearly racist commented,

White America doesn't like competition from anyone of African descent and they cringe when they see Blacks have their own businesses. Fear of the Black intellectual who will mobilize Blacks is what propels them to be hateful towards us. With lack of respect for Black life, they could care less about us having great medical care and counseling. I truly beleive that if the could send us back to Africa and wash their hands with us they would just as they did the Mexicans in 1967 after they exploited their labor.

Another, however, interpreted the incident completely differently, “Well, I dont think its because she is racist, maybe she just doesn't want a lot of traffic or questions.” Another 22% agreed with the assessment that “The businesswoman might not have allowed the doctor to place the announcement in her store simply because she doesnt like to

advertise for other businesses, so that it doesn't take away from her clientele.” A couple of respondents seemed somewhat ambivalent about the cause and was torn between this line of thinking and racism, responding:

The woman may have not wanted people to hang things in her store or she could have just been being racist toward the man and didn't want to help anyone or anyone who looked like him.

She might feel that it is a bit tacky to advertise in her store. If there aren't any fliers up in there then it should be a just cause. If there were fliers up then he is being racially discriminated against.

It is interesting to note the dynamic between African and African-American respondents in the interpretation of race through these scenarios. Recall in the previous scenario where a black man was being beaten by white cops, 38% of African respondents attributed the police action as somehow provoked by the actions of the black man. In the last scenario, while African-American respondents do not interpret the business owner's refusal as somehow motivated by the doctor's character or behavior, only a little over half of them (56%) interpreted the event in racial terms. Perhaps this is indicative of African-American's reluctance to interpret the *intentions* of whites in racial situations where little harm is perceived to have occurred as opposed to interpreting their *actions* where the consequence of white action is quite harmful. Perhaps it suggests that African-Americans are so used to racial discrimination being directed at them (and much more consequential) that they are somewhat ambivalent about its causes when they are not the direct target of such treatment. Perhaps, even, it is indicative of African respondents' lack of experience with the consequences of racial hatred in America – as posited by this project – that it is unfathomable for them to consider that a black man

could be beaten simply for the color of his skin without some provocation on his part; after all, such is not the consequence of *blackness* in their countries of origin. All of these assumptions deserve further examination and will receive follow-up for greater clarification in an extension of this project.

The last vignette presented, though not representing a racial incident, was designed to ascertain how knowledgeable native African-Americans and African respondents are about each other's culture and history. This project asserts that while there is no disconnect in identification with a shared heritage, there is a disjuncture in the cultural and historical cord that binds these native and immigrant brothers together. Given that Africans lack experience with racial structures that inflict harm merely because of the darkness of one's skin color and African-Americans are unfamiliar with what it must feel like to be loved because of the darkness of one's skin color, it would stand to reason that such differential journeys through life must seem foreign to the other at times. However, what is amazing is the strength of the bond that remains; that despite all the years of physical separation, the native and immigrant black in America readily identifies with a shared heritage. Now it is time to engage a process of binding the *historical* cord together more fluidly so that the native and immigrant black can gain a better understanding of the other's trek to and through the America that both call home – at least for now. It is the desire of this project to serve as a basis from which that process can begin.

Thus, as a means of discerning what the respondent groups already comprehend about the other, respondents were presented with the following scenario:

A white professor is discussing the events of slavery in American society and the current relationship between African-Americans and African immigrants to America. You are the only black person in the class. She asks you to complete the following assignment: If you identify as African-American, describe everything you know about African culture. If you identify as African, describe everything you know about African-American culture.

Some respondent comments readily accentuate the disconnect in the historical cord between native African-Americans and African immigrants:

I do not know anything about the African culture to be completely honest. (African-American)

I am guilty as charged. I am not knowledgeable about the African history, all I can do is refer to stories and the things I remember my father told me in my younger childhood. (African)

I know nothing really about the culture. (African-American)

I only know one of the two cultures (African)

As an African American I don't know if what I believe to be true about the African culture is actually correct. From what I know the African men tend to be very dominant and controlling and they teach their sons to be the same way. The mothers of the family are considered to be submissive and just in control of the household, which consist of the children, cooking, and cleaning. The children are expected to place the highest value on education and the family. Older people in the family expect and even try to force the younger generations to marry other Africans. Africans tend to be in it for themselves instead of the greater good. (African-American)

Others tie their knowledge back to a common heritage, often mirroring the knowledge shared about each other:

I know that African culture went through slavery. They express themselves through music (drum beating) and dances. They also appreciate education and have responsibilities at a young age. (African-American)

I think that the African-American culture is mostly originates from the slavery days. It is good to have culture but sometimes African Americans can be a little too materialistic (African)

Africans felt the impact of slavery as did the African Americans, because on both "sides" there were deaths, violence, oppression, and broken families. / (African)

Im African America and I know now that Africans were the first civilization on this planet, and many Africans were enslaved in Africa, and shipped out to other different parts of world. (African-American)

As an African, I know everything taught to me about African-American slavery, civil rights, and other black freedoms. As an African-American, I know that Africans were shipped to American to be slaves. (African)

Similarly, others expressed the possession of similar values observed in each other's cultural heritage that tend to be echoed from one group to the next:

i identify myself as a African American. I would describe the african culture as hard working, proud of their heritage, and educated. I know that they tend to watch out for their own by giving back to their homeland. Africans are deeply rooted into their traditions. (African American)

I would identify myself as African, so I would explain the African American culture as being resilient. From Martin Luther King to Malcolm X, African Americans have faced much from racial segregation and just now having a black President. (African)

Africans are religious. Have strong sense of family. Male dominated. Skilled. Many want to be Educated. It is the birthplace of civilization. stonge sense of self. proud. loyal and happy people. (African-American)

african american families tend to be very close. they look out for eachother. they can be very friendly, lovable, back and will have your if you guys are really close. they can be really cool people (African)

I know that African culture is matriarchal structure, the woman rears and nourishes the child while the father works and teaches the Child life lessons and lessons about hard work. Family is important to Africans and maintaining that structure even through infidelity is respected. Africans also value the power behind the meanings of words and names. Everything has a name which defines what exactly the thing is or is supposed to be. The Biblical principle that the tongue has the power to kill or nourish life is a major value in African society. (African-American)

These respondent comments clearly express several key things: 1) a lack of in-depth knowledge about the historical trek of the other respondent group, 2) a connection to a shared heritage – both acknowledging the others’ connection to a common ancestor, and 3) a connection to similar cultural values. The comments shared here and throughout this research study provide value insight for launching a more extensive project capable of addressing the lack of knowledge about the different trek from the Motherland to this “Otherland” – the America in which we dwell together.

Discussion of Results

A review of the results indicates support for the hypothesis of this project in regards to the stated research question: *Does a “disconnect” (a divide or separation) exist between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America such that they do not readily identify as having a shared ancestry and heritage?* The results confirmed the expectations that no such disconnect exists between native-black, African-American and black, African respondents who participated in this study. The two instruments utilized in assessing the relationship between African-American and African respondents – The African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) and the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire – both yield this finding. The *African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS)* asked participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various statements which express certain beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Black people while the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire asked students a series of questions to which they had the opportunity to

provide *detailed* responses regarding their racial experiences and interpretation of those experiences.

Recall that an overall prediction was made in regards to the ASCS assuming that African-Americans – because they are more familiar with the white racial framing and its intended effects of delegitimizing black behavior – would possess higher levels of ASC as they are more likely to exhibit more *conscious-level expression* of behaviors associated with *blackness*. This assumption, however, was not supported in terms of a comparison to African respondents as mean scores on the scale – both reflective of mid-range ASC – did not yield a statistically-significant difference; African-Americans were not found to possess higher ASC on the scale overall, suggesting that African respondents are just as likely to exhibit “conscious level expression” of behaviors, attitudes and identities associated with Black people as African-Americans.

Predictions about the outcomes on the four indices or factors of the ASCS were also made in the conceptual framework of this project. Those predictions were as follows: First, it was predicted that in terms of a collective black identity, African-American and African respondents would exhibit similar levels of African Self-Consciousness (ASC) given the overall assumption that no disconnect existed between their identification with a shared heritage. This prediction was, in fact, supported as analysis yielded no significant differences in the level of ASC exhibited by African-American and African respondents on Factor I – *Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification*. Results on this construct clearly suggest that African-American and

African respondents both possess a disposition reflecting a sense of collective African identity and a tendency to engage in activities that affirm that identity.

The findings on the ASCS Factor I construct seem to be further supported by respondents in their statements on the BROS questionnaire as well which clearly indicate that they see each other as kinsmen with no distinctive separations:

I honestly do not think its a division. Majority of people cannot even tell Africans aren't black unless they see their last name or some indicator of them being African (African)

There is no seperation amongst blacks and Africans. They are in organizations together, classes, groups, relationships, etc. (African)

I really do not believe there is a separation between the two groups or haven't noticed (African-American)

The relationship between both are simple, when on XXXXX campus everyone is the same (African-American)

On the second construct, Factor II – *Resistance against Anti-African Forces*, it was predicted that while African-American and African respondents would similarly possess an intrinsic belief that affirms black identity and promotes the necessity for its survival, African-American respondents, however, would exhibit a higher level of ASC than their African counterpart. The black immigrant to America – as was assumed – unfamiliar with the experiences in America that necessitate such resistant behavior, are less likely to recognize the intended effects of oppositional white racial structures and thus, are less likely to perceive these effects as a threat and furthermore, would be less likely to actively resist these structures. This prediction was not supported by the data; although there was a difference in mean scores attained by group respondents on this construct – both mean scores indicating high ASC – the difference was not found to be

statistically-significant, suggesting –again – that African respondents are just as likely as African-Americans to resist information which may be perceived as Anti-Black or a threat to Black survival.

The prediction for Factor III – *Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions* – was that similarities would be expected to exist between African-American and African respondents in terms of their active participation in the positive development of Black people to the point of defending the dignity and integrity of such practices. Given the assumption that both respondent groups identify with a common African/Black heritage and possess an intrinsic belief which affirms black identity, they will similarly promote the proactive development of institutional practices rooted in this identity. While the data supports the expectation that respondent groups would exhibit similarities in the direction of their thrust on this construct, yielding no statistically-significant differences between groups on this construct, and further corroborating an identification with a shared heritage, the data also indicates that neither African nor African-American respondents exhibited a strong sense of African Self-Consciousness in terms of valuing African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions. Thus, while on one level, the expectations were supported, the expectation regarding this lack of consciousness on this construct was not anticipated.

Significant differences were, surprisingly, found on the Factor IV construct – Value for African Culture. While it was predicted that African-American and African respondents would similarly exhibit value for African-centered cultural customs and practices which affirm Black life because of their identification with a shared heritage,

this expectation was not met. The difference between African and African-American respondents was statistically significant on this construct. While both respondent groups attained scores indicative of high levels of ASC on this construct, African respondents yielded a significantly higher level of ASC than African-American respondents thereby suggesting that African respondents possess a more conscious disposition reflective of value for traditional African cultural forms in terms of practices, products, artifacts, etc. Perhaps this should be expected as African respondents are more familiar with the authentic expression of traditional African culture, language, and the perception of Africa as a “homeland” – as assessed on this construct – than are African-Americans.

While this project asserted that there is a disruption in *associations* as a result of the imposition of identities – rooted in America’s historical past – that prohibit subsequent progression in the identity process between native and immigrant blacks in America, overall, no such disruptions were encountered. This finding is perhaps illuminated given the social context of this black college; absent the pronounced influence of white racial structures such impositions of identity do not find expression.

It was further assumed that such disruptions – influenced by racial frames – occurred as a result of African immigrants’ negotiations in the exchange processes; seeking access to valued resources, they would forego associations with native African-Americans as the consequences of association were too great, thwarting their efforts toward enhanced economic positioning. However, no such exchange motive was encountered in this research process further suggesting that absent the influence of the white racial frame, immigrant blacks are able to freely associate with the native African-

American, free to engage in the full expression of their black identity and thereby “avoid the imposition of a more restrictive identity” (Vickerman 1999:139) – identities imposed by the white racial frame, rooted in America’s slave past.

In terms of racial experiences and the interpretation of these experiences, it was assumed that African-Americans – given the manner in which they are uniquely targeted by white racial structures in America as a result of their resistance to these structures – would report more racial experiences and would more readily identify and interpret experiences as *racially-motivated* given their greater familiarity with the intended effects (often cloaked in covert expressions) of American racial structures. The results yielded in this study indicate support for the expectation that African-Americans report encountering significantly more racial experiences than their African brother. This finding, then, could lend support to the assertion made by this project that African-Americans, because of their historical resistance to American racialized structures, are uniquely positioned as targets of oppressive treatment more than any other group in American society – at least in comparison of the respondents within this study.

In the interpretations of racial incidents, however, something very interesting happens: *contexts* become highly salient and these contexts appear to be further influenced by exposure to (or lack of exposure to) America’s racial constructs. For instance, whereas high percentages of African and African-American respondents (averaging over 70%) report *not* encountering racial experiences while on the campus of this HBCU where this research takes place, there is a significant discrepancy in racial experiences encountered off-campus by African-American respondents in comparison to

African respondents; African-American experiences are significantly higher. This finding is suggestive that 1) the influence of the white racial frame is relaxed in the social context of this black campus and thus, racial experiences are less likely to be encountered in such settings and 2) outside of this context – off-campus – where the influence of white racial structures are more pronounced in its expressions, the discrepancy in African-American and African respondents' encounters with racial experiences may be reflective of their differential exposure to and familiarity with the implicit meanings of America's racial structures, leading to differences in the interpretation of incidents as *racially*-constructed and/or motivated. The assumption here is that African-Americans, more familiar with the implicit meanings and intended effects of the racial behavior of whites in American society, are more likely to identify negatively-expressed behavior aimed at them by whites as racially-charged whereas African respondents, presumed less familiar with racial constructs and unaccustomed to the meanings of behavior directed at them “strictly in terms of their phenotype” (Shaw-Taylor 2007), are less likely to identify or interpret white behavior as connected to *race*.

This assumption is partially supported by the data. What was of great interest is that African-American respondents had greatest difficulty in the interpretation of racial events, specifically when 1) they (African-Americans) were not the target of the discriminatory treatment – as in the vignette with the Nigerian doctor, 2) when the discrimination had to be inferred from the *intention* of whites (directed at some *other* target) as opposed to direct *action* by whites; for example inferring the intention of the business owner toward the Nigerian doctor as opposed to the beating of the black man

by the police officers, and these two factors fed further into 3) when the extent of the consequences (for some *other* target of the discrimination) does not rise to some significant level of harm, such as assessing the harm to the Nigerian doctor by the white business owner. Thus, on occasion, even for African-American respondents, the meanings of race are tied to the social contexts in which they occur. Time and again, African-American respondents expressed their familiarity with the *intended* effects of race as well as the implicit rules which shape and define meanings in racialized contexts, yet when they are not the explicit targets, the meanings seem to become blurred and other contextual cues become more salient in the interpretation of the incidents.

Last, support for greater movement toward social blending and blurring of boundaries was found among some of the respondent comments on the BROS Questionnaire such as in the following comments:

I felt like African-Americans were so naive because they dont understand the fact that they are africans too. But all these things that happened was when i was younger. As i got older like in the later teens early 20's, my relationship with african-americans changed i feel there is more of an understanding between us. I interact more with the African-Americans (African)

Believe it or not the relationship among Africans and African-Americans has changed compared to when I was a freshman. I do believe there is a closer bond and understanding than there was back than. I do fill like it could be better, and that African americans would take the time to get to know them much better. So I think its good. (African-American)

In my opinion the relationship between African and African-American students is good. in an African culture class that i took at XXXXX i was in a group project on Nigeria with an African student, and i think that we worked together very well. He was very much so Americanized in the way he dressed and talked, but was very knowledgeable about where he came from. my encounter with him was very plesant, unlike many encounters i have had with older Africans off campus. i think that the relationship between young African and African-Americans is growing into something positive. (African-American)

in a recent campaign efforts to get the student of XXXXX to vote i was involved in a political actions committee, and there were several Afriacn students participating. The efforts of the committee were successful. there were some African student heading some aspects of the committee and others just assisting the efforts of the campaign. I think the committee was successful because everyone was woking towards one general goal, so there wasnt any room for conflict between African and African-American students. (African-American)

Such comments illustrate that as native and immigrant blacks in America continue to interact with each other, they are able to gain a better understanding of each other; thus it is likely that they will begin to bridge the gaps that distort the historical cords that bind them together. These respondents are showing us, as did Jackson (2007) and Rogers (2001), that as we focus more on the connectedness, the “oneness of being” as described by (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) and change the discourse regarding the relationship between native and immigrant blacks, we won’t have time to focus on the negative characterizations of “distancing,” “separation” and “conflict.”

The findings of this study, overall, suggests that such characterization of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks as suggested throughout the literature is indicative of researchers’ naïve and narrow purview – largely from the black immigrant perspective whose naïve consciousness lacks a clear conception of *race* in America. Furthermore, that scholarship tends to be rooted in the white racial constructs of American academia and thus, division and misrepresentation persists in the findings due to the ineffectiveness of the instruments used to assess *black* behavior and identity in such constructs. This project, attempting to address both of these elements, produced a conceptualization which not only utilizes assessment tools specifically designed to capture the authentic behavior of *Blacks* but which also diverges from popular standards

of academia and puts forth a critical analysis of white racial structures, giving attention and significance to the expression of the African-American view whose racial experiences are a product of the generational legacies borne as a result of America's historical slave past. This study recognizes that while not seen or acknowledged by all, the native African-American view more accurately represents the conception of the white racial frame as it exists in America, personifying it as a real-life, breathing organism that continues to construct social interactions, impose identities and manifest its discriminatory nature throughout the whole of American society.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

Given that my work was driven, largely, by the characterization of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks as “distanced,” “divided,” and mired in “conflict” in the existing literature, this project – in response to that literature – developed a conceptualization of a number of theoretical frameworks which offers a critical analysis of the general findings of the existing scholarship. The theoretical frameworks engaged include the *White Racial Frame* (Feagin 2006, 2010), Baldwin and Bell’s (1985) ideations of the *Africentric Paradigm*, *Identity Control Theory* (Burke 1991), and *Social Exchange Theory* (Molm 1991). Thus, in this final chapter, I first address the current literature and its shortfalls in adequately assessing the relationship between native and immigrant blacks. Then I provide a brief, generalized summary of the conceptualization of these theoretical frameworks as I imagine their influence to occur upon the relationship between native-black African-Americans and immigrant blacks in America; furthermore I attempt to link the key findings of this research to this theoretical conceptualization. Last, I note the limitations and implications of this work, directions for future analysis of this issue and end with a concluding statement regarding this issue.

The Current Literature

It has been asserted throughout the existing literature examining the relationship between the native-black, African-American and the black immigrant in America that

these ancestral kinsmen are distanced, divided, conflicted and disconnected from a shared identity. However, the analysis of data obtained from this study supports the assertion that no such disconnect (a divide or separation) exists between black, native-born African-Americans and black African immigrants in America which prevents them from readily identifying as having a shared ancestry and heritage.

This project, in examining the complex relationship between native and immigrant blacks in America, proceeded from a few major assumptions made in response to the existing literature's characterization of this relationship: 1) that no such disconnect or distancing existed as presented by the existing literature, 2) that the literature, operating from the dominant frame of American academia – the white racial frame – did not take into account the structural influence of the frame (upon the evaluation of black identity and behavior within such constructs and upon newcomer immigrants who are unfamiliar with the workings of the frame) in examining the relationship and 3) that the literature fails to take into account the different motivations of native-black African-Americans and immigrant blacks as they interact in American structures. Thus, I employed the above-mentioned theoretical frameworks in an effort to address these areas.

White Racial Frame

The *white racial frame* – that “color-coded framing of society” (Feagin 2006:25) inherent in American structures that refers to the particular way that whites conceive of and interpret their world – shapes everyday events and encounters with others and is characterized by negative images and stereotypes of African Americans and other people

of color, while asserting positive views of whites and white institutions. These images along with the attitudes, ideologies, emotions, habits, views, stereotypes and metaphors directed at people of color (Feagin 2006) are embodied in the implicit rules of this racialized structuring; they indicate the proscribed value and treatment of individuals based on *color* as well as define and shape meanings about race (and others) in social situations. These meanings spill over into the whole of American life and into all of its institutions – political, educational, legal, religious and economic – shaping the everyday encounters of individuals as they navigate interaction within these institutions.

Because images of *blackness* are negatively characterized in America's white racial frame, and are, in fact characterized as "inferior" given their stark opposition to the images of *whiteness* (deemed "superior"), identities and behavior associated with *blackness* do not receive confirming appraisals within structures rooted in this white racialized frame. Such characterizations based on the notion that "One is black the extent to which one is most distant from white...And one is white the extent to which one is most distant from black" (Feagin 2006:286), then, sets up a hierarchical and *divisive* racial structure in which whites ascend to the top, blacks descend to the bottom, and all others entering into this context situated within the white-black continuum. Thus, in such a system, anyone entering American society understands that in order to attain access to the resources for which they are seeking entrance into America, a "hostile posture toward resident blacks must be struck at the Americanizing door before it will open" (Morrison 1993:57). Thus, the white racial framing of American society

imposes identities upon all who seek entrance and access to her resources, including the black immigrant.

It was asserted in this project that the white racial frame, in imposing identities rooted in America's historical past which persist even today, disrupts associations between those entering American society and native African-Americans due to its racialized structuring. By disrupting associations between the native and immigrant black, the frame interrupts progression in identity processes between these brothers. This assertion, I believe, was supported by this research in that *absent the influence of the white racial frame, associations and identification between African-American and African respondents were not disrupted, interrupted nor disconnected*; in fact, native and immigrant blacks *willingly* established associations with each other and *readily identify* with a shared ancestry and heritage.

It was also stressed that because the native or "resident" black – the African-American – has so resisted these white racial structures for so long – challenging and opposing the unequal social structures which seek to preserve white privilege and power at the expense of black subordination – they are positioned as unique targets of American oppressive and discriminatory treatment. The newcomer, black immigrant, unaware of the workings and intended effects of the frame and lacking a vested interest in America's racial structures, seeks entrance into American society – which offers better options than their home country – to improve their life conditions, willingly (albeit *temporarily*) negotiates identity, foregoing associations with their native brother in an effort to access valued resources.

While African-American respondents did, in fact, experience more racial events in the larger social contexts – outside of the HBCU campus – it is difficult to ascertain whether this occurred because they were uniquely targeted (although one could make that argument) or if it was indicative of African respondents' lack of racial consciousness that led them to under-report the frequency of their racial experiences; given their lack of familiarity with the racialized nature of American society, perhaps they simply were not able to accurately identify these events. Recall that in terms of *racial consciousness*, it was found that African-Americans did exhibit slightly more consciousness than African respondents on the ASCS and they provided much more vivid descriptions, denoting *race*, in their interpretations of racial events. However, in interpreting racial events, more than half of the African respondents were able to accurately recognize the racialized nature of the events in all three of the vignettes assessing their sense of racial consciousness. Thus, these arguments may need to be fleshed out a bit more concisely.

Africentric Paradigm: A Counter-framed Perspective

Given that much of the existing literature's examination of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks occurs within the larger social contexts where the constructs of the white racial framing prevail – where black behavior and identity fails to find confirming appraisals – I felt it was significant to conduct this research in a space that readily affirmed expressions of *blackness*; this would give native and immigrant blacks freedom to authentically express themselves absent the pronounced influence of the white racial frame. Thus, the environment at a historically black college/university

(HBCU) provided such an atmosphere and produced results that clearly indicated that no disconnect (division or separation) exists between native African-American and African immigrants that prevents their association with one another or their identification with a shared ancestry and heritage.

It is also important to note that the use of assessment instruments which embody an intrinsic knowledge and appreciation for expressions of blackness as well as value for black life and culture were also utilized as a means of capturing the authentic expressions of blackness among African-American and African respondents. This was significant in that many of the assessment tools utilized in mainstream academia (which impact the literature) reflect the experiences and culture of the dominant white society; assessment of *black* dispositions, identities and behaviors within such a construct is equivalent to asking a white student to rate (on a scale from 1 – 8) the extent to which he/she agrees with the statement, “Racial consciousness and cultural awareness based on traditional African values are necessary to the development of Black marriages and families that can contribute to the liberation and enhancement of Black people in America” in an attempt to evaluate their level of *racial consciousness*. Such an analysis is ineffective and does not appropriately evaluate their sense of consciousness. Thus, *situating the evaluation of black behavior and identity within such an affirming space more appropriately assesses their authentic expressions.*

Just as the results at this HBCU attained different results than does much of the literature found in mainstream academia which is suffused in the frame (as are all institutions), so does black identity and behavior attain different appraisals in an

environment which affirms images of *blackness*. The HBCU provides a space that is “in the service of the authentic needs and social priorities of the African community... toward its affirmation, enhancement...[that] projects a normalcy referent for Black behavior which is independent of Euro-American culture and Western racism” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62). Thus the contention that *an afri-centric paradigm would be sensitive to the “normal thrust” (Baldwin and Bell 1985:62) of black behavior, yielding different results than in the existing literature which is engulfed in the dominant paradigm or frame of American society* was borne out in this research.

Identity Control Theory

Because black identity and behavior does not attain confirmation in mainstream identity processes – unless it fits the negative characterization associated with *blackness* within that construct (distanced, divided, conflicted) – in order for such an identity to be sustained, it must find expression somewhere. This project asserts that black identity (engulfed in affirming qualities of *blackness*) – characterized as an “outlier” identity in white racial constructs – is incongruent with an *internalized standard* of blackness as defined in mainstream identity processes and thus is unable to attain confirming *input* appraisals from the social environment. Because *any* behavior shrouded in an affirming black identity is characterized negatively in a white racial construct, alternate *output* behaviors (still veiled in this affirming identity standard) is ineffective in changing input appraisals. As such, in a white racial construct, the goal of the identity process – congruence between the input appraisals and the internalized standards – is unable to be achieved while possessing an internalized standard rooted in

an affirming black identity because it does not attain confirming appraisals. The fact that the affirmation of black behavior and identity – which is typically not found in the contexts of white racial constructs – finds affirmation in settings as provided within the environment of the HBCU, lends support to the claim of this project that *there are, in fact, two different identity processes at work in American society that yield very different result for blacks interacting within these spaces.*

Social Exchange Theory

Immigrants attempting to gain access to valued resources to attain better living conditions than in home country, then, must negotiate their interactions – deciding which identity process to enter – because the white racial frame which structures interactions compels such a choice. These immigrants come here – not vested in America’s racial structures – but because this country offers better options than their home country for enhancing their chances of providing for their families. They possess no natural inclination to dissociate with native black nor do they intentionally seek to do so. However, because the racial structures dictate that association with their native brother entails costs and given that they are motivated to access valued resources that will help them attain better living conditions, they seek to avoid any such associations that would thwart their efforts toward this goal. No such motive found in this research. In fact, in assessing the motivation of African respondents to act in ways that deny connection to their black identity in order to gain greater access to a valued outcome, these respondents overwhelmingly chose to proclaim their black identity and forego any outcome that would necessitate their denial of such identity.

It should be noted that while no such motivation was found within the contexts of this HBCU, it should not be assumed that such a motive does not exist. In this context, it must be considered that respondents already have access to the resource that they are most seeking to access at this moment in their lives – education – and more significantly, absent the influence of white racial structures, there is no need to compete or forego associations for access to these resources; different results might be attained outside these social contexts where the influence of white racial structures is more pronounced.

Limitations and Implications of Research

Limitations

One of the limitations of this current research lies in the fact that only 53% of African respondents are truly representative of the African immigrant – they were born in Africa and entered American society from their native origins. The others were born in the United States and reside in America as a result of their parents' immigration to this country. While a number of them speak to the influence of their parents' teachings of the native African culture and practices, it is not the same as being a native African themselves. Thus, extended replications of this research will address this issue to ensure greater access to respondents who were born in their native African country to more accurately assess exposure to racial structures.

A second limitation in actually examining the influence of the white racial frame – a major focus of this project – is that this research only captures the experiences of *race* in the contexts of a historically-black social setting. Some elements conceptualized are not able to receive adequate testing in such a setting such as how the frame disrupts

associations and interrupt further progression in the identity process. Furthermore, given the reality within American society that the white racial frame is the predominant frame which shapes meanings, defines social situations and structures experiences, it may be a difficult to apply the results from this process to mainstream audiences in order to attempt to affect change in any substantial manner. After all – in my view – sociology, at some point, should move from the classrooms and bookshelves to real world settings in the hopes of impacting change in the conditions it finds problematic.

Implications of the Study

A major concern of this project was to focus on an African-American perspective – to illustrate how the white racial frame has, in the past, and continues today, to uniquely structure experiences for the native black unlike for any other people in American society. This project was able to fulfill that objective by shedding light on how the black identity, specifically one which affirms positive images of blackness, with an awareness of how American racial structures seeks to discourage such expression, fails to find confirmation in mainstream identity. It was able to highlight how black identity does find confirmation and full expression in social contexts *absent the profound influences of the white racial framing*. What is most powerful about the affirming black identity in American society is that it still sustains itself even in the midst of mainstream contexts that know well “how to discourage, choke, and murder ability when it so far forgets itself to choose a dark skin,” (Du Bois, 2003:204). So while this research does not provide for an examination of the full impact of white racial structures in influencing the relationship between native African-Americans and African

immigrant blacks, it does provide a baseline, contextual analysis for black experiences *absent the influence of the white racial frame*.

Furthermore, it allows the African-American perspective to be considered in the evaluation of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks in America. Much of the existing research tends to focus on the black immigrant perspective and thus, is rooted, to a large extent, in the influence of white racial structures which shape, define and impose social meanings for black immigrants who are less familiar with the intended effects of these structures; such a view is a naïve representation of “black life” in American society for it gives no consideration to the historical (mis)treatment of blacks since the founding of this nation – treatment which yields generational legacies still today.

Finally, it paves the way for a change in the nature in which black identity and behavior is assessed and evaluated. It illustrates the significantly different results that are attained when black identity and behavior is affirmed and allowed full expression as opposed to being assessed by instruments embodied in a construct that does not value, or take into consideration, the expression of black identity and behavior. Thus, changes in the manner in which black identity and behavior is assessed – to more appropriate methods which accurately reflect the dispositions of blacks in American society – leads to changes in the results attained and subsequently, changes in the discourse regarding the nature of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks.

Future Research

This research process highlighted the need to better flesh out the argument that African-Americans are, in fact, positioned as primary targets of the white racial frame as well as the argument that immigrant blacks are less familiar with racial structures. By clearly distinguishing between the impact of increased frequency of racial encounters experienced by African-Americans versus African immigrants' lack of familiarity with and exposure to America's racial structures – which may account for their decreased reporting of racial experiences – we can get a better assessment of both of these elements. Thus, the BROS Questionnaire may need to be modified at some point in the future to address this issue.

However, the first priority for future research is to further flesh the argument of how the white racial frame imposes identities and structures social interactions such that it disrupts associations and interrupts identity processes – a major contention of this research. In order to address this issue, this project will be replicated at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) to assess the nature of the relationship between native African-American blacks and African immigrant blacks on that campus for comparison to the relationship found to exist at this HBCU. Given that at a PWI, the white racial structures will be more pronounced, manifesting its influence upon the interactions of all entering that context.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to fully explore the contextual issues which seemed to produce confusion for African-American respondents in the interpretation of some racial incidents. Such confusion or difficulty seem to arise when 1) they were not

the target of the racial experience, 2) when the discrimination had to be inferred from the *intention* of whites (directed at some *other* target) as opposed to direct *action* by whites and 3) when the extent of the consequences (for some *other* target of the discrimination) does not rise to some significant level of harm.

Concluding Statement

So, is there something about American society that fosters division between the native and immigrant black such that they do not readily identify with a common ancestry and heritage? Absolutely! America's white racial framing constructs black identity as an outlier identity incongruent with the internalized standards of the frame. As such it imposes identities upon all who seek entrance into American society, encouraging dissociation from the native black in American society. As this research has shown, absent the influence of the frame, no such disconnects (separation or division) exist between native and immigrant blacks in America. Thus, the conceptualization of this project takes into account this *structural* interpretation of the relationship between native and immigrant blacks that look beyond the general ethnic and cultural differences that all groups experience in any society, focusing on how the white racial structures *impose* social realities and identities and force negotiation of associations and identities within American society.

While not so naïve as to believe that there are no distinctions between black groups in America, the focus of this study was clearly on the *commonalities* between brothers separated by the inhumane practice of the American slave trade. For “Beyond separation, beyond social distancing, boundaries create the conditions for meaningful

connections, exchange, building and inclusion. Rather than marking distance and disidentification, the symbolic boundaries that black immigrants perform in the process of negotiating belonging in America should be understood as an attempt to contest and reframe the meaningful social boundaries between blacks and nonblacks” (Jackson 2007: 249), even between blacks, themselves, within American society. Thus, the blurring and blending of boundaries between native and immigrant blacks in America is a story still unfolding. However, it is the hope of this project that native, African-Americans and his African immigrant brother come to fully *experience* their common heritage together, realizing that it is the influence of deeply-embedded structures in American society that encourages a lack of shared association and identification.

From the *African slave* to the *freed African in America* to the *African-American* and now the *African immigrant in America*, we share a common bond: our African ancestors in whose identity we garnished the strength to survive an institution destined for our destruction. It is from this identity that we must summons the courage to face our *perceived* differences within the racialized structures of American society today and the strength to master our future – together. It is a future rooted no longer in the things we didn’t have, didn’t know, or what was taken from us, but firmly focused on how we positively and creatively utilize that which we do have, what we now know, that which could not be taken, and on what was left over and survived! WE Survived – the African, the African-American – we *Brothers of the Trade*.

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THE AFRICAN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE SCORING KEY

The African Self-Consciousness Scale (ASCS) is a 42-item questionnaire. It is structured such that every other item (odd numbered vs. even-numbered items) is weighted or keyed in the opposite direction for ASC, alternating from Negative to Positive weights. Thus, for Positive keyed items (even-numbered items), high scores (above 4.5) are reflective of strong/high ASC, and for Negative keyed items, low scores (4.5 and below) are reflective of strong/high ASC. Therefore, Negative item scores (odd-numbered items) are *transposed* (must be converted to their ASC weights or values). For example, a Negative keyed score of 1 is converted to 8, a 2 to 7, 3 to 6, etc. (i.e., 1=8, 2=7, 3=6, 4=5, 5=4, 6=3, 7=2, 8=1). A Total ASCS score and four Sub-factor scores can be computed based on this scoring procedure.

Odd numbered items are
Negatively keyed for ASC

1
3
5
7
9
11
13
15
17
19
21
23
25
27
29
31
33
35
37
39
41

Even numbered items are
Positively keyed for ASC

2
4
6
8
10
12
14
16
18
20
22
24
26
28
30
32
34
36
38
40
42

TOTAL SCORING RANGE = 42 - 336 POINTS
MID-POINT/MEAN SCORE = 168 POINTS
HIGH ASCS SCORE RANGE = 252 -336 POINTS

MIDDLE ASCS SCORE RANGE = 127 -251 POINTS
 LOW ASCS SCORE RANGE = 42 -126 POINTS

THE AFRICAN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE: FOUR FACTORS

Factor 1: Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification

A psychological disposition reflecting a sense of collective African identity and a tendency to engage in activities that affirm one's African identity. (e.g., Pro-Black/Black empowering actions like promoting African history and cultural activities, Black organized/collective activities, Black economic and political activities/Nguzo Saba, etc.)

Factor 2: Resistance Against Anti-African Forces

A psychological disposition reflecting a tendency to resist, by any means necessary, any and all information which may be perceived (experienced/interpreted) as anti-African/anti-Black, or as a threat to African/Black survival in any way, shape or form. (e.g., Rejects White supremacy and actively combats it in all areas of experience.)

Factor 3: Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions

A psychological disposition reflecting a belief in the importance of Africentric/pro-Black-oriented/empowering organizations-institutions, practices, etc., that are under African/Black control based on African cultural definitions. (e.g., practicing African cultural rituals, celebrations, commemorations, etc.)

Factor 4: Value for African Culture

A psychological disposition reflecting a firm belief in the value/importance of traditional African cultural forms (practices, products-artifacts, etc.) for Africans (in America).

ASCS ITEMS LOADED ON THE FOUR SUB-FACTORS

Factor I, Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification

Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 23, 26, 30, 36, 40, 42 (15)

Factor II, Resistance Against Anti-African Forces

Items 3, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 31, 32, 33, 37, 41 (11)

Factor III, Value for African-Centered Institutions and Cultural Expressions

Items 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 34, 39 (8)

Factor IV, Value for African Culture

Items 5, 7, 19, 21, 28 (5)

F1 SCORING RANGE = 15 - 120 POINTS

HIGH RANGE = 75.5 - 120

LOW RANGE = 15 - 75

F2 SCORING RANGE = 11 - 88 POINTS

HIGH RANGE = 55.5 - 88

LOW RANGE = 11-55

F3 SCORING RANGE = 8 - 64 POINTS

HIGH RANGE = 40.5 - 64

LOW RANGE = 8 - 40

F4 SCORING RANGE = 5 - 40 POINTS

HIGH RANGE = 20.5 - 40

LOW RANGE = 5 - 20

Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire

Below, you will be asked a series of questions for which you are to provide **detailed** responses (providing examples when possible) regarding your racial identities and experiences and the identities and experiences of your acquaintances and friends.

1. So, I understand that you are a student here at Prairie View A&M University, is that correct? What is your classification? (freshman, sophomore, etc.)

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Other

2. How old are you and where were you born? (Tell a little about your birth place).

3. What does your father do for a living? Your mother?

4. What is your ultimate goal after completing all of your college studies?

5. In terms of your racial or ethnic identity, with which racial identity would you say that you most identify? Please explain your response.

African

African-American

Black

American

Other

6. When people ask about your race or ethnicity, do you ever change the way you respond to them or do you always say the same thing? Explain.

7. Do you feel any connection to Africans who were brought to this country centuries ago and were forced into slavery in the U.S.? Explain in detail why or why not.

8. Which group do you believe is more connected to that slave past, Africans or African-Americans? Please explain your response in detail.

9. How would you describe the relationship between African and African-American students on PVAMU campus? Please provide specifics and/or incidents and/or examples related to your response.

10. Describe in detail important and specific examples of how you have seen African and African-American students working together on campus.

Were these efforts successful? Explain *in detail* why or why not.

11. What, *if anything*, do you see as a major problem in the relationship between African and African-American students on campus?

12. Have you ever experienced any racial discrimination while on campus? If so, describe your most memorable incident. Please describe *in detail who* was involved in the incident (use generic titles, such as "a teacher" or other titles; do not use names) and describe *what happened*.

(If you have not experienced it personally, please describe incidents that your friends or acquaintances have experienced on campus).

a. What was it about the incident that made you feel you were being treated differently because of your race? Please provide specific details.

b. Did the incident change you or your perceptions in any way? If so, explain how.

13. Have you ever experienced any racial discrimination in any other setting outside of campus?

If so, describe your most memorable incident. Please describe *in detail who* was

involved in the incident (use generic title, such as "a teacher" or other titles; do not use names) and describe *what happened*.

(If you have not experienced it personally, please describe incidents that your friends or acquaintances have experienced).

a. What was it about the incident that made you feel you were being treated differently because of your race? Please provide specific details.

b. Did the incident change you or your perceptions in any way? If so, explain how.

14. Please identify your 5 best friends (*by first name only*) and provide their race or ethnicity

	Race / Ethnicity
First Name Only	<input type="text"/>

15. In your estimation, how comfortable and relaxed are you when interacting with:

	Not at All			Very Much					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
African Americans									<input type="text"/>
Hispanics or Latinos									<input type="text"/>
Africans									<input type="text"/>
White or European Americans									<input type="text"/>
Asian Americans									<input type="text"/>

Vignettes

Below are some examples of events that might happen. Try to put yourself in the situation and describe what you think you might do.

Please respond *in detail* to the following situations, providing your interpretation of the situation and using specific examples when possible or necessary.

1. The job you want that can help move your career forward is *finally* posted on a U.S. company's website . You really want this job!

a. Would you intentionally misrepresent your identification as African or African-American on the application in the hopes of getting an interview? ***(Please provide a detailed explanation for why you would or would not engage in such misrepresentation)***

- b. Has a close friend or family member ever done this? *(If so, please describe in detail).*

2. A Black man is pulled over by several police officers and asked to step out of his car. As he is pulled from the car, a white police officer is videotaped badly beating the man. Even after being beaten to the ground and unable to defend himself from the strikes, he is continually hit over and over again.

- a. What do you believe happened to cause the police to respond in this violent manner? *(Explain in detail)*

- b. Has anything like this ever happened to a close friend or family member? *(If so, please describe in detail)*

3. A judge sentences a young black male who is a first-time drug offender to 2 years in prison for having crack-cocaine. This same judge sentences a middle-class white male, who has a previous drug offense, to 2 years probation for having powdered cocaine. Why do you think the two men got different sentences? *(Please be specific and detailed in your response)*

4. A Nigerian doctor opens a medical office in a low-income neighborhood. He asks a white businesswoman, who owns the local store down the street from his office, if he could place a sign at her store announcing low-cost medical services for local residents. The doctor's request is quickly denied. Why wouldn't the businesswoman allow the doctor to put the announcement at her store?

5. A white professor is discussing the events of slavery in American society and the current relationship between African-Americans and African immigrants to America. You are the only black person in the class. She asks you to complete the following assignment: If you identify as African-American, describe everything you know about African culture. If you identify as African, describe everything you know about African-American culture. Please complete the assignment below.

In Conclusion

1. Is there anything else that you would like to add about the relationship between African immigrants and native-born African-Americans that has not been covered in this questionnaire or are there any significant questions or areas of concern that have been left out of this questionnaire? If so, please provide your suggestions below.

2. Do you have any comments or questions regarding this questionnaire or research? If so, please state your comments and/or questions below.

APPENDIX B

Consent

Thank you for your participation in the Brothers of the Trade research project.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the Brothers of the Trade research project. This study examines the racial identities and experiences of African and African-Americans living within American society. As a participant, you will be asked to respond to questions on the following two questionnaires regarding your racial identities, attitudes and experiences.

On the first questionnaire, the *African Self-Consciousness Scale*, you will be asked to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with various statements which express certain beliefs and attitudes thought to be held by Black people. This scale may take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. On the Brothers of the Trade Student Questionnaire, you will be asked a series of questions to which you will have the opportunity to provide *detailed* responses (providing examples when possible) regarding your racial identities and experiences and the identities and experiences of your acquaintances and friends. This questionnaire may take 40 minutes to an hour to complete.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. There are no risks associated with this study that are greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life and you may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. All responses are confidential and the records of this study will be kept private and stored securely. Only Ms. Williams, the principal investigator, will have access to the records. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published.

As a participant, you will receive a new flash drive upon completion of the questionnaires. Upon submitting the completed questionnaires, a confirmation page will be generated informing you that your responses have been successfully submitted. **Please print out the confirmation page** and present this page to the Principal Investigator on the project, Ms. Williams, to receive your flash drive for your participation. Your initials will serve as acknowledgement that you received the flash drive.

Once the surveys are started, if you do not complete them in one session, your responses will be saved and you may return to complete the surveys at a later time (within one week).

By continuing on and completing the questionnaires, you consent to participation in this research process. If at any time you experience any discomfort or adverse affects in participating, please remember that you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?

This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

You may also contact:

Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Prairie View A&M University
Attention: Marcia C. Shelton, PhD, Director, Research Regulatory Compliance
Anderson Hall, Room 104
Prairie View, Texas 77446
Telephone: 936.261.1588/1585 Fax: 936.261.1599

If you have further questions regarding this study, you may also contact:

Veeda V. Williams
(936)261-3210
vwilliams@pvamu.edu

Please answer all questions in as much detail as possible.

Please enter your email address below to start survey:

Enter Email Address

APPENDIX C

THE AFRICAN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE: FOUR FACTORS**Factor 1: Collective African Identity and Self-Fortification**

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Items 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 34, 39 (8)

Factor IV, Value for African Culture

Items 5, 7, 19, 21, 28 (5)

VITA

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