

IN THE WAKE OF THE ATTACK ON “RAJIV” ON JUNE 1, 2005: PERCEPTIONS  
OF INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT NON-NATIVE ENGLISH  
SPEAKERS ON VIOLENCE AND RACISM AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

A Thesis

by

MITZI KAUFMAN

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

MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2006

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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## ABSTRACT

In the Wake of the Attack on “Rajiv” on June 1, 2005: Perceptions of International Graduate Student Non-Native English Speakers on Violence and Racism at Texas A&M University. (August 2006)

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In this thesis, results of an online survey and focus group interview sessions comprised of a total of 21 International Graduate Student Non-Native English Speakers (IGSNNES) at Texas A&M (TAMU) are summarized. IGSNNESs were interviewed in an effort to gauge their perceptions and experiences with racism and discrimination following a string of assaults on IGSNNESs that occurred in the area immediately surrounding the TAMU campus. This study was conducted in an attempt to reveal previously undisclosed incidents of discrimination against IGSNNESs. The results of this study indicated that several IGSNNESs at TAMU had experienced and heard about both violent and nonviolent incidents of discrimination which they had not reported. IGSNNESs in this study were not aware of the parameters that would define an act of discrimination as one worthy of reporting. IGSNNESs in this study were also unaware of the proper procedure for filing incident reports. This research is important not only to help ensure the safety and happiness of current IGSNNESs at TAMU, but also to help TAMU reach its Vision 2020 goal to become one of the top ten universities in the United States by the year 2020. The paper concludes with ten recommendations for improving

the current campus climate and level of safety for IGSNNESs as well as the rest of the TAMU student population.

## DEDICATION

To those who have something to say, but have not yet found their voice.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have even *attempted* to have taken on this research project without help. I want to take this opportunity to thank several of my most important inspirations.

The chair of my committee and my dear friend, Patrick—if I ever had any doubts about moving to Texas, they were all alleviated the first night I met you. You are a ray of light in a broken world, a world I now feel energized to do my part to repair in some small way. You have encouraged me to problematize, question, and deconstruct, and you have simultaneously reminded me to nurture the ambiguity and contradiction in both myself and others. I am looking forward to a lifelong professional and personal collaboration with you.

The members of my committee, Steve and Rafael—thank you for agreeing (perhaps somewhat naively) to “take me on.” Steve, thank you for exposing me to new ways of thinking and expressing myself; I am still processing and attempting to get a handle on ways in which I can harness what I have learned to better express myself so that others will be willing to partner with me to make positive change.

My best friend, Andrea—your support is unflagging, which is often no less than heroic due to the demands of being my best friend. I think it is safe to say that I trust your advice more than I trust my own. You remind me every day that reality is constructed and thus it is possible to for me to make my own reality and be exactly who I want to be no matter what others might think.

My friend, Jennifer (aka “The fer that is Jen”)—you are my number one fan, and you are not afraid to tell me when I am being a pain in the...

The members of the “I did it did you group” (past, present, and future)—you help me take care of my body, my soul, and my spirit.

My Texas “friends”—I do not throw the title and distinction of “friend” around lightly. Since moving to Texas, the two women whom I have been able to associate this title with are Jennifer and Sara. You are women of strength and quality and you have earned my respect.

My “students”—thank you for invigorating me and giving me the motivation to wake up in the morning.

My respondents—I am forever grateful that you agreed to share your input and perspectives candidly with me. In particular, a special thank you is due to “Rajiv” and “Arisa.” It was because of my friendship with the each of you that I felt compelled to conduct this research. I only hope that I have “done right” by you.

My family—for raising me with “benign neglect” and thus not getting overly bent out of shape when I refuse perfectly solid advice simply to be contrary and do it my own way. I am so lucky to have such healthy roots and strong role-models. You are all independent, persistent, reliable, and wise.

To “the network”—this includes all of the acquaintances, friends, and extended family whom I didn’t have room to list. I believe we are all “teachers” and we are all “students.” Whether it was your express intention or not, you have taught me more than you will ever know! I know from my own experience that it often takes as little as ONE contact to be affected by, influenced by, or create a connection with someone, and thus it is unfortunate that many whom I am referring to in this acknowledgement may not even

know that I am talking about them. I am compelled to thank them regardless, as their actions have helped shape the person that I am and the person I am still becoming.



## NOMENCLATURE

ASU	Arizona State University
B/CS	Bryan/College Station
BPD	Bryan Police Department
CSPD	College Station Police Department
FSCIC	Faculty and Staff Committed to an Inclusive Campus
GT	Georgia Tech
IGSNNES	International Graduate Student Non-Native English Speaker
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISS	International Student Services
NES	Native English Speaker
NNES	Non-Native English Speaker
SA	Student Activities
TAMU	Texas A&M University
UA	University Apartments
UPD	University Police Department

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## INTRODUCTION: THE PROLEPTIC MOMENT

In the Slattery and Rapp (2003) book, *Ethics and the foundations of education: Teaching convictions in the postmodern world*, Slattery asks “have you ever had an experience in which time stood still? Not in the sense of being completely out of touch with reality, but rather a moment of clarity or understanding about your entire life: what you have done, where you are now, and what you will be in the future” (p. 75). He calls this moment “proleptic” and claims “literary scholars and English majors will recognize this word as describing the moment in a short story or novel when the reader becomes fully cognizant of past, present, and future events all in one instant” (p.74). For me, this proleptic moment did not occur as I was reading a fictional story. Rather, it happened when I learned that my friend, whom I will refer to as “Rajiv” in an effort to protect his confidentiality, had been struck with a metal baseball bat for no reasons other than the color of his skin and his country of origin.

Perhaps it is significant, or at the very least fitting, that I learned about both the proleptic moment and the assault on Rajiv from the same source. I first read about the proleptic moment in the Slattery and Rapp (2003) book, and I first heard about the assault on Rajiv when Slattery mentioned it to one of his classes. In that instant, I found myself flashing back to a previous incident—an act of relationship violence that Rajiv and I had witnessed while we were riding in a car together. I also recalled all that I had studied about violence and brutality historically acted out by dominant groups in an effort to maintain their power. In particular, I thought of the newspaper headlines and

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This thesis follows the style of *Curriculum Inquiry*.

articles I had read over the past several years which recounted graphic details of assaults on students who appeared, as does Rajiv, to be of Middle-Eastern decent at college campuses in post 9/11 America. I also felt myself at once connected to Rajiv even though he was no where near me at the time. In that same moment, I knew that in the very near future, I would somehow be involved in trying to learn as much as I could about this incident in an effort to bring about social changes through education that would help prevent such incidents from ever occurring again.

I will not be so brazen as to claim that in my proleptic moment of clarity I was able to foresee that this assault on my friend, an international graduate student and Non-Native English Speaker (IGSNNES), would be the first of many such assaults in the Northgate area (roughly the area between University Drive and Old College Road, and Wellborn Road and South College Road) of Texas A&M University (TAMU) in the Bryan/College Station (B/CS) area. However, once the proleptic moment had passed, and time began to march on in its traditional way, assaults on other IGSNNESs began to come to light, as if what I had at first thought was a personal proleptic moment was actually a proleptic moment for us all.

## IN THE WAKE

My feeling is that it is apropos to think about the following phenomenon: occasionally there are profound moments that occur that no one may realize at the time are significant, not only in and of themselves, but also as an indicator of a larger shift in history. Danto (1992) asserts that generally no one is aware of a moment in time that

signifies a greater shift in overall history because it is not “headline” news. This is true of Rajiv’s incident as well, for although news stories were eventually written about the assault, very few people were aware of the event when it occurred. Even I, Rajiv’s friend, had no idea that he had been assaulted until hearing about it class. The student body in general was not officially informed of the assault until 20 days after it occurred when an e-mail was issued by TAMU’s Vice Provost (William Perry, personal communication, June 21, 2005). Rajiv’s incident initiated a series of policy changes and additions. Up until this point, there were no clear policies that stated how and when the student body should be informed about hate crimes (Saugier, 2005). Presently, as of May 13, 2005, there are still no official policies, but some preliminary improvements to the campus alerting process have been made. For example, in the first campus alert e-mail very few details about the assault were given:

...an international graduate student reported being physically and verbally assaulted in Northgate at about 10 p.m. on Wednesday, June 1, 2005, by unknown individuals...(William Perry, personal communication, June 21, 2005).

Students had no way of knowing how severe the assault was; there was no mention that Rajiv had been struck with a metal baseball bat. Students also were not informed that given the nature of what the assailants yelled at Rajiv while they were assaulting him, the most likely motivation of the assault was racially based.

Additionally, the e-mail did not include details regarding how to contact the appropriate authorities with any additional information that the students may have been privy to in order to help catch the assailants. Refer to Appendix 1, “Campus Crime Alert E-mails,”

for examples of four campus crime alert e-mails sent to students which describe assaults on numerous IGSNNESs, including Rajiv.

Eventually word spread about the assault on Rajiv. The following photograph and caption, Figure 1, appeared in the TAMU school newspaper, *The Battalion*, in the July 28, 2005, edition. The photograph was taken during a rally held after news of Rajiv's assault was released to the student body.



More than 300 students, faculty and community members gathered along University Drive late Wednesday night bearing candles and signs protesting hate. The event, sponsored by Make Aggieland Safe for Everyone, comes in the wake of an assault on an international student in the Northgate area. The event included a candlelight vigil and the reading of testimonials of hate-related incidents that have occurred in the community (Reeves, 2005).

FIGURE 1. MASE Rally. (Reeves, 2005)

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Feagin (2000) posits, “People are born, live and die within a racist system” (p. 4). If this statement is true, and I believe it is, it means that no one can escape the effects of institutional inequalities, and thus IGSNNESs are not unique in grappling with the unjust system in which the assault on Rajiv occurred. The mere fact that all people are



operating within a racist system does not let anyone off the hook, it simply means that a more in depth analysis is in order to find the seemingly mundane roots of racism that are capable of producing individuals willing to assault others. Just as the lyrics of the song “Strange Fruit,” written by Abel Meeropol (pseudonym Lewis Allan) sometime in the 1930s and performed for the first time in 1939, imply, it is possible to cultivate and develop people capable of physically assaulting others just as one would grow fruit “southern trees bear a strange fruit, blood on the leaves and blood at the root” (Meeropol, n.d.). I equate the assaults that have occurred as the “fruit” that has grown from the tree fed at the “root” by “blood” and racism.

So how can this cycle of violence be altered or stopped? Another way of looking at the problem, instead of from the fruit and root metaphor, is to think of racism as taking place in two arenas, both frontstage and backstage. Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) have begun using the terms “Frontstage Racism” and “Backstage Racism” to help illustrate this duality of behaviors. Frontstage Racism includes the acts that occur out in public view between people of different races. In particular, Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) use this term to refer to acts that are discriminatory, destructive, or violent between Whites and those of other races. Backstage Racism includes what is said and done that is racialized, and thus harmful, by people of one race when they are in a homogenous environment about those of another race (Picca & Feagin, forthcoming). When acts of racism are witnessed or reported, they are on display in the frontstage and can be analyzed and interpreted; but what about acts of racism that occur in the

backstage? My research project was conducted as an effort to peel back the curtain on what is happening in the backstage and bring it forward.

It knew it was necessary for me to determine who I would speak with in my study; given that I would be conducting my research with limited resources, I knew that I would only be able to speak to a relatively small number of students. If we are all born into racism, we all must exhibit, or at the very least consistently witness, racist behaviors in the frontstage. I wanted to know what was happening in the backstage as well. Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) attempted to get a glimpse at what happens in the backstage(s) of White students at colleges and universities in the United States by encouraging hundreds of these students to keep journals recounting the racialized comments that were made while they were exclusively in the company of other Whites. Had I chosen to speak with White students at TAMU about backstage racism, I would have had plenty to choose from. As shown in Figure 2, White students account for approximately 77% of the overall population of students at TAMU (Office of Institutional Studies at Texas A&M, 2004). However, I felt that speaking with IGSNNESs about their perceptions would perhaps be more enlightening than speaking with White students. There has been increased awareness that minority students' perceptions about a campus climate are an integral factor that will indicate their chances of success or failure. The heightened dropout rate of many minority students on predominantly White campuses has been attributed to inhospitable climates (McClellan, Cogdal, Lease, and Londono-McConnell, 1996). As TAMU is a predominantly White campus, I wanted to know how TAMU IGSNNESs were feeling.

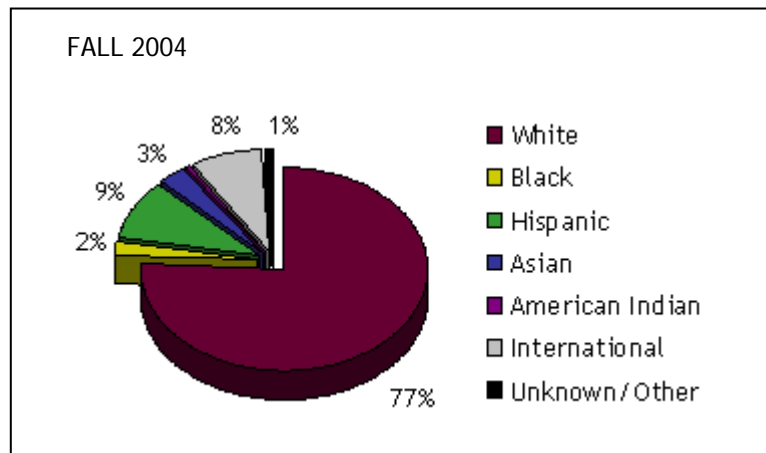


FIGURE 2. TAMU Population Percentages. (Office of Institutional Studies at Texas A&M, 2004)

There are moments when the curtains between the front and back stages part and those on one side are able to get a glimpse at what is happening on the other side.

Ronald Takaki is a Japanese American who has experienced this spectacle numerous times in his life. Takaki (1993) recounts a dialogue that occurred between a taxi driver and him on his way to a multicultural educator conference:

“How long have you been in this country?” he asked. “All my life,” I replied, wincing. “I was born in the United States.” With a strong southern drawl, he remarked: “I was wondering because your English is excellent!” Then, as I had many times before, I explained: “My grandfather came here from Japan in the 1880’s. My family has been here, in America, for over a hundred years.” He glanced at me in the mirror. Somehow I did not look “American” to him; my eyes and complexion looked foreign. Suddenly, we both became uncomfortably conscious of a radical divide separating us” (p. 1).

Occasionally, people consciously or unconsciously step too far forward and expose in the frontstage what they normally think, say, and do in the backstage. At

TAMU, the assault that occurred on June 1, 2005, and all of those that followed were observable in the frontstage. My goal in this study was to find a part in the curtains to look into the backstage at the root of the problem; to look at the acts of racism and discrimination I would not normally get the opportunity to see. To do this, I decided to speak with IGSNNESs about not only what they have witnessed in the frontstage, but also what they have inadvertently discovered about “other” people’s backstage. Gentile (1985) points out that “everyone is someone else’s ‘Other’” (p. 7). I wanted to know who the IGSNNESs felt their “other” was, and what they had been able to catch their other doing when their other let their guard down. Additionally, I wanted to find out what, if any, mechanisms these students were aware of that might help them expose the roots of racism before those roots had a chance to bear the violent frontstage fruits of racism.

Studies focused on international graduate students in the United States are important as the numbers of these students are expected to continue to increase significantly; while the number of American-born graduate students has already decreased more than 50% and is expected to continue along the same trend (Smith, Byrd, Nelson, Barrett, and Constantinides, 1992). At TAMU, international students make up only 1% of undergraduates, but they make up nearly 40% of graduates (Office of Institutional Studies at Texas A&M, 2004). If national trends continue, TAMU should expect an increase in these numbers (Smith, Byrd, Nelson, Barrett, and Constantinides, 1992). However, if students do not believe that a campus climate will be hospitable, they may choose to enroll elsewhere. Even before a student enrolls in a

school, the perceived campus climate plays a huge role. In the fall of 1999 administrators at TAMU were curious about the possible reasons why nearly 50% of minority students who were admitted decided not to attend (Rice and Arekere, 2000). The Race & Ethnic Studies Institute at TAMU was charged with tracking down these students and interviewing them and their families about the reasons they had decided to opt out of attending TAMU. Though several reasons were cited, many potential students recounted stories about how experiences of having been treated rudely by college personnel had led to their decision not to attend (Rice and Arekere, 2000). I felt it was vital that a thorough assessment of international graduate students and their perceptions about the current campus climate be conducted so that TAMU would not inadvertently turn away potential future students. While the designation of a “thorough assessment” is perhaps beyond the scope of my specific study, I believe my study will help lay the groundwork for future research attempts.

For those who would claim the assaults on the IGSNNESs that have occurred on the TAMU campus are isolated events, I would like to point out the larger context in which these assaults have taken place. Campuses across the nation have been experiencing assaults similar to these in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001 (9/11). For example, there was an assault which took place on September 13, 2001, at Arizona State University (ASU) that was reported in the school’s online newspaper the *Web Devil*:

A Muslim ASU student was assaulted on campus Thursday morning, according to ASU police. Ahmad Saad Nasim, 23, was knocked to the ground in Lot 59 at about 7 a.m. He was reportedly punched or kicked and hit with eggs while his attackers chanted, “Die Muslim, Die,” ASU officials said . . . . “It looks to us that

it was a response to the attacks on the East Coast,” ASU spokesman Keith Jennings said. “People are reacting to a stereotype rather than reacting to the individual themselves” (Koch, 2001).

The report about this assault on the ASU campus went out to the student body the day after it occurred. Included in the report was a speculation by an ASU spokesperson that the assault was motivated by the events of 9/11. Another such assault occurred at Georgia Tech University (GT) nearly a year and a half later. Instead of informing the student body of the assault within 24 hours, as did officials at ASU, GT officials waited two weeks before informing their students about the assault on their campus. Furthermore, in the coverage of this incident on the GT Web site, it appears that the school representative reporting the incident was attempting to downplay the possibility that the assault was motivated by 9/11:

Two weeks ago, one of our students was attacked behind the College of Computing in the early morning hours of February 28th. He is a student of Indian descent...his attackers were two white males. There is an active police investigation into this crime, but we do not yet have enough facts to determine if race or ethnicity played a role in it, or if the assailants were even Georgia Tech students (Clough, 2003).

Some students at GT as well as the members of the national human rights activist group Historians Against the War were critical of the official coverage that the assault on the GT campus received. A posting on the Historians Against the War Web site reads:

... the student attacked is a South Asian...he has stitches on the face, and has lost part of a tooth, and was kicked repeatedly, leaving him with severe bruises. Although there is no other hypothesis other than racial prejudice that's plausible, it's hard/impossible to prove intention, and the assailants have not been found or questioned. The official response is that this particular ethnic identity is “invisible” and therefore not plausibly linked to the cause of the attack. The student is completely traumatized, and this bureaucratic exercise makes him feel

as if the violence against him is being taken lightly (Historians Against the War, 2003).

A second posting on the same site reads:

On February 28th a Georgia Tech (GT) International Student from India was attacked on campus by two white males. To this date the GT administration has not sent out an alert to the student body under a technicality that the crime was not a felony. The crime appears to be racially motivated, as the student's wallet and backpack were not taken, he was only physically assaulted. The attack was sudden and no money was asked for. It is important that the student body be alerted to this attack immediately, so others are particularly cautious during this time. Further, it is imperative that the university discuss with its international student body the ramifications of this attack in the current climate of war and how best they can ensure their safety (Historians Against the War, 2003).

I understand that the assault at ASU, the assault at GT, and the assault on Rajiv are each separate incidents that may or may not be linked in any significant way. Still, I am struck by my own personal observation that the more time that has passed between 9/11 and the three assaults I have just highlighted, the weaker the institutional response has been. The details of the first assault at ASU were reported to students within 24 hours, and the assault was assumed to be racially motivated from the very beginning. The second assault, at GT, was not reported to the student body until two weeks after it occurred, and at that time it was questioned as to whether the assault was racially or ethnically motivated. The assault on Rajiv was not reported to the TAMU student population until 20 days after it occurred. In the campus alert e-mail that was sent out to TAMU students, there was no mention of the possible motivations for the crime (William L. Perry, personal communication, June 21, 2005). The phenomenon of waiting increasing amounts of time before reporting incidents of violence to students, and the further phenomenon of refusing to name the incidents as racially or ethnically

motivated—or at the very least, refusing to acknowledge the likelihood that the assaults were racially motivated—seems to me to be indicative of a problem. The problem the way I see it is that there is an effort to cover up and hide incidents that are occurring to IGSNNESs in the frontstage and somehow force these events into the backstage, where they can be concealed and protected from further scrutiny.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to help expose the backstage roots of racism and discrimination toward IGSNNESs on the TAMU campus in the wake of the assault on Rajiv, I developed a set of five main research questions, and one sub-question. My first set of research questions were all linked together and focused on the perceptions of the IGSNNESs:

1. What was it like to be an individual member of a group that had publicly been symbolically and literally stripped of power; more specifically—what was it like to be an IGSNNES at TAMU post June 1, 2005?
2. What experiences with racism had IGSNNESs encountered in the frontstage?
3. What experiences with racism had IGSNNESs been exposed to in their “other’s” backstage?
4. How did these encounters make them feel about their safety and about being a student at TAMU?
5. Did they have any idea how to empower themselves by revealing what they had seen, heard, and experienced to others so that the racism that had



previously lurked in the backstage could be exposed to the scrutiny of all in the frontstage?

My sub-question was inspired by my role as an educator, and as someone who had high hopes of doing a research project that had the potential to be a catalyst for social change. I wanted to know:

6. What were the educational and institutional implications of the data I uncovered?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

My first set of questions sought to help me better understand the experiences of IGSNNESs. Ellsworth (1989) speaks about her own attempts to better understand her students, and her realization of the limitations of such an endeavor “. . . I could not unproblematically ‘help’ a student of color to find her/his authentic voice as a student of color” (p. 309). Just as Ellsworth could not help her students, I could not help the students who would respond to my study; there were very powerful forces weighing in on these IGSNNESs that I had no control over and could not help them negotiate.

Ellsworth (1989) continues:

They just are not talking in their authentic voices, or they are declining/refusing to talk at all, to critical educators who have been unable to acknowledge the presence of knowledges that are challenging and most likely inaccessible to their own social positions. What they/we say, to whom, in what context, depending on the energy they/we have for the struggle on a particular day, is the result of conscious and unconscious assessments of the power relations and safety of the situation (p. 313).

I wanted to help these IGSNNESs by partnering with them in some way so they would have an opportunity to be heard, but I did not know how to go about doing that.

McLaren (2003) offered me an idea about how to negotiate this exchange in his commentary on Barthes:

Barthes suggests that teachers should employ the strategy of *disappropriation*; that is, they should deliberately cast off authority as a speaker so that students can claim some authority of their own. In this way, the teacher is no longer a hegemonic overlord, a representative of the dominant culture who tells students whether their interpretations of events are valid—in short, who tells them *who they are*. Instead the teacher actively assumes a counterhegemonic role; the teacher actively contests existing relations of power and privilege (p. 252).

So I figured I might partially cast off my role of power and privilege in a couple of ways: First, I would use the IGSNNESs words verbatim, or as close to it as humanly possible, so that I would not be inadvertently misrepresenting them by paraphrasing. Also, I would ask them several questions about what *they* thought I should ask. By doing this, they would have an opportunity to tell me what they were thinking, unfettered by my own biases. McLaren (2003), however, not only cautions about the need to take on a counterhegemonic role, he also admonishes:

One has to be careful here . . . the overall purpose of the critical educator is to reveal to students the forces behind their own interpretations, to call into question the ideological nature of their experiences, and to help students discover the interconnections between the community, culture, and the larger capitalist social relations of exploitation: in short, to engage in a dialectic of self and society (p. 252).

It would not be sufficient for me to simply ask my questions and have the IGSNNESs respond. I would have to actively participate in adapting the questions as I went along so that I could react to the information that was provided in a way that would help reveal some of the hidden forces that may have been responsible for these answers

in the first place. Ellsworth (1989) sheds light on some of these hidden forces “. . . the mythical norm deployed for the purpose of setting the standard of humanness against which Others are defined and assigned privilege . . . at this moment in history . . . is young, White, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied, thin, middle-class, English speaking, and male” (p. 323). It is nearly impossible for the IGSNNESs at TAMU to fit into this “mythical norm,” for although they may or may not embody a few of the characteristics Ellsworth (1989) highlights, they are rarely thought of as “White,” often practice religions other than Christianity, and—though they must speak a proficient level of English in order to become students at TAMU—are not often thought of as Native English speakers (NESs).

In my study, I chose to use McKay’s (2002) description of “Native” and “Non-Native” speakers which she takes from Kachru (1989). McKay (2002) clarifies the difference between NNESs and NESs by dividing countries where English is spoken into three categories—Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle. The “Inner Circle” countries are those in which English is the primary language used. Inner Circle countries include those such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. People from Inner Circle countries are considered to be NESs, while those from the Outer and Expanding Circles are considered to be NNESs (McKay, 2002). I chose only to speak with international graduate students from Outer and Expanding Circle countries, and thus I refer to them in my study as IGSNNESs.

This research project is not intended to be used to make generalizations or predictions about what the IGSNNESs who did not respond to my survey might have

said about their own perceptions of TAMU. Furthermore, though the students who volunteered their voices in this study were no doubt as honest and open as they felt comfortable being, Ellsworth (1989) cautions that we cannot “. . . [lose] sight of the contradictory and partial nature of all voices” (p. 312). Ellsworth (1989) asks the question, “Why doesn’t this feel empowering?” in the title of her article recounting her attempts to encourage a space of open sharing and discussion within her classroom. She recalls, “participants expressed much pain, confusion, and difficulty in speaking because of the ways in which discussions called up their multiple and contradictory social positionings” (p. 312). Ellsworth (1989) specifically addresses the unique complexity and difficulties that affected her students who happened to be NNEs. She reports, “Among international students, both those who were of color and those who were White found it difficult to join their voices with those of the U.S. students of color when it meant a subordination of their oppressions as people living under U.S. imperialist policies and as students for whom English was a second language” (p. 312). I had to acknowledge that some IGSNNEs might not want to speak with me because doing so would not necessarily lead to a feeling of empowerment.

My connection to IGSNNEs as both a teacher and a friend has always been very important to me, and as I began to think about the importance of this bond, I began also to consider the potential influence of my own biased perspectives. My thoughts went back to Ellsworth (1989) and her struggles with coming to terms with her own biases and lack of ability to break free of stereotyping, “I cannot unproblematically bring subjugated knowledges to light when I am not free of my own learned racism, fat

oppression, classism, ableism, or sexism. No teacher is free of these learned and internalized oppressions. Nor are accounts of one group's suffering and struggle immune from reproducing narratives oppressive to another's . . ." (p. 307). Not only would I have to fight against my own "internalized oppressions," I would additionally have to be cognizant of the ways in which I was oppressing and subjugating those in my study just by virtue of who I am in comparison to who they are.

In my life, I have often grappled with feelings of being both the oppressed and the oppressor. It seems as though I have walked a tightrope of power imbalance all of my life. At some points, I have been high above everyone else, and at others I have been falling perilously toward the ground, and yet I have had to keep getting up and walking the line. My life has been spent as a minority among minorities among minorities, which at times meant I was viewed as unique and special, and at other times meant I was viewed as a "freak." My mother was born in Bombay, India. My father was born in Virginia, Minnesota, and his family was originally from Lithuania. Both of my parents are Jewish. I was born in Monterey Park, California, and raised in Alhambra, California, where the population was more than 75% Eastern Asian. In an elementary school of more than 800 students, I towered over every single one of the girls, and all but one of the boys. I look like a Latina, but I am not, so even though I am often at first accepted by, I am also often promptly rejected by, many Latinos. Most of the time, I pass as White and my family was upper-middle class, so I have certainly enjoyed more than my share of privilege and social capital. In fact, at times, I would argue that it is my ability to pass in many different circles that gives me more privilege than most could ever hope

for. However, because of my unusual background, there have certainly been times when I have felt a distinct lack of privilege and empowerment.

When Ellsworth (1989) addresses her understandings about racism, she states: “my understanding and experience of racism will always be constrained by my white skin and middle-class privilege. Indeed it is impossible for anyone to be free from those oppressive formations at this historical moment” (p. 307). Even though I do not necessarily share the same constraints as Ellsworth, and certainly not those of the IGSNNESs in my study, I realize that no one is free of the filters through which we invariably see the world. Perhaps the best I can hope to do is acknowledge that for most people, their perceptions are the basis for their understanding of reality.

My final research question was the following: What were the educational and institutional implications of the data I uncovered? It is a particularly difficult question to grapple with given this country’s recent political and military record. In the foreword to the fourth edition of McLaren’s (2003) book *Life in Schools*, Farahmandpur (2003) asks an even larger set of questions. “In the last twenty years, the United States has bombed Libya, Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, and Yugoslavia, all poor countries where the majority of the population is dark-skinned . . . are there other ways to bring peace and social justice to the planet? Can terrorism be fought through education?” (p. xi). How can I possibly expect people in the B/CS area not to engage in frontstage and backstage racism when our country is engaged in war abroad with some of the same people I am attempting to protect at home? Farahmandpur (2003) questions

whether education can be used as a tool to fight terrorism in the global arena. His question goes beyond the scope of my study. However, I do feel that through my study I should be able to identify several recommendations for educational and institutional changes at TAMU that may help to create a safer environment for IGSNNESs.

Some might ask if it is necessary for TAMU to make institutional changes that will help better protect IGSNNESs in the first place. These individuals might claim that the recent assaults were anomalous and isolated events and cite the willingness of international students to attend school at TAMU as an indicator that IGSNNES do not feel that they are in any danger. It is certainly true that a large number of international students have chosen to attend TAMU. As shown in Figure 3, TAMU has a population of international students that is ranked 13th in the United States among leading research institutions, and 2nd amongst Texas universities (International Programs for Students, 2005).

**Leading Institution by Total Number of International Students  
TOP 20 Research Institutions Fall 2004\***

<i>Institution</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Total Int'l Students</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>
1 University of Southern California	Los Angeles	CA	6,846	30,000
2 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Champaign	IL	5,560	40,360
3 University of Texas at Austin	Austin	TX	5,333	50,377
4 Columbia University	New York	NY	5,278	23,775
5 New York University	New York	NY	5,140	38,188
6 Purdue University, Main Campus	West Lafayette	IN	4,921	38,653
7 University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor	MI	4,632	39,031
8 Boston University	Boston	MA	4,541	29,596
9 University of California - Los Angeles	Los Angeles	CA	4,217	37,563
10 The Ohio State University Main Campus	Columbus	OH	4,140	50,995
11 SUNY - University at Buffalo	Buffalo	NY	3,965	27,276
12 University of Wisconsin - Madison	Madison	WI	3,941	41,169
<b>13 Texas A&amp;M University</b>	<b>College Station</b>	<b>TX</b>	<b>3,721</b>	<b>44,813</b>
14 University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	PA	3,712	23,305
15 University of Maryland College Park	College Park	MD	3,646	34,933
16 Harvard University	Cambridge	MA	3,546	19,731
17 Indiana University at Bloomington	Bloomington	IN	3,525	37,821
18 University of Florida	Gainesville	FL	3,492	48,876
19 University of Houston	Houston	TX	3,326	34,912
Michigan State University	East Lansing	MI	3,315	44,452

Source: International Institute for Education, Open Doors 2005

Note that national data for international students is one year behind university data

FIGURE 3. Enrollment Ranking Among Top 20 Institutions.

In comparison to its peer institutions, TAMU appears to be doing quite well at recruiting international students to enroll as a significant part of the student population. This is an important issue as TAMU is in the midst of a push to reach the Vision 2020 goal of becoming one of the top ten research institutions in the nation by the year 2020; the 6th Imperative of the Vision 2020 plan is to “Globalize and Diversify the Campus”



(International Programs for Students, 2005). Students who do not feel confident about a perceived campus climate often do not enroll at all and are more likely to drop out even if they do enroll (McClellan, Cogdal, Lease, and Londono-McConnell, 1996). If there is any hope of moving forward with the goal of achieving the 6th Imperative of increasing the number of international students on this campus, it is crucial that these students view the campus climate as hospitable and safe. So far, word of the recent assaults on IGSNNESs has not spread much further than the local B/CS area. In my study, I even found that many of the IGSNNESs who currently attend TAMU were unaware of several of the assaults. I am afraid that we at TAMU are one step away from a tragedy that may irrevocably remain a national and international headline. The time to act is now in order to prune this problem at its root before it is too late.

For those who would claim that TAMU cannot possibly be held responsible for the recent assaults, I would caution that laws are currently being evaluated that may hold university campuses accountable for the safety of their students. Epstein (2002) cautions about challenges and changes in the judicial system that may begin to hold colleges and universities accountable for such incidents as the shootings at Appalachian Law School and Simon's Rock College of the Bard; and murder-suicides at the University of Iowa, Harvard University, and the University of Arkansas. Presently, there is a debate about whether colleges and universities have a custodial or circumstantial relationship with their students (Epstein, 2002). Under current federal laws, colleges and universities are not required to guarantee student safety, but Epstein (2002) is quick to point out that an Arizona court found Maricopa County Community College District to be responsible in

a case in which a student reported having been threatened by another student to campus security. Campus security spoke to the individual accused of harassment, but less than an hour later the same individual killed the student who had been previously threatened (Epstein, 2002). It is my sincere hope that my study, and future studies inspired by my research, will help to identify signs of potential violence before the consequences become dire and irreparable.

## METHODOLOGY

There were two main parts to my study, an online survey and two focus groups. The online survey was used primarily to discover which IGSNNESs I would speak with in focus group interviews. I designed my research using Merriam's (1998) model for qualitative research which she calls "interpretive study." In interpretive study, "the researcher must physically go to the people, setting, site, and institution (the field) in order to observe behavior in its natural setting" (p. 7). Though I would not be physically present with my research participants during the online survey portion of my study, it was of critical importance that I be present and actively involved in the focus group interviews. Merriam posits (1998) ". . . the human instrument, which is best able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data" (p. 5). I had made the decision to be the primary and sole researcher in my study. I hope future studies will include multiple researchers so that larger numbers of students can be interviewed to gain a greater understanding about the lived experiences of IGSNNESs on university campuses. While my sample is small, my inability to speak with vast numbers of IGSNNESs at TAMU in no way diminishes the significance of my findings as I specifically designed my research to be in line with the interpretive paradigm. Schram (2003) writes about the tenets of the interpretive paradigm:

As an interpretivist researcher, your aim is to understand complex and constructed reality from the point of view of those who live in it. Necessarily, then, you are focused on particular people, in particular places, at particular times—situating people's meanings and constructs within and amid specific social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and other contextual factors (p. 33).

As an interpretivist researcher, I was interested in finding the particular students who would be able to provide me with the most robust answers to my first set of guiding research questions.

## PARTICIPANT SELECTION

I wanted to have at least one focus group that was specifically made up of IGSNNESs who had been physically assaulted and had reported their incidents as acts of Frontstage Racism. I was interested in hearing if and how these students' perceptions of TAMU had changed following their assaults. Rajiv was a friend of mine before he was assaulted, and thus, it was easy for me to contact him and ask him to participate in my study. Of the other IGSNNESs who had been assaulted, I had knowledge of only two of their names as the rest had decided to remain anonymous when they reported their crimes. Although I believe that all of the students who were assaulted, and even the international non-native speaking *parent* of an international student who additionally was assaulted, would have had valuable insights to share, I was asking these individuals to bring to the frontstage once again what had happened to them. I did not think that it was appropriate or necessary to attempt to find out through my sources what the names of the other IGSNNESs who had been assaulted were, even though I probably could have easily done so. They had requested anonymity, and in my study I could promise them only confidentiality. I set out instead to contact the IGSNNESs who had chosen to use their names when reporting their crimes. I used my connections within the IGSNNES community to contact each of these two students and ask them if they would

be willing to participate in a focus group. Only one of these two students responded; fortunately, he agreed to speak with me.

I did not guarantee anonymity to any of my respondents. Instead I helped to ensure their confidentiality by allowing each respondent to choose their own pseudonym. There were two members in the first focus group. The first was Rajiv, and the second, also a male South Asian, chose to be called “Ahmed.”

With the members of my first focus group lined up, I had to figure out how to find IGSNNESs who would be willing to fill out my online survey and potentially speak with me further in an additional focus group session. This was not a university-funded research project, so I did not have access to master lists containing all IGSNNESs’ personal contact information. I did, however, have access to the organization search tool on the TAMU Student Activities Web site <http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/orgsearch/>. I used this tool to look up officially recognized student organizations that had an international focus. I sent out a mass e-mail to all of the addresses that were listed in affiliation with the organizations I had selected, urging the members of these organizations to take my survey and spread the word about my survey to others who would be eligible to take it (i.e., other IGSNNESs). I also used word of mouth and told all of my IGSNNES friends that they should consider taking my survey as well.

I received 21 usable survey responses between the time that I established a link to my survey and the time that I closed the link (approximately one month). At the most recent count, there were 3,122 IGSNNESs enrolled at TAMU (Office of Institutional Studies, 2004). I read through the responses to my online survey then used Patton’s

(1990) concept of “purposeful sampling” by choosing to speak in person with three students who wrote specifically about their experiences with discrimination on this campus. Patton (1990) writes, “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in depth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling” (p. 169). It made sense to me to speak in person with students who had already articulated through their online survey responses that they had valuable information that would help to address and answer the guiding research questions which had inspired my survey questions. The students I selected had several characteristics in common: they had witnessed, been a target of, and/or heard about incidents of discrimination against IGSNNESs; they had a mixture of positive and negative responses about their perceptions and feelings about being a student at TAMU; they had suggestions for how to improve the current campus climate; and they did not know all of the appropriate steps for filling out an incident report.

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

I created an online survey for the convenience of my respondents, and also for my own ease in data collection. However, this method of qualitative research data collection, in which rigidly structured and ordered questions are presented to subjects can be problematic. Merriam (1998) explains, “The problem with using a highly structured interview in qualitative research is that rigidly adhering to predetermined questions may not allow you to access participants’ perspectives and understandings of

the world. Instead you get the *investigator's* preconceived notions of the world” (p. 74). Though I acknowledge that my use of an online survey format may have negatively impacted the potential richness of my initial data collection, I felt that the online survey portion of my study could serve as a “pilot” study that would help inform and improve my focus group interviews. Merriam (1998) writes about the importance of conducting “pilot” studies:

The key to getting good data from interviewing is to ask good questions; asking good questions takes practice. Pilot interviews are crucial for trying out questions. Not only do you get some practice in interviewing, you also quickly learn which questions are confusing and need rewording, which questions yield useless data, and which questions, suggested by your respondents, you should have thought to include in the first place (p. 75).

I used the online survey portion of my study as a “pilot” study of sorts. I not only determined which of my questions needed to be modified or adapted, I also added questions to my focus group interviews that were suggested by my respondents. The following is a list of the 18 questions I included as a part of my online survey as well as my rationale for each question.

1. *Please choose a pseudonym (fake name) to maintain your confidentiality.* I wanted the identities of my respondents to remain confidential in an effort to protect them against any repercussions of what they might divulge to me. I did not want them to have to filter themselves for fear of being reprimanded. Therefore, I allowed my participants to choose their own pseudonyms.

2. *Please state your gender. (If you would prefer not to state if you are female or male, please skip this question.)* I asked this question in an effort to verify whether I

had a mixture of both male and female respondents. I also wanted to be able to determine if either gender was observing more discriminatory acts than the other.

3. *How long have you lived in the U.S.?* I believed it would be interesting to see if the types of views expressed by my respondents were in any way tied to the amount of time they had lived in the United States.

4. *How long have you been a graduate student at Texas A&M University (TAMU)?* A 2002–2004 Campus Climate Survey at TAMU showed that the longer a student was enrolled at TAMU, the more she/he became aware of the degree of racism that existed here. The percentage of non-White students who agreed that racism was a problem at TAMU increased with each classification: 33 percent of sophomores, 43 percent of juniors, and 50 percent of seniors (Student Life Studies, 2004). I wanted to determine if I would find similar results; if the amount of time that each IGSNNES had spent at TAMU would be linked negatively to their responses.

5. *How would you describe yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity and/or country of origin?* I did not want to assume anything about my respondents' racial, ethnic, or national identity. Thus, I asked them to define how they would classify themselves.

6. *When people at TAMU first meet you, what do they think about your English speaking status, and how do they indicate this to you?* The Aggie R-r-ring Survey was a campus climate-type survey that was conducted at TAMU; it included questions about how it feels to be a visible minority on this campus (Student Life Studies, 2004). The Aggie R-r-ring Survey did not include questions specifically targeted at IGSNNESs.



These students not only have to deal with discrimination based on their appearance, they also frequently have to deal with others (mis)perceptions about their language (in)abilities. This question was created in an effort to learn more about any perceived language ability–based discrimination that IGSNNESs may feel.

7. *Have you heard of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so, please tell me a bit more about what you have heard.)* The recent assaults on IGSNNESs were the inspiration for my research. These assaults occurred in the frontstage. I wanted to know if there had been other incidents that had been discussed only by members of the IGSNNES group in their backstage. I also wanted to leave the definition of the word “discrimination” unspecified so that I might be able to learn about a wide range of incidents that these students themselves would describe as discriminatory.

8. *Have you witnessed and/or been a target of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so, please tell me a little more about what you witnessed or experienced.)* Question number seven in my survey relied on hearsay. I included question eight to learn about eyewitness and personal accounts of discrimination that previously had not been discussed in the frontstage.

9. *Do you live in the Northgate area (yes/no)?* Many documented incidents of violence and discrimination have occurred in the Northgate area. I wanted to see if there was a correlation between negative trends of responses and residence in, or frequency of traversing, the Northgate area.

10. *Please tell me a little bit about your typical exposure to the Northgate area. (How often you go through or visit, what time of day you are typically there, what you are usually doing when you are there, etc.)* The Northgate area was the site of all of the incidents of violence toward IGSNNESs that I was aware of before conducting my research. I was curious about the reasons IGSNNESs were frequenting the area.

11. *There have been several assaults on non-native English speakers and other visible minority students in the Northgate area. Does this affect the frequency with which you visit this area?* I did not conduct this research project merely to satisfy my own curiosity. My hope was that I would be able to share the information I had obtained with campus and local organizations and businesses so any necessary and feasible improvements could be made. If the assaults were in any way negatively influencing the frequency of the IGSNNESs' exposure to Northgate, I hoped that these organizations and businesses would begin to critically think about new ways to make Northgate a more safe and hospitable environment.

12. *Do you feel safe where you live and/or on the TAMU campus? Why or why not?* I am not an IGSNNES, and yet, after hearing about the assaults on these students, I no longer feel safe in the Northgate area and I do everything I can to avoid going there. Still, I have never thought too much about my safety on this campus, or where I live, as overall I feel quite safe in the B/CS area. I wanted to know how IGSNNESs felt about safety on campus and in their places of residence.

13. *Would you recommend TAMU to a non-native English speaker or a visible minority student? Why or why not?* If I were an IGSNNES, I would have serious

reservations about recommending TAMU to other IGSNNESs given the assaults that have taken place. However, I am not an IGSNNES, so I needed to ask them how they felt about recommending TAMU.

14. *What suggestions do you have for the university to improve the current campus climate (the way that students feel about the campus experience)?* I do not believe that it should be the responsibility of IGSNNESs to improve the campus climate for other IGSNNESs. However, I felt that these students may have some valuable insights and ideas to share that could help the university move in a positive and more welcoming direction.

15. *To the best of your ability, please explain: 1. what an incident report is, 2. a few common reasons someone might want to fill out an incident report, and 3. how to file an incident report.* I actually felt the need to change this question after I had received only a few responses to my online survey. The original question was: *Do you know what an incident report is and when and how to file one? (If so, please explain.)* The initial responses I received were just the word “no.” I wanted to dig a little deeper and push for more information. I hoped that by changing the wording of the question from a yes/no format to an open-ended format, I would receive richer data and more revealing responses.

16. *In an emergency it is best to call 911 (or 9-911 if you are using a campus phone). If you had to call the police for a nonemergency and you were off campus at the time, which police department (Bryan, College Station, or University) would you call? Please explain your choice.* Were I not to have been friends with Rajiv, and thus

intimately familiar with the details of his assault, I would not have thought to have asked this question. To be honest, I would not have known the correct answer to this question before learning about the difficulties Rajiv faced in reporting his assault to the proper police department. The correct response is that you should call the police department in which the incident takes place (not necessarily the one responsible for where you live). I wanted to know if the university and the local police departments had been able to get this message across to IGSNNESs.

*17. If you are willing to be contacted to answer more questions about your perceptions and experiences, please provide your contact information below. If not, please skip this question.* My online survey was designed for the most part as a pilot survey that would serve the purpose of helping me to refine my questions for the focus group interview sessions. However, I also used the online survey to identify a group of IGSNNESs who had responded with complex answers and were willing to be contacted for further questioning. The online survey could be answered in such a way as to retain the anonymity of the respondents. Agreeing to be contacted for further questioning required that the respondents provide their personal identification information. This meant that they were agreeing to move from an anonymous identity to a confidential one because agreeing to be a part of one of my focus groups would mean having to meet with me face-to-face. It was necessary for me to ask this question in order to determine which respondents were willing to take this additional step of disclosure.

*18. Is there any information you would like to add or are there any questions that you think I should have asked you?* I felt it was important to provide a space for my

respondents to help shape the scope of my research project. This question allowed me to tap into their insights and input and add their suggestions to my final questions that I used in my focus group sessions.

Once I had honed my survey questions, I had to set up the online survey.

#### ONLINE SURVEY

In the mass e-mail that I sent out to all of the student organizations at TAMU that were listed as having an international focus, I requested that anyone who was interested in taking my survey go directly to my personal Web site, <http://www.onlyonemitzi.com>. Once these students accessed my Web site, they were directed to read my Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved informed consent form. If these IGSNNESs agreed to the terms of the consent form, they were directed to click on a separate link to access the online survey. I used Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>) to host the 18 questions of my online survey, and to provide a mechanism for easily exporting my data to a spreadsheet. Data collected from the online survey can be found in Appendix 2.

#### FOCUS GROUPS

I facilitated two focus groups. The first group consisted of two male IGSNNESs who had been physically assaulted. The interview lasted an hour and thirteen minutes. In this interview, I began asking the 18 questions that I had used for the online survey. I did this because I did not ask the two participants in this focus group to respond to the online survey portion of my study. During the course of the interview, I also

occasionally adapted and added questions as I used semistructured interview techniques. Merriam (1998) writes about the benefits of utilizing the semistructured interview when she states, “this format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic” (p. 74). As the two participants in my first focus group would respond to my questions, I would respond to what they had said in a way that would help me to better understand their meaning. For example, when Rajiv told me that he would not recommend TAMU to other IGSNNESs, I was able to ask additional questions to determine if his refusal to recommend TAMU was only based on his assault, or if there were other factors involved.

I followed a similar semistructured format of questioning for the second focus group. In this focus group session, I did not ask all of the original 18 online survey questions as I had chosen the three participants in this focus group because of their rich and interesting answers to these questions. Instead, I began with these questions to simply refresh their memories about their responses; then I continued by asking more probing questions so they would elaborate with details about some of the responses I did not fully understand the first time around. This focus group session lasted 58 minutes.

Unlike in the online survey format, in which I was the one asking all of the questions and my participants were the ones giving me all of the answers, in the focus group sessions my participants asked *me* questions about my study. I asked myself the same question that Schram (2003) asked, “how much and what types of information do I share with participants, and for what reasons?” (p. 103). I did not want to tell my

participants information that would sway their responses, but on the other hand, I did not want to betray their trust by lying to them or refusing to respond to their questions.

Schram (2003) writes about this dilemma, “. . . two unlikely bedfellows, genuineness and deception, are linked by a pragmatic, mutually justifying logic that arguably addresses the needs of both researcher and participants” (p. 104). In the end, I decided to tell my participants a little bit about my main overarching research questions which had inspired the specific survey questions of my study, but not about how I felt they should respond to those questions.

#### VALIDITY/CREDIBILITY/RELIABILITY

Why is my research valid? Including both online survey participants and focus group participants, I received responses from only 23 IGSNNESs. The number of IGSNNESs enrolled at TAMU is well over 3,000 (Office of Institutional Studies, 2004). In the end, I spoke with less than one percent of the overall TAMU IGSNNES population. How can I be certain that the responses of my participants reflect those of their peers? The simple answer is that I cannot guarantee that my results are generalizable. I would never attempt to make such a claim. Schram (2003) indicates, “. . . it is not necessary (or feasible) to reach some ultimate truth in order for your study to be credible and useful . . . credibility does not demand certainty” (p. 97). It will never be possible to reach a simple conclusion or answer to my guiding research questions using only the limited data that I collected.

It is important to keep in mind that the results of my particular study can never be duplicated exactly. Even if I were to do the same project myself and speak to the same people, I would not yield the same results. Merriam (1998) corroborates this phenomenon of unpredictability:

Because what is being studied . . . is assumed to be in flux, multifaceted, and highly contextual, because information gathered is a function of who gives it and how skilled the researcher is at getting it, and because the emergent design of a qualitative case study precludes a priori controls, achieving reliability in the traditional sense is not only fanciful but impossible . . . replication of the study will not yield the same results. That fact, however, does not discredit the results of the original study. Several interpretations of the same data can be made, and all stand until directly contradicted by new evidence (p. 206).

Some readers may disagree with my interpretations of the data, but they cannot deny my data unless or until new data is collected that conflicts with what I have found. I have, in good conscience selected focus group participants whom I felt would be able to contribute the most to my understanding of my guiding research questions. I asked myself the same question Merriam (1998) asked, “What makes a good respondent? . . . Good respondents are those who can express thoughts, feelings, opinions—that is offer a perspective—on the topic being studied” (p. 85). In the end, I feel that all of my focus group participants were “good” respondents because each of them willingly shared their unique perspectives with me.



## RESULTS

I have included the data from the online survey and the transcriptions of the focus group sessions in Appendices 2–4. In this section I highlight some of the themes and trends that emerged from my data. I examine these themes and trends in more detail in the discussion section.

### ONLINE SURVEY

The following is a list of my online survey questions along with a summary of the responses I collected.

1. *Please choose a pseudonym (fake name) to maintain your confidentiality.*

Each of my respondents chose a unique pseudonym.

2. *Please state your gender. (If you would prefer not to state if you are female or male, please skip this question.)* Nine females, eleven males, and one respondent who declined to state her/his gender responded to my survey.

3. *How long have you lived in the U.S.?* The range of time that my respondents had been living in the United States varied from 6 months to 32 years.

4. *How long have you been a graduate student at Texas A&M University (TAMU)?* The range of time that my respondents had been attending TAMU ranged from 6 months to 6 years.

5. *How would you describe yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity and/or country of origin?* I allowed my respondents to describe their ethnicity and country of

origin in whatever terms they desired. As far as I can tell, I had responses from three Hispanics, twelve Asians, and six Asian Indians.

6. *When people at TAMU first meet you, what do they think about your English speaking status, and how do they indicate this to you?* A few respondents mentioned being treated slightly differently or poorly because of their accents, but overall, most expressed that when people first meet them, they are told that their English skills are “good.”

7. *Have you heard of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so, please tell me a bit more about what you have heard.)* Seven respondents indicated that they had not heard of any acts of discrimination against IGSNNESs or other visible minorities. The remaining fourteen respondents all had stories they had heard about varying degrees of discriminatory acts.

8. *Have you witnessed and/or been a target of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so, please tell me a little more about what you witnessed or experienced.)* Five out of the 21 respondents recalled being a witness to and/or a target of acts of discrimination. The five respondents provided descriptions of these incidents. As an example, one Asian female respondent reported, “. . . I rode bicycle back to home, there was a truck passing me very closely, and there is two guy shouted to me: ‘Go back to your country!’ My friend put some traditional paint in his apartment door; someone wrote ‘Go back! Fuck you!’ in that paint.”

9. *Do you live in the Northgate area (yes/no)?* Five respondents were currently residing in the Northgate area. Two had lived there in the past but had since moved away. The rest of the respondents indicated that they did not live in the Northgate area.

10. *Please tell me a little bit about your typical exposure to the Northgate area. (How often you go through or visit, what time of day you are typically there, what you are usually doing when you are there, etc.)* There was a wide variety of response to this question. Some respondents never went to the Northgate area, while others passed through on a daily basis. A few respondents frequented the bars on Northgate, while others went there for lunch or other activities.

11. *There have been several assaults on non-native English speakers and other visible minority students in the Northgate area. Does this affect the frequency with which you visit this area?* Approximately half of the respondents mentioned that the assaults had at least some affect on the way that they feel while in the Northgate area or on the frequency with which they visit. One female Colombian IGSNNES responded, “No. Fortunately I don’t ‘look’ Hispanic. However, when I visit the area at night, I make sure to bring a weapon with me (usually a small knife) in the event that someone assaults me.”

12. *Do you feel safe where you live and/or on the TAMU campus? Why or why not?* Most of the respondents felt safe on campus and at home, though a few mentioned being more alert and cautious in the evenings.

13. *Would you recommend TAMU to a non-native English speaker or a visible minority student? Why or why not?* The majority of the respondents stated that they

would recommend TAMU to NNEs and visible minority students. A few respondents mentioned that they would praise the academics of the university. Others mentioned that they would recommend TAMU, but they would mention the incidents to caution new students to be careful and aware.

14. *What suggestions do you have for the university to improve the current campus climate (the way that students feel about the campus experience)?* The responses to this question varied widely. Some students had no suggestions. Others had suggestions ranging from removing the Bush library to changing the architectural look and feel of the buildings on campus. A few students mentioned a need to improve transportation services, particularly in the evenings. Other students suggested having more sensitivity trainings for faculty, staff, and students. Several students mentioned the possibility of increasing cultural awareness events, but others cited a lack of attendance by Whites at these events as a point of frustration. A couple of students specifically targeted the International Student Services (ISS) office as a place that needs to become more welcoming to international students.

15. *To the best of your ability, please explain: 1. what an incident report is, 2. a few common reasons someone might want to fill out an incident report, and 3. how to file an incident report.* Several students thought that filling out an incident report exclusively involved the police in some way. Others had no idea whatsoever about what an incident report was or how to file one. None of the students knew about the offices on campus that have incident reporting mechanisms.

16. *In an emergency it is best to call 911 (or 9-911 if you are using a campus phone). If you had to call the police for a nonemergency and you were off campus at the time, which police department (Bryan, College Station, or University) would you call? Please explain your choice.* Only four students responded to this question, and none of them gave correct answers. The proper response would be to call the police station that is in the jurisdiction where the incident takes place (not necessarily where you live).

17. *If you are willing to be contacted to answer more questions about your perceptions and experiences, please provide your contact information below. If not, please skip this question.* Eleven respondents gave contact information and were willing to answer more questions about their experiences.

18. *Is there any information you would like to add or are there any questions that you think I should have asked you?* Most respondents did not have anything to add. A few wished me luck in my study and thanked me for my interest in their responses. One respondent felt that IGSNNESs should take assimilation courses, and another questioned the relevance of my study.

## FOCUS GROUPS

I think that it will be most beneficial to discuss in depth several of the specific responses that came to light in my focus groups. Thus, I will leave the bulk of my deconstruction and analysis of my focus group sessions for the discussion section. I would, however, like to point out a couple of themes that emerged from each focus group session.

In the first focus group, I spoke with two of the IGSNNESs who had been assaulted. Neither of the students wished to recount the details of their assault. Both were far more willing and interested in discussing the possible reasons the assaults may have taken place.

In the second focus group, though the respondents mentioned a few violent incidents, their main discussion surrounded incidents that were nonviolent. All three respondents expressed varying degrees of disdain for the International Student Services (ISS) office. One student has even had to contact a lawyer because of an issue that the ISS has been unable to resolve in a timely fashion. None of the students in this group knew how to properly file an incident report.

## DISCUSSION

I feel I should be critical about my focus group participant selection process and the decisions I made regarding which research data I would include in my discussion.

Merriam (1998) cautions:

Since the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection, data have been filtered through his or her particular theoretical position and biases. Deciding what is important—what should or should not be attended to when collecting and analyzing data—is almost always up to the investigator. Opportunities thus exist for excluding data contradictory to the investigator's views (p. 216).

I admit that I had an agenda going into this research project. I was not interested in speaking with IGSNNESs who did not acknowledge that they had experienced a history of being discriminated against. I feel that IGSNNESs at TAMU who claim not to have experienced discrimination are simply in a state of denial, or they have grown so accustomed to being treated poorly that they do not perceive the treatment as differential or discriminatory. The acts of frontstage racism that have occurred on the TAMU campus and in the surrounding B/CS area reinforce my belief that the IGSNNESs on this campus are experiencing discrimination. In the space of the year and a half in which I have been a graduate student at TAMU, there have been numerous attacks on IGSNNESs. One need not look any farther than TAMU's school newspaper, *The Battalion*, to find stories of IGSNNES assaults:

June 22, 2005—Before I could process my thoughts, a guy leaned out of the window and hit me with a metal baseball bat. It was a severe pain. They hit me pretty hard. If they had hit me on the bone, I would have had a fracture. They yelled out 'f\*\*\* you' and slowed down and laughed at me. . . .(Shriver, 2005).

September 15, 2005—Two assaults, involving an international student and a relative of an international student, took place near campus this week . . . a 23-

year-old graduate student of computer science was assaulted by three juveniles using air-powered pellet pistols. . . . (Romo, 2005).

November 1, 2005— . . . a graduate student from India reported to police that he was assaulted by four White males around 3 a.m. Sunday on Cherry Street. . . . When [the student's friend] reached him, [he] was lying in a pool of blood. . . .(Thomas, 2005).

November 30, 2005—An international student reported to the University Police Department Monday that she had been the victim of two incidents while she was riding her bicycle . . . the second incident occurred Sunday when two males in a black vehicle pulled up and struck her on the back. . . .(*The Battalion*, 2005)

An article in *The Bryan-College Station Eagle* newspaper provides another overview of the assaults which took place over a period of less than seven months, from the time that Rajiv was attacked on June 1, 2005, to the time that the following article was published:

December 27, 2005—Beginning in June, a string of assaults on Texas A&M University international students were reported in the Northgate area in College Station. An Indian student said he was hit with a baseball bat and called racial slurs, and two BB-gun assaults were reported against other international students. Another international student said she was assaulted with a paintball gun, also in the Northgate area (Sullivan, 2005).

Before I began this research project, I already had strong suspicions that these assaults, which had taken place in the frontstage, were really just the most visible forms of discrimination that were taking place. I was not sure what was lurking behind the curtain in the backstage, but I knew that I would not be able to rest until I looked for myself. I have been highly selective about what I have presented in the discussion section. I have not tampered at all with the data from the online survey or the transcripts of the focus groups. (See Appendices 2–4).



Some of the data contradicts my suspicions - in that there are a number of IGSNNESs who are completely unaware of any acts of discrimination and, furthermore, do not believe that they have ever been the target of discrimination. I think it is wonderful that some IGSNNESs have no complaints about their treatment here at TAMU, and I hope that eventually all IGSNNESs will feel that way, but until then, I have chosen to focus only on the IGSNNES who have noticed that they are not being treated equitably in all stages. I feel that these students will best be able to help me answer my first set of guiding research questions. These guiding questions all attempt to clarify what it feels like to be an individual member of a group that has been publicly abused. In order to address my questions about how the power imbalance that is a byproduct of discrimination plays out in the front and back stages of IGSNNESs at TAMU, I necessarily needed to focus on students who were aware of differential treatment.

I do not feel as though I am abusing my power as a researcher because I am not exaggerating my findings. I am merely choosing to focus on specific statements that were made during the course of my study. If anything, I feel as though I may be downplaying some of the more outrageous statements that were made in an effort to do my best to heed the words of Merriam (1998) when she speaks about learning too much while conducting qualitative research. “You may (and likely will) discover more than you want to learn, either in the form of information that is potentially dangerous to some people or that may be interesting but not of critical importance to your study” (p. 105). It is impractical and imprudent for me to discuss all that I was able to uncover and

discover about my respondents' experiences. Instead I have chosen to focus on the revelations that I believe have the greatest potential to provide answers to my guiding research questions.

One of the goals of my study was to discover ways in which improvements can be made to the current educational and institutional systems in place at TAMU and in the B/CS area that will specifically benefit IGSNNESs. Therefore, I focus on the responses which reveal what my respondents indicated are current educational and institutional shortcomings. In order to highlight themes in the responses, I have taken some liberties with the order of what was said by each respondent. Occasionally I have linked together with ellipses (. . .) statements that were not necessarily made in consecutive order in an effort to make a point by combining several comments that each person said together in one place. I may have edited and rearranged their statements, but the words are their own. For the unedited transcripts, see Appendices 2-4.

I began my study with a series of guiding research questions. Out of those questions were born 18 specific survey questions for the online survey. Then I spoke in person with IGSNNESs, and their responses inspired even more questions. The questions I asked were designed to help me peek through the curtains between the front and back stages to get a closer look at the "roots" of racism. I am not sure how successful I was in this endeavor. All I know for sure is that I will be critically evaluating and mulling over what I uncovered for many years to come. The voices of my respondents will ring in my ears and haunt me. For example, I am troubled by one of the female IGSNNES respondents to my online survey who claimed to feel safe in the

Northgate area, and yet mentioned that she carries a knife with her in case she needs to protect herself. I did not invite this student to a focus group session because the rest of her answers did not seem to address my research questions. Still, it is responses such as this one that make me question whether I made the correct decisions about what and whom to focus on. I will never know if I have served the *voices* of my IGSNNES respondents as they *should* have been served. Still, I cannot help but think about something that Rajiv said during his focus group session. He said, “although I haven’t done as much as I could . . . I have done *my share* of it I guess; I mean I wouldn’t go to sleep at night feeling guilty that I didn’t stand up for myself.” I designed this research project in an effort to do “my share” of the work to improve the lives of IGSNNESs by exposing backstage and previously hidden racism, discrimination, and educational and institutional areas in need of improvement. The following is a discussion which is based on my careful analysis of the data from the online survey and the focus group discussions.

#### GUARDING AGAINST REVICTIMIZATION

In my first focus group session, I spoke with two IGSNNESs who were targets of physical assaults in the Northgate area, Rajiv and Ahmed. Both identified themselves as South Asian. Before the focus group session, I was already aware that Rajiv had been assaulted with a metal baseball bat and Ahmed had been shot at with a BB gun. However, I did not know all of the details of each incident. I attempted to attain more information about each assault by asking Rajiv and Ahmed to recount the events before,

during, and after their incidents. While both were willing to discuss their experiences before and after each assault, neither was eager to discuss the assault itself. Rajiv had the following to say:

RAJIV: You know what happened. I am not going to get into that; I have repeated it so many times. You are permitted to write whatever you would like . . . I cannot do this. I cannot do this again. . . . Oh god, I hate this. . . . This is the other thing, when you go through an assault, the drama, it stays. There is an urge to clamor; it is not—there is an element of drama that surrounds it that you cannot make go away. . . .

INTERVIEWER: So are you upset that this research project is done? Or do you think that this research project is necessary?

RAJIV: I think that it is necessary, but I think that it is the fashionable thing to recount what happened, but after some time you want to see what you can get out of it. . . .

Ahmed was even more unwilling than Rajiv to discuss his assault:

AHMED: Regarding me, can you use the article from *The Battalion*?

I could not blame Rajiv and Ahmed for not wanting to talk about their assaults, and I did not feel it was appropriate to require them to do so. Hanna (1996) debates the pros and cons of “mandated participation” of domestic violence victims during the court trials of the individuals responsible for assaulting them. Without the participation of the victim, prosecutors are less likely to get a conviction. On the other hand, if the victims are forced against her or his will to participate, there is a risk of “revictimizing the victim” (Hanna, 1996). As I was not going to be able to reach any judicial conviction regardless of whether information about the assaults was shared, I dropped this line of questioning after only a few attempts, and I moved on to the rest of my survey questions.

## WHO IS BEING ASSAULTED?

In an effort to learn more about what my respondents had discovered about front and backstage racism that had occurred within the greater TAMU community, I asked Rajiv and Ahmed to share with me stories they had heard about other TAMU students being assaulted or discriminated against in the B/CS area.

RAJIV: One of my friends, he is Pakistani, and they followed him and threw beer bottles at him and were calling him names. . . . I mean those incidents where the guy in the parking lot, where people stopped by and tried to hit him. And someone else got hurt on College Main; he got his nose broken on Northgate by someone else and things like that I came to know. . . .

AHMED: Yeah, one of my [Indian] friends actually, it was not one of those incidents but he was walking on the road one night and somebody threw a beer bottle at him. . . . I have heard of a few incidents, I don't remember the name of the person, but a few instances where two or three Indians went to a bar, the Library, and they were pushed out of the bar by the bouncers . . . yeah I have heard two or three things that were like that. I have heard one instance where one guy was walking on College Main Road and he was beaten by four Americans.

It seemed to me that most of the incidents that Rajiv and Ahmed were recounting involved other IGSNNESs. When I explicitly asked if most of the assaults that Rajiv and Ahmed had heard about involved IGSNNESs, Rajiv replied:

RAJIV: Most of the incidents that I hear about that are motivated by hate are related to non-native English speakers.

The first of my guiding research questions was in regard to what it feels like to be an individual member of a group that has been publicly discriminated against. Rajiv and Ahmed were not only individual targets of discrimination; they were also part of a specific ethnic group that had been targeted as well. Many of the assaults that had been reported in the frontstage were targeted toward South Asian students, and specifically

Asian Indians. Both Rajiv and Ahmed are Asian Indian, so I asked them to speculate why so many assaults had been targeted toward members of their ethnic group. Rajiv offered some possible explanations for this phenomenon:

RAJIV: I found out that out of 3,000 [graduate students], 800 were Indians, the largest group were Indians; that might be one reason. . . . Although East Asians have a look more like white. I mean if you look at their face, but if you look at their bodies, it is almost like white. It is very hard to notice, whereas I am quite noticeable. I walk into a bar, and they notice that someone different is around.

Perhaps the reason that more Asian Indians had been assaulted was due to the fact that there simply were more of them than any other international ethnic group at TAMU. Or perhaps it was due in some part to the dark hue of their skin; for those who wished to discriminate against IGSNNESs, the darker skin tone might mean an easier target. Rajiv suggested another reason that Asian Indians in particular were the ones being assaulted: in another part of the interview, he hypothesized that it may be more of a cultural norm for Asian Indian students to go out and socialize than it would be for other ethnic groups, and thus, it could be possible that they were the ones being assaulted because they were most often the ones who were walking around at night. I cannot support Rajiv's hypotheses with proof based on my own research. My own hypothesis is that this group has been targeted due to post 9/11 anger and ignorance and inability by many Whites to tell the difference based on looks between South Asians and Middle Easterners, but again my research project was not conducted to prove or disprove these hypotheses. I have included these hypotheses in my discussion in a hope to inspire future research projects that my help to bear out the reasons why certain ethnic groups appear to be a target of discrimination on United States college and university campuses.

## NORTHGATE

During one of the focus group interviews, I asked Rajiv several questions about his perceptions of Northgate before and after his assault. I was curious as to his motivation for moving away from the area. Rajiv seemed to be struggling with how he felt about visiting Northgate. On the one hand, he did not want to let the incident scare him or change his habits in any way. On the other hand, he lost interest in visiting Northgate bars and felt that he had to be constantly alert while in the Northgate area:

RAJIV: Yeah [sighs], the incident kind of set a lot of things in motion and made certain things more tangible and noticeable. I felt more and more uncomfortable being here and that is the reason I moved to Houston . . . in Houston . . . they don't differentiate you so much. When you go to a bar here, you step in and people turn their heads like 'oh, it is so unusual to see people like you here.' . . . I don't repeatedly think about going there. I mean I don't feel like going to those businesses anytime because, yeah, I don't feel comfortable. . . . It affected it in the sense that I am more conscious of my presence there. Before, I would just walk through it, but now I go through it and I see it, you know, and it becomes more sentient, you know. I mean, you experience your being. I mean that is how it affects you, I guess.

Rajiv claimed at first that he did not want to let his assault change his habits in any way in regard to his exposure to Northgate, but his assault did change his habits. In fact, they changed things for him rather dramatically. Rajiv mentioned that before his assault he used to enjoy hanging out at Northgate bars. After his assault, Rajiv said that he became aware that when he would go to a bar on Northgate, he would almost always be the only non-White person present. Eventually Rajiv grew tired of being stared at every time he entered a Northgate establishment, and he became uncomfortable living in B/CS so he moved 90 miles away to Houston. Rajiv stated he felt more comfortable in Houston because the ethnic makeup of the city is less homogenous than it is in B/CS.

Unlike Rajiv, Ahmed still lives in the Northgate area, but he indicated that several of his habits had changed considerably following his assault:

AHMED: Before my incident I - many a times - it happened that I walked from my department to my home at 2 or 3 in the night and I would walk through the Northgate area, and I never had any fear about that, but after my incident I don't like walking on that road at night and I definitely avoid that. . . . Fortunately I have a car, so I usually use my car to drive anywhere I want. . . . It was definitely knowing that there were other incidents that were also happening. It was not just that I was afraid of my incident happening, but afterwards I heard of two or three incidents like [mentions name of the student who was beaten unconscious], and I heard of two or three other incidents, so that adds to the fear and that adds to the caution that I follow.

Even though Ahmed said that he does all that he can to avoid the specific area of Northgate where he was assaulted, he said that he feels safe both on campus and at home. He cited both his memories of having been shot at with a BB gun, and the lack of lighting in the Northgate area, as the reasons the Northgate area no longer feels safe to him. While there is little that can be done to erase his memories of the assault, I am sure it would be possible to add more lighting to the Northgate area.

#### THIS JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT

Rajiv stated about the task of educating his "other" about racism, "We can educate the White folks . . . but they don't even notice that it is this bad." Rajiv's statement made me wonder — how bad is it? I believe Rajiv may have been on target when he stated that many of the White students on campus "don't even notice that [racism] is this bad." The Aggie R-r-ring campus climate survey conducted from 2002-2004 revealed that White students were less likely than non-White students to view racism on campus as a problem (Student Life Studies, 2004). The physical assaults



against IGSNNESs were alarming to many students, but it is possible that a number of White students in particular may have believed these incidents were isolated events. White students in general have tended to view the TAMU campus as a more welcoming environment than their non-White peers (Student Life Studies, 2004). Even some of the IGSNNESs who responded to my online survey seemed to echo this sentiment; several of the IGSNNESs mentioned feeling welcome on campus and claimed that they would recommend TAMU to other IGSNNESs without reservations. However, during my focus group interview sessions, it took only a few questions before the stories about a wide range of discriminatory acts against IGSNNESs began to emerge.

“Sarayu,” an Asian Indian female with whom I spoke in the second focus group, recounted a story about inappropriate topics being brought up at an (Asian Indian) friend’s interview:

SARAYU: Yeah, one of my friends went on a job interview, and the person asked him about the Apu character [from the TV show *The Simpsons*]. And my friend was like, ‘What? I came here to interview for an engineer’s position, and you cannot ask a request like that.’

Sarayu hypothesized that the reason people think they can get away with these types of inappropriate behaviors is deeply rooted in institutionalized systems of editing history. These systems have made it seem as though certain ethnic groups have less value than others. She states:

SARAYU: I think it is the hegemonic feeling. I mean, even when it comes down to our history of education courses, we will be taught about how the Greek and Romans . . . but Chinese and Indians go back . . . even further than that. I mean we had the first universities . . . like, thousands of years ago, but nobody even knows about that. . . . I mean, does that not qualify under a system of education? I don’t understand.

Why is it that our graduate level history of education courses do not highlight the contributions of the IGSNNESs that TAMU and other universities across the nation are attempting to recruit? This question is larger than I have space to address within this thesis. Loewen (1995) devoted an entire book to the topic, which he aptly named *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. Though I will not analyze the reasons for the “lies,” I believe it is important to note that the omission of such information in graduate history of education classes serves to make many IGSNNESs feel discriminated against.

Many of the incidents I have highlighted up until this point involved violence or at the very least a threat of violence. Not all of the stories I heard in the interview sessions involved violence. There were countless seemingly more mundane events that I heard about as well.

“Arisa,” an Eastern Asian female who participated in the second focus group, talked about her frustrations with continued failed attempts to participate in classroom discussions:

ARISA: I think in our culture, the Asian culture, usually we do not interrupt other people when other people are talking, so you can't catch the exact time that you want to jump in. So when you have something you want to say, someone else will just take what you want to say and jump in. . . . So I wait until the last minute and I have nothing to say, so that is another problem for me and those in my culture. . . .

Eddy agreed that he, too, experienced frustration with attempting to find the right time to add to classroom discussions. Eddy mentioned that an IGSNNES friend of his had developed a strategy for dealing with this problem. Eddy's friend would make sure that he was the first one to speak in class so that he would not have to worry about

negotiating the correct time to take his turn to speak. Apparently, the inability to contribute meaningfully to conversations that involve NESs has at some point been a frustration for all of the participants in the second focus group. Based on the numerous informal discussions I have had with my IGSNNES friends outside of the context of my study in which my IGSNNES friends expressed their aggravation with feeling excluded from discussions with many NESs, I suspect that it is actually a frustration that many IGSNNESs have to deal with. This is a difficult area of discrimination to address and combat because it involves a number of conscious as well as unconscious behaviors on the part of the NESs. Sarayu, Arisa, and Eddy had stories that pinpointed NESs conscious and unconscious behaviors that became apparent during their attempts to engage NESs in conversation. These stories highlighted the *inability* of NESs to make Sarayu, Arisa, and Eddy feel as if they were being included, understood, and heard:

SARAYU: With the undergraduates and even some of the faculty . . . they don't make an effort to understand . . . there is a sort of discriminancy in their effort.

ARISA: For me . . . if it is in the classroom . . . and I try to say something [pause] they say, "Oh, she is trying to say duh duh duh duh," and they don't really try to pay attention, to listen. . . . Sometimes I had an experience like I tried to talk in my class in a small discussion and a White male turned in the other direction and didn't listen . . . he is always talking . . . but whenever he is talking, he doesn't look at me. It is like you are not here.

EDDY: Sometimes students and faculty listen to me when I am speaking . . . but sometimes I think students unconsciously do not want to engage me in the conversation and I can feel it . . . their official and general reaction to me is . . . they are trying . . . and I appreciate that, but the unconscious part of their behaviors I understand, but sometimes I want more. . . .

An argument could be made that if the behaviors that NESs exhibit during conversations with IGSNNESs really are *unconscious*, there is no way to hold them

accountable for their actions. However, the anger and frustration that the IGSNNEs in the focus groups have come to feel over time has prompted them to point out to peers as well as instructors these seemingly unconscious behaviors, and even still the IGSNNEs in the focus groups have found the NESs to be unwilling to make changes.

Even when IGSNNEs do choose to speak up about this type of discriminatory behavior, it seems that the NESs' response is often to continue to ignore them. For example, Arisa recounted a story about a professor who claimed that she would create an environment for all students to contribute equally, but the promise was an empty one. Arisa tried to share her thoughts in small-group discussions, but her ideas were not shared with the rest of the class when it was time for the smaller groups to shift their discussions to a whole-class discussion. Here is what happened when Arisa questioned a group member as to the reasons she had been excluded:

ARISA: I said a lot of things in the group, and they didn't include any of my experiences or opinions, and after class I asked that girl . . . Is my English so poor that you didn't understand? . . . and she said she noticed that that guy . . . ignored me but she didn't say anything to create an environment to let me in . . . but at that time she was like, "Oh, I am so sorry, I noticed," and she was, like, crying for me and I was, like, [pause] Isn't it too late? You know I don't want you to say that after class. I need you to help me to let me in [pause] at that time she noticed, she didn't do anything. . . .

It is possible that the students who were excluding Arisa *may* have been doing so unconsciously, but the other student in the group was definitely conscious of the exclusion, and she did not do anything about it. What was even more disturbing to me about this story than this NES student's unwillingness to stand up for Arisa was the professor's refusal to stand up for her as well. Arisa had not only mentioned the

discrimination and exclusion to her classmate, she had also done so to the professor after class:

ARISA: I talked to that professor, and she asked if she should talk to him or if I wanted to, and I didn't want to be like children, like I reported it and had the professor take care of it. . . .

It may at first blush seem as though this professor was doing the right thing by asking Arisa whether she wanted her to say something to the student who had excluded her, but I do not agree that this professor did the right thing. If Arisa did not want help with the situation, she would not have bothered to tell the professor. In my opinion, the professor had blatantly betrayed Arisa's trust. In Arisa's words:

ARISA: [That] professor who was so gentle and she at the beginning of the class said that she had to create an environment where everyone could talk and . . . in that class I had that situation and I told her. I was so disappointed, I cried. . . .

Arisa's professor had claimed that she would create an open and supportive environment for all, but when it was brought to her attention that she was not fulfilling this promise, she made it the responsibility of the student who had been hurt to attempt to fix the problem. At the very least, she could have reminded the whole class to be careful to include all students' contributions to the smaller groups when sharing with the larger group. I wish I could report that this incident was an isolated one, but in my study I heard stories about a number of professors at TAMU who have made IGSNNESs feel unwelcome. Sarayu explains:

SARAYU: I got my masters from a different department, and they would see international students as beggars mostly because we always have to go and ask them for graduate assistantships and scholarships, so the moment we walk up to them, they think, "What sort of money is this person going to ask of me?" instead of thinking, "Oh, does she have a doubt or a question?"

Sarayu tempered her comments about the negative way in which she believed some of her former professors viewed IGSNNESs by mentioning that in her current department, she had found support from many professors. Sarayu's accounts seem to suggest that there are some professors who discriminate against IGSNNESs and some who do not. I asked Sarayu to recount additional stories which involved professors who had behaved in a discriminatory fashion. Sarayu recounted a story involving her IGSNNES boyfriend:

SARAYU: My [Asian Indian] boyfriend's professor [pause] you know, every week he would come to class and he would say, "This part of my computer is not working, and I had to call and the call went to India and you guys speak like this" [pause] and he would try to imitate the accent so badly, and he would do that every class, every week, and then finally my boyfriend got so annoyed, he said, "Why don't you try talking Hindi for a change and we will see?" I mean, it was outrageous he did that for one complete semester and finally [my boyfriend] just couldn't take it, I mean usually we are not the talking-back kind; usually we think of professors as gurus, but this was just beyond. . . . It is offensive because people keep saying that [America is] losing all the jobs to India. . . . I think it is just a matter of them being ignorant. . . . I mean, the only context that they know of India is the call centers.

This story is illuminating to me for two main reasons. First, after hearing this story, I thought of a possible motivation for the assaults which were directed toward Asian Indians at TAMU. Sarayu mentioned that "people keep saying that [America is] losing all the jobs to India" so perhaps the assaults that were specifically targeted towards Asian Indian students were motivated by fear of the perceived threat of these students taking jobs away from those who perpetrated the crimes. I cannot support this hypothesis with any evidence from my study. However, I hope a future research attempt will reveal some of the common motivations for assaults against Asian Indians in the

United States. Perhaps future researchers could conduct interviews with individuals who have been convicted of assaulting Asian Indians in the United States; in these interviews, the researchers could specifically ask if the assaults were in any way motivated by fears that Asian Indians were taking over the American job market. The second reason I feel Sarayu's story about the way her boyfriend was treated in one of his classes is significant is that it may offer some insight about the degree to which some IGSNNESs at TAMU may be feeling discriminated against. Sarayu mentioned that it is not customary for many IGSNNESs to speak up about discrimination, and thus, the mere fact that they have had to do so in several cases may reflect the severity of the discrimination that they are feeling. Again, future research is needed to help clarify the scale and extent of discrimination that IGSNNESs at TAMU are (or are not) feeling.

#### THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE JUST PLAIN UGLY

Most of the respondents to both the online survey and the focus group sessions mentioned that they have been received well by numerous people at TAMU and in the B/CS area. The "good" news for TAMU is that even with all of the discrimination against IGSNNESs that is present in both the front and back stages, all but three of the respondents to both the online survey and the focus group sessions agreed that they would recommend TAMU to NNESs and to other visible minority groups. One of the three was not opposed to others recommending TAMU; she simply wrote in her online response that it was not something she imagined doing herself. The only two individuals who said they would not recommend TAMU were Rajiv and Arisa. Arisa wrote in her

online survey response, “I do not think TAMU [is] welcome[ing] to international students. They just want them to pay the tuition.” I asked Rajiv how he felt about recommending TAMU, and this was his response:

INTERVIEWER: So overall, though, would you recommend TAMU to a Non-Native English speaker or visible minority?

RAJIV: No.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

RAJIV: Absolutely not . . . put it this way, if you have offers from two colleges with the same academic level, I would say go for the other.

Rajiv mentioned in his response that he would not recommend TAMU even when compared to other institutions with similar academic rankings. This is most likely due to the overwhelming trauma that he endured as a student here. I feel I have an obligation to point out that Ahmed was shot at with a BB gun while a student at TAMU, and he said that in spite of that, he would recommend TAMU to other IGSNNESs. Ahmed did, however, mention that he would warn such students to be a little cautious and aware of their surroundings.

As I mentioned, the vast majority of the IGSNNESs who responded to the survey and in the focus group discussions agreed that they would recommend TAMU. Sarayu explained her reasoning in this way:

SARAYU: It is a very good university. I mean, my boyfriend went to New Jersey, and he did his masters there and there they had the ultimate discrimination. So he says this is heaven compared to that. So it is only a matter of comparison. . . . I mean, discrimination, it is not one of the priorities to recommend or not recommend a university. I think it is mostly academic standing and the funding.



Eddy echoed the sentiments of Sarayu and offered his opinion about why IGSNNESs are willing to overlook the discrimination that they face while students at TAMU:

EDDY: I think . . . one of the reasons why international students here do not blame too much . . . because they think anyway this university is good for their education. That is why they can endure.

The good news for TAMU is that for all but one of the IGSNNESs in my study, perceptions about the strength of the academic programs at TAMU outweigh any threats of discrimination and violence that are possibilities for IGSNNESs who enroll. My concern, however, is that this is a precarious balance of priorities that could easily tip in the other direction given the increasing number of assaults that have occurred and been reported since Rajiv's assault. Also, it angers me that *any* student should have to entertain the idea of "enduring" a hostile and potentially dangerous environment in the hopes of achieving academic goals.

I wish that I could continue to report findings that I consider to be "good," but I believe it is important for me to point out what I feel is "bad"—very bad—and not just for IGSNNESs. The bad news is that not a single one of the respondents in the online survey or focus group sessions responded accurately to my question(s) about how to file an incident report:

To the best of your ability, please explain: 1. what an incident report is, 2. a few common reasons someone might want to fill out an incident report, and 3. how to file an incident report.

I think that most of the IGSNNESs understood the first part of my three-part question. They seemed to understand that an incident report should be filed to inform

those in authority about acts of violence. Still, they often admitted to being unable to adequately answer the second part of my question. The respondents in both parts of my study seemed confident about the need to fill out an incident report to describe an act of violence, but they were not nearly as certain about which nonviolent crimes would warrant the completion of such a form. The following are samples of such responses:

SARAYU: The thing is that we don't know the threshold because sometimes we think, "Oh, that thing is too small to be reported. It is not enough, so we won't tell them."

ARISA: Sometimes . . . you think you were hurt, but other people say they were just joking, don't take it so seriously. I mean, like, . . . [I am confused about] which level . . . is an 'incident' or which level is just, like, oh a joke . . . so . . . one of my friends is from Taiwan and she put the traditional letters in New Year we put the lucky letter on the door, and there were some people you don't know who that wrote, "Go back to your country. Fuck you." So how [do] we need to report it?

RAJIV: That is the other thing that I don't know about and that I was asking about. What about verbal threats? Does it count as a crime or racism? And no one gave me answers.

If IGSNNESs do not know when to fill out an incident report, there is no way to expect them to do so. If I did not work for the office that I work for, The Women's & Gender Equity Resource Center at TAMU, I too would be confused about what types of nonviolent incidents warrant reporting. I think that there needs to be a massive educational campaign to instruct students about the proper use of incident reports.

I am not a pie-in-the-sky idealist. I realize that reporting incidents such as vandalism, for example, will not in and of itself stop the vandalism from happening. However, I believe that filling out incident reports helps to serve three main functions:

First, and perhaps most important to the IGSNNESs in my study, filling out an incident report generally helps the person who is filling out the report feel as if they are being heard. People fill out incident reports because they feel their rights or the rights of others have been violated in some way. If there is no method available to formally make a record of perceived wrongdoing(s), there is no possibility that a positive resolution or restitution will occur. Those who feel that rights have been violated are left to deal with the disappointment of the violation on their own without any opportunity for catharsis.

Second, when an incident report is filed, authorities are able to maintain a formal record for an indeterminate amount of time. A central location where related types of incident reports can be filed is imperative so that connections between repetitive crimes can be spotted easily. Patterns often begin to emerge that can help lead to catching criminals.

Third, incident reports provide authorities with the opportunity to assess their ability to solve crimes. It is far more impressive, in my opinion, to have an authority group that is able to produce incident reports and show that they have additionally been able to catch the culprits of the crimes that were reported, than it is to have an authority group that claims they are doing their job simply because they have no reports that provide information to the contrary. A lack of incident reporting does not necessarily mean a lack of criminal activity.

The last part of my question about incident reports sought to determine whether IGSNNESs knew *how* to file an incident report. Most of my respondents had no idea how to file an incident report, and even those who did were aware only of the police as

an authority to which crimes could be reported. None of the respondents were aware of the campus organizations that have mechanisms for reporting crimes such as the Department of Residence Life, the Student Activities Office, and the Greek Life Office. For those who would claim that it is harmless and thus not an issue if IGSNNESs choose to report their crimes directly to the police, I would like to point out that I discovered most of my respondents were solely aware of the 9-911 and 911 method for reporting crimes. This is a wonderfully useful service, but it should be used only in emergencies and, in particular, life-threatening emergencies. In all other cases, police departments should be contacted through their direct lines. Ahmed told me about a time when he thought that it would be appropriate to call 9-911:

AHMED: Uh, it happened once when my bicycle got stolen [laughs]. I did not know what number to call, so I just called 9-911, and then they delivered me to the University police. Actually they didn't connect me, but they just gave me the number, and then I called UPD.

Bicycle theft is a crime, and it should certainly be reported to the proper authorities, but it should not be reported using 9-911 as it does not qualify as an emergency. IGSNNESs and I suspect the rest of the campus population need to be educated about whom to call to report commonly occurring crimes. Some NESs might argue that this is a straightforward issue. In emergencies, you dial 9-911 or 911, and in non-emergencies you call the police station directly or you call whatever other authority you feel is appropriate for the crime in question. Actually, knowing who to call is much more difficult than one might at first imagine. Rajiv knew that he should report his assault to the police, and yet he still encountered difficulties in reporting his assault due

to some technicalities that many people have likely never taken the time to consider. He recalls:

RAJIV: See, in Northgate there is no way to tell where one city ends and the other city starts, so it is hard . . . to make the judgment anywhere near the border. So at that time that is the reason why I called Bryan Police Station because that is where I lived . . . I told them in the beginning where it happened and . . . even then . . . the Bryan cops came to my house four hours after my incident and they told me that I was supposed to go to College Station.

Bryan and College Station are two distinct cities with their own police departments; each department is responsible for handling crimes that are committed within the physical borders of each city. The University Police Department has jurisdiction primarily over the physical campus of TAMU. I do not understand why the operators at the police departments do not specifically ask *where* an incident has taken place and *connect* those who have called to the correct station. I cannot imagine that we do not have access to the technology to make this happen. Even if the technology is not available, the operator should still ask *where* the incident took place and give the appropriate police department phone number to the caller if he or she has inadvertently called the wrong station. I am not sure if I am echoing Rajiv's sentiments, or if he is echoing mine, but I know that we are in agreement on this issue:

RAJIV: I think they at least should be knowledgeable enough to know what is their property and also they shouldn't put you through all these loopholes . . . you call them and then . . . they should be able to tie you to the other police station that you need to talk to. And then I told you that I did not have the number to call the police station directly and my roommate said that you should have the number to call them directly.

Rajiv's roommate is correct. Everyone should know how to easily access the numbers to their local police stations. When an incident occurs, there is often a certain

element of emotional stress that can hinder the ability of the people affected by the incident to think as clearly and rationally as they normally would. It seems to me that we should do a better job of distributing important phone number “cheat sheets” such as the magnets that are distributed by the “Bee a Good Neighbor” organizers. I know that I have had personal experience with using this magnet to find the number for my local police station. I witnessed a crime, and was able to go to my apartment and look on my refrigerator for the appropriate number to call to report it.

It would have been even more convenient, if I had been carrying the numbers of the local police departments with me. I know that part of the success of CARPOOL, the organization that offers free rides home to drunk callers, is due in large part to the educational campaign that informs all new students during their orientation sessions not only about the purpose of CARPOOL, but also the fact that the number for CARPOOL can be readily found on the back of every student’s identification card. I know there is not much room left on the back of the identification card, but if students were to receive a supplemental card that contained all three police department phone numbers and all other numbers they might need to use to report an incident, they could simply put the card in their wallets or purses and have it available when needed. If the crime was the theft of the wallet or purse that the student was carrying, the information card would not be accessible, however, if the distribution of these information cards was pervasive, all the student would have to do is find another student and ask to see their information card in order to get the numbers they would need to report the theft.

Some crimes are best *not* reported to the police at all. Some crimes are not so much illegal as they are in violation of university rules and codes. These types of crimes need to be reported directly to the campus office in charge of enforcing the particular rule or code in question. For example, if I were to witness a student cheating on an exam, I would report the incident directly to the instructor or to the Aggie Honor System office, not the police. The numbers, Web addresses, e-mail addresses, and physical addresses of campus offices and organizations that are channels for reporting incidents should be included on the information cards along with the numbers of the local police stations.

To recap, I believe that it is “good” that most IGSNNESs would recommend TAMU and “bad” that most IGSNNESs do not have a clear concept about *what* an incident report is, *when* to file one, and *how* to file one. What follows is what I consider to be the really “ugly” thing that I discovered from speaking with the IGSNNESs in my study. On this campus there is one office that is specifically geared toward IGSNNESs. This office is designed to be a resource and helpful place for IGSNNESs. In theory, this office should be a place that IGSNNESs look forward to visiting. The office is the International Student Services (ISS) office. I realize that my results may be skewed due to my use of “purposeful sampling,” and I sincerely hope that the incidents that are recounted in the following transcripts are isolated and uncommon. However, I am afraid that, just as the assault on Rajiv was indicative of a larger problem, as evidenced by all of the stories my respondents disclosed regarding both unreported physical assaults as well as other nonviolent types of discrimination, the following horror stories about the

ISS are just the tip of the iceberg and are indicative of an appalling failing of the ISS to serve the needs of IGSNNESs with any semblance of respect or nurturance let alone competency:

ARISA: My experience . . . with International Student Services, I mean, they are really bad . . . whoever I met at this university . . . I mean, international students, didn't give any positive feedback of ISS. . . . The people working in the international student service are very impatient to international students. Sometimes they are very rude. If you ask most of international students and if they trust you, they will tell you how rude these people [are]. (I think 95% international students think their attitude are not nice.) . . . They often make mistake[s] in their work but do not want to apologize. I can tell you many stories about them. One of my friends got an e-mail from them to ask her to stop by and pick up her document. She went there, but they could not find the document for her. So they asked her: "Are you sure you get the e-mail? Do you really understand the meaning of the e-mail?" I mean, she was, like, "OK, I am graduate student here. I passed, I mean, I [must] understand English to come here. . . . At last, she found out that they lost her document and she could not change I-20 this semester. *No apology* at all.

Some may question whether Arisa's experiences reflect those of the majority or the minority of the IGSNNESs who are dependent upon the services of the ISS office. I cannot answer to that with complete certainty, but I can share stories from the rest of the participants in the second focus group that corroborate Arisa's complaints. Sarayu recounted her own horror story of dealing with an advisor at the ISS office. Sarayu mentioned that some of the people at the ISS office were "nice," but she also recounted a story that involved an advisor whom I refer to as just plain "ugly," in the figurative sense of the word, of course.

SARAYU: The student workers have been nice to me, but one of the advisors [pause] I had been applying for my I-20 form and she told me that I didn't have sufficient funds . . . she said, "You don't have sufficient funds to fill out your I-20." And I said, "Where am I supposed to go now after this?" And I had to get a letter from my advisor saying that she can help me with my funding, and still this girl said this was not enough. And I had to get it done because I was going to



India and I told her that I had to get this done because I was going to India and she said, “Oh, you have the money to go to India, but you don’t have the money to show me in this I-20.” [gasps from others in focus group and “Wow” from interviewer] I mean, just because you give me all these things doesn’t mean that I cannot visit my home country after five years. [pause] I put it on my credit card. I think she was extremely rude, and I will never forget that experience. That particular line that she said, I will never forget that.

Both Arisa and Sarayu spoke to me not only about the incompetence of the staff at the ISS office, but also of the propensity for certain members of the staff to be downright rude. Eddy was more complimentary about the personalities of the people he had dealt with at the ISS office, but unfortunately he was not able to negate either of these women’s remarks about the ineffectiveness of the staff. In fact, the inability of the staff at the ISS office to properly address Eddy’s needs has escalated to the point that he has found it necessary to seek legal counsel:

EDDY: I need to fix the problem with some forms, so I wrote to the ISS office and that is December of last year and they [pause] the advisor was of course very gentle to me, but the procedure which they use are not effective. I am still waiting for their answer, and they usually told me, “Why don’t you send an e-mail directly to the advisor?” but there is no e-mail address for advisors, there is only one e-mail address for ISS, iss@tamu.edu, and whenever I call the advisor, she tells me, “Oh, this is a very complex problem. I am looking for the solution for you.” So still I am waiting for their response, but my wife couldn’t wait and I couldn’t believe their inability so we asked a lawyer here but it didn’t help us yet.

Eddy’s story is upsetting to me for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, I am frustrated that he has not been able to get the help that he has requested and has not been connected to someone who will be able to help him. He has been waiting for six months now, and I think that is just ridiculous. I am furthermore disgusted because there are other avenues and services available on this campus that may have been able to help Eddy, but they are so poorly advertised that he had no possible way of knowing about

them. I am troubled that Eddy has had to pay for legal counsel, particularly since TAMU students have access to free legal services. Why don't IGSNNESs know about these services? It seems to me that they would be the ones who would be most likely to need legal help with government forms and documents. The following is a brief discussion I had with Eddy's focus group on this topic:

INTERVIEWER: By the way, did you know that you can get free law services here?

EDDY: Free?

INTERVIEWER: Free.

EDDY: No.

INTERVIEWER: There is a lawyer here on campus for students; the only thing the lawyer cannot do is go to court with you. So he can advise you here, and then if you need to go to court, they can recommend a lawyer that you would have to pay to go to court with you but all of the stuff beforehand . . . they can help you. [sighs and frustrated sounds from participants] I didn't know it either, and if I didn't work for my office, I wouldn't know.

ARISA: And you know what, they have an orientation for international students. And they don't talk about nothing. I mean nothing, and I heard so many complaints from international students. . . . I know a person who has been here for seven years and she says, you know, [pause] it is better than it was before. I was, like, [pause] [this] is better?

Due to a lack of knowledge about the wide range of resources available to them on this campus, IGSNNESs are forced to deal almost exclusively with the ISS office.

ARISA: You know if I could not go [to ISS] I would not go there. I go there because . . . you have to go there. It is not just a service [pause] it is like I have no choice. I think most of the international students would say the same thing. I am really sure about that.

I really do not want to believe that the ISS office is as horrendous as the participants in my study have made it sound. I would like to console myself by thinking

that if it really were that bad, more IGSNNESs would have complained about it. I would like to think that if it really were that terrible, there would have been articles written in *The Battalion* about it, and everyone would be aware of this problem. Unfortunately, I have a sinking feeling that Arisa, in her following statement, is correct in explaining the real reason I have not heard about the current shortcomings of the ISS office:

ARISA: They don't think international students will make trouble because . . . you know, they don't think they will make any complaints so they think they can do whatever they want.

At least from what I gathered from the participants in my study, it appears to me as if many of the people in the ISS office are doing exactly what Arisa accuses them of—they are doing what they want, and unfortunately for the IGSNNESs, what the ISS workers want is often not in the IGSNNESs best interests.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This section begins with a summary of my findings and a brief discussion of whether the responses of the IGSNNESs in my study addressed my original guiding research questions. Next, the limitations of my study are highlighted. Then, I have included some conclusions inspired from the comments of the participants in my study. Finally, I have created a list of ten recommendations for improving the lives of IGSNNESs at TAMU and a summary of recommendations for future research.

### SUMMARY

I began my research project with five guiding research questions and one sub-question. In this section, I will address the extent to which I was able to answer each of my original guiding questions based on my findings.

1. *What was it like to be an individual member of a group that had publicly been symbolically and literally stripped of power; more specifically—what was it like to be an IGSNNES at TAMU post June 1, 2005?* I had imagined that I would find trends within the IGSNNESs responses that would help me to answer this question. However, I came to find that there is no simple answer to this question as the IGSNNESs who participated in my study each expressed a wide assortment of feelings and observations regarding how they feel in the wake of the assault on Rajiv.

Perhaps most surprising to me was that some of the IGSNNESs who responded to my online survey mentioned that they had never experienced or heard about *any* incidents of discrimination or violence targeted toward IGSNNESs. I was surprised to

discover that some individual members of the IGSNNES group were not aware of the assault on Rajiv, or any of the other assaults that were reported to authorities. I had imagined that members of the IGSNNES group in particular would have heard about these incidents from their IGSNNES peers, read about them in the school newspaper *The Battalion*, or read about them in the campus alert e-mails that were distributed to all TAMU students.

Though I received online survey responses from students who were unaware of the assaults, or at the very least forgot about them at the time that they filled out my online survey, I did not choose to speak with these students further during the focus group portion of my study. Instead I spoke with IGSNNESs who were aware of assaults and incidents of discrimination targeted toward other IGSNNESs. Overall, this group of students felt knowledge of the assaults on IGSNNESs had led them to become more aware of other unreported incidents of discrimination both violent and nonviolent which had and have taken place at TAMU both pre- and post- June 1, 2005. By making the decision to only speak in the focus group portion of my study with IGSNNESs who were consciously aware of incidents of discrimination, I was better able to answer the rest of my guiding research questions.

2. *What experiences with racism had IGSNNESs encountered in the frontstage?*

The participants in the focus group interviews had encountered a wide range of both violent and nonviolent forms of racism and discrimination. Two of the participants had been physically assaulted; one was hit with a baseball bat, and the other was shot at with a BB gun. Several of the participants mentioned that they had IGSNNES friends who

had beer bottles thrown at them. The majority of the participants had either been called derogatory names, or had heard about other IGSNNESs who had been verbally assaulted with phrases such as “go back to your country” or “you don’t belong here.” All of the participants recounted stories about less blatant and perhaps more unconscious types of discriminatory behaviors that NESs had exhibited. I have included a summary of these types of incidents and behaviors in the summary of my third guiding research question.

3. *What experiences with racism had IGSNNESs been exposed to in their “other’s” backstage?* All of the participants in the focus groups spoke of instances when comments and actions of NESs had made them feel degraded, angry, frustrated, ignored, and misunderstood. The participants spoke about the unconscious behaviors of NESs that have led them to believe they are not being treated as equals. These behaviors include things as simple as body language cues such as lack of eye contact from NESs and the tendency for NESs to turn away and exclude IGSNNESs from conversations.

Some of the participants cited instances when professors, fellow students, and university staff members have made statements about IGSNNESs that are derogatory. For example, the IGSNNESs I spoke with often heard NESs make fun of their accents. One participant recounted hearing NESs make comments that she perceived as indicators that these individuals believe IGSNNESs are beggars only looking for money, or that IGSNNESs are responsible for taking away American jobs. The participants I spoke with also mentioned institutional policies and procedures which have made them feel discriminated against. I-Week was cited as a place where IGSNNESs *should* be celebrated, but a place where they actually feel shunned by NESs. The International

Student Services (ISS) office was cited as a place where IGSNNESs *should* be welcomed and happy to visit, but instead is a place where they try to avoid because of the negative, inappropriate, and incompetent ways in which their issues and concerns have often been handled. I came to realize through my study that it is difficult to delineate in a precise way which behaviors and actions constitute those of the frontstage, and which behaviors would be considered backstage. Regardless of how these behaviors and actions are categorized or labeled, the end result is that the IGSNNESs I spoke with in the focus group interviews all felt that they had been exposed to racist and discriminatory behaviors from their “others.”

4. *How did these encounters make them feel about their safety and about being a student at TAMU?* All of the participants in the focus group sessions mentioned that they were more cautious while traveling through the Northgate area than they had been before the assaults on IGSNNESs had been reported. Many of the participants in the focus groups have limited their exposure to the Northgate area in some way. One participant has even moved over 90 miles away so that he will no longer have to live in the Northgate area. Although the participants of my focus groups felt these precautions were necessary whilst in Northgate, all of them claimed to feel safe both on campus and at home. Many of the respondents from the online survey portion of my study echoed these sentiments; they stated that TAMU was a safe campus.

5. *Did they have any idea how to empower themselves by revealing what they had seen, heard, and experienced to others so that the racism that had previously lurked in the backstage could be exposed to the scrutiny of all in the frontstage?* Unfortunately,

both the respondents to the online survey and the participants in the focus groups were not aware of the proper procedures for reporting incidents of racism and discrimination. The IGSNNESs in my study were unclear about the threshold or degree necessary for an instance of discrimination to be classified as an “incident” worthy of reporting. Many of the IGSNNESs were aware that they could call 911 or 9-911 for emergencies, but they were unaware of how to go about reporting non-emergencies. Additionally, IGSNNESs in my study were not aware of the campus offices which have incident reporting mechanisms. The participants in the second focus group session were not aware of the free legal consultation service that is available to all TAMU students.

My final guiding research question was a departure from my first five questions which were all related to IGSNNESs perceptions of TAMU post-June 1, 2005. My final guiding research question was:

6. *What were the educational and institutional implications of the data I uncovered?* My research findings inspired the creation of ten specific recommendations for educational and institutional changes that I believe will:

- help ensure a greater level of safety for all students at TAMU,
- help improve the overall campus climate of TAMU and in particular IGSNNESs perceptions of the campus climate,
- and help TAMU administrators reach the 6th Imperative of the Vision 2020 mission to “Globalize and Diversify the Campus” and become one of the top ten research institutions in the United States by the year 2020.



My recommendations for educational and institutional changes are included below in the “Recommendations to improve the current situation for IGSNNESs” section of this paper.

## LIMITATIONS

In reflecting upon my study I have identified five limitations that were beyond the scope of my study.

1. *My study was small.* I interviewed a total of 23 IGSNNESs. Interviewing a larger number would have resulted in the ability to identify more trends in their statements. For example, it may have been the case that IGSNNESs from certain ethnic groups or from certain countries would have felt more similarly to others in their own homogenous group than with all IGSNNESs in general. I did not speak with a large enough number of IGSNNESs to make generalizations about their perceptions.

2. *My study was focused.* I decided to speak in the focus group sessions exclusively with IGSNNESs who had experienced or heard about racist and discriminatory acts directed toward IGSNNESs. I did not conduct focus group sessions with the IGSNNES respondents from the online survey who had *not* experienced or heard about such acts of discrimination.

3. *I invited IGSNNESs, but not any other groups to share their perceptions with me.* I conducted a study with IGSNNESs. I did not conduct a similar study with NESs. Therefore, I was not able to compare the responses of these two groups. Again, this would have required a larger study with more participants.

4. *In my study, I used the terms “backstage” and “frontstage” in a more figurative way than they were intended by Picca and Feagin (forthcoming).* If I had used the terms “Backstage Racism” and “Frontstage Racism” as they were originally presented by Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) I would have interviewed the IGSNNESs about the racialized and discriminatory comments they heard about NESs when they were only with other IGSNNESs. Or conversely, I would have interviewed NESs about the racialized and discriminatory comments that they heard about IGSNNESs when they were only with other NESs. In my study, all of the incidents that I learned about happened in arenas in which both IGSNNESs and NESs were present. In other words, all of the incidents that the IGSNNESs in my study recounted would technically fall under the Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) definition of “Frontstage Racism.” In my study, I was using the term “frontstage” as a metaphor for behaviors that were conscious and intentionally displayed in public arenas. I was using the term “backstage” for *unconscious* behaviors and those that were displayed in more private or institutional arenas. My use of these terms as a metaphor rather than a literal spatial identifier made it more difficult for me to categorize behaviors as having taken place in the front or back stage.

5. *My study was not designed to uncover the motivations for the assaults on IGSNNESs.* My study was about IGSNNESs perceptions and experiences at TAMU post-July 1, 2005. My study was not designed as a way to uncover the motivation behind the assaults which had inspired my research. Because of the way that I chose to structure my study, I can offer recommendations from my findings that may enhance

IGSNNESs perceptions and experiences at TAMU and perhaps their level of safety, but I cannot recommend any actions that will definitively eliminate the factors that motivate certain individuals to assault IGSNNESs because I did not design my study in a way that would illuminate those motivations. The IGSNNESs in my study and I could only speculate about the possible motivations for these assaults.

## CONCLUSION

I believe that the information that was shared with me by the IGSNNESs in this study helped me to answer my guiding research questions. I now have a better understanding of IGSNNESs' struggles to feel empowered while negotiating the treacherous terrain of racism and discrimination that is present at TAMU and in the greater B/CS area. I realize that there is much work to be done in order to create an environment where IGSNNESs not only are aware of the resources available to them to report incidents, but also feel safe to do so. I have personally been changed by this research project. I have realized that I bit off more than I could chew. In future research studies, I would recommend that a team of researchers work together to interview students. Actually, this is not only my personal recommendation, but also that of Siegel (1994), who states, "It is important to have representatives of many offices participating in guiding the institutional response to crisis. The different officers raise consciousness for the needs of the particular constituency they represent" (p. 245).

Rajiv's assault inspired this research project. The responses of my participants inspired me to realize that the scope and depth of this problem is much larger than I had

ever imagined. It will take the collaborative efforts of many organizations affiliated with TAMU and IGSNNESs in order to make the types of significant educational and institutional improvements that I was hoping for. These organizations include, but are not limited to: the ISS office, all three local police stations, Northgate businesses, I-week organizers, the people who work at the student identification office, the people who conduct the orientation sessions for IGSNNESs, and the University Apartment Association. During the course of my research, I consulted many sources. I have included the sources which I did not have space to utilize within my own research project, but which I feel will be beneficial to future researchers on this topic in the “Supplemental Sources Consulted” portion of my Reference section.

So what is to happen “In the Wake of Rajiv”? Where should we go from here? I think that we should consult the source himself for inspiration:

RAJIV: See, I think what my incident had was newsworthiness. It was something that hadn't happened before, or maybe it happened before but nobody took it seriously and I kind of took it seriously. . . . And that is the reason why I think when the other incidences happened, we came to know about it and I mean it didn't remain quiet because people thought that they could talk about it. . . . I think that there is still so much that is kind of backstage. You know, it happens elsewhere where we cannot confront about it. And I don't see the university taking a very active approach . . . at least it has not come to my attention or it is a very meek, weak sort of thing that I do not think can make any sort of difference.

Rajiv's assault has opened a small space between the front and back stages of racism and discrimination on the TAMU campus and surrounding region during this brief period of time. It is imperative that the curtains are not allowed to shut between the two sides of the stage, but rather that they be drawn open wider to shine some light on what has been festering far too long within the shadows. The co-chair of the Faculty and

Staff Committed to an Inclusive Campus (FSCIC) put out a message after the assaults on IGSNNESs began taking place that sums up the gravity of the current state of affairs at TAMU:

On a basic human level, Northgate violence is an issue of health and safety. Falling disproportionately on international students and, in particular instances, explicitly motivated by hate, the violence in Northgate is a question of fundamental social justice issue. Fear of violent assault is not conducive to learning. Should this problem continue, it will be harder to attract the best students to TAMU, and the university's reputation—and its rankings will suffer (Berger, 2005).

It needs to be made clear to *all* students that discriminatory behaviors both large and small are not acceptable. As the progression of campus alert e-mails in Appendix 1 show, TAMU administration has already made some initial improvements. As evidenced by the increased timeliness and enhanced content of the campus alert e-mails, the administration has been able to significantly reduce the time it takes to report assaults to the TAMU student body, and they have begun providing more meaningful details about the assaults within the e-mails. The e-mails still do not reveal that the motivation behind the assaults that have been targeted toward IGSNNESs is most likely racially based. Although the improvements in the dissemination of information through campus alerts may help to better inform TAMU students about hate-based acts of violence, I worry that the student body has been lulled into thinking that the university will continue to report in a timely and open fashion such crimes to ensure that they will remain in the frontstage for all to see. Until this becomes an official policy, there is no rule that will require that such reports are disclosed to students. Therefore, the potential for the pendulum of information sharing to swing back in the direction of the backstage

is a tangible possibility. It has been nearly a year since the assault on Rajiv. How much longer will it take for such a policy to be written? During the course of the second focus group questioning, Sarayu made a comment that seems appropriate to mention here. She said:

SARAYU: Remember that incident at the University Apartments (UA)? [The] gas fire, the Bangladeshi family [pause] all those students. And if this had happened to an American student, I mean a White American student, it would have been a big thing. It would have come on CNN . . . and everywhere that you can find. This hardly [pause] hardly qualified as news, even for *The Battalion*.

Whether it is a conscious decision or not, it seems to me that incidents that involve IGSNNESs simply are not taken as seriously as they should be. Apparently I am not the only one who has noticed this phenomenon. When I asked Rajiv what he wanted those who would read my thesis to know, he said:

RAJIV: I want them to know that racism is still around and people do experience it every day, although it is not noticeable most of the time . . . and I am scarred for it. It is not a good feeling to go through and I think it is punishable . . . and these things that are happening, they shouldn't just let them happen; they need to *do something about it*. If they don't, you know, you never know who is next.

I would like to see the TAMU administration follow Rajiv's advice, and "do something about it." Below is a list of recommendations I believe should be enacted in the short and long term to help address the discrimination and intimidation that many of the IGSNNESs in my study expressed to me.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE CURRENT SITUATION FOR IGSNNESSs

The following is a collection of ten recommendations which should serve to make TAMU a safer and more hospitable environment, not just for IGSNNESs, but for all students. They are listed in no particular order.

### 1. *Policing Improvements*

- There should be an increase of police and/or private security patrolling in the Northgate area. Harris Berger, co-chair of the Faculty and Staff Committed to an Inclusive Campus (FSCIC) at TAMU recommends that TAMU follow the lead of other universities which have committed to patrolling the areas surrounding their campuses “Other major universities (Yale University, University of Chicago, Columbia University) patrol the areas next to their campuses. TAMU must do the same” (Berger, 2005). I believe that more patrols, particularly at night, would translate into fewer crimes and an overall feeling of safety for all students.
- TAMU has recently established a program for on-campus residents called Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) which has increased the presence of police officers on campus (Floerke, 2006). An article in *The Battalion* highlights the success of the COPS in making students feel safer:

Dana Brown, a junior English major and Neeley Hall resident, said the program will allow her and other on-campus residents to feel more secure in the future. “I am out a lot at night going to and from the parking garage or walking back from the library,” Brown said. “It is comforting to know that officers will be there if you need them.” (Floerke, 2006)

The COPS program has a satellite office in the University Apartments complex, but the rest of the offices are on campus. More satellite offices should be established off-campus, particularly in the Northgate area.

- A special unit should be created within each of the three local police departments (Bryan, College Station, and University) to specifically deal with hate crimes (Berger, 2005). An article that appeared in *The Battalion* following Rajiv's assault stated "CSPD should have automatically classified the case as a hate crime, and that CSPD also reported inaccurate information regarding the incident on its Web site, leaving out the fact that the people in [the] van shouted racial comments" (White, 2005). It seems likely to me that if there had been a specialized hate crime unit within the CSPD at the time of Rajiv's assault, the crime would have been reported to the TAMU students far more expeditiously.
- The three local police stations should work together to ensure that when a caller phones in to report a crime, one of the first questions that is asked is where the incident took place. If the incident occurred in a different police department's jurisdiction, the caller should immediately be transferred to the correct department. In Rajiv's case, it took approximately four hours before the correct authorities responded because he was not told at the time of his initial call that he should have contacted the police station whose jurisdiction covered the crime scene area instead of the police station in charge of his area of residence.

## 2. *Incident Report and Legal Consultation Awareness Campaign*



- IGSNNESs, and most likely the rest of the student population at TAMU, need to be provided with definitions of what types of actions qualify as discriminatory and/or warrant the filing of an incident report. For example, I learned during one of my focus group interviews that Arisa did not realize she should have reported an incident in which her friend's door was vandalized with the words, "Go back to your country. Fuck you." Vandalism is a criminal offence that should be reported to the proper authorities.
- IGSNNESs, and I suspect the student body at large, need to be educated about *when*, *how*, and *where* to file incident reports. Some reports should be filed directly with the police, while others should be reported to specific campus offices. In addition, IGSNNESs need to be informed that they should only use 911 and 9-911 in emergency situations. Ahmed called 9-911 to report a stolen bicycle because he was not aware that he should have called the local police station directly. Furthermore, students need to be informed that when they are reporting a crime, they should contact the authority in charge of the area in which the crime took place, which may not necessarily be the same as the authority in charge of where they live.
- Reported incidents both violent and nonviolent must be taken seriously and investigated to help nip in the bud what could easily grow into larger problems if left unaddressed.
- Students need to be provided with a quick and easy reference list card that contains a variety of important phone numbers. The card should at the very

minimum contain all the local police department numbers as well as the numbers of campus offices that have incident-reporting mechanisms. These information cards should be given to *all* students when they get their student identification cards.

- Several of the IGSNNESs in my study had legal questions and one of my focus group participants, Eddy, had contacted a lawyer at his own expense to help address his concerns. Free legal consultations are offered through the TAMU Student Activities (SA) office. An information awareness campaign should be launched directly through the SA office to help inform all students about this valuable service. In particular, information about free legal consultations should be targeted and sent specifically to the campus offices and organizations that cater to IGSNNESs.
- Information about incident reporting and services such as free legal consultations should be provided to IGSNNESs. An article in *The Battalion* featured input from an international student who reiterated the need for this type of information to be disseminated during orientation programming:

Darci Moudini, an international student, said the University should educate students about how to report incidents to the police and University at the international students' orientation. "They gave us and told us things like - take your hat off at the MSC and Americans bathe once a day, but failed to inform us about how to report an incident of assault to the University," Moudini said (Watkins, 2005b).

Information about incident reporting mechanisms and services that are of unique interest to IGSNNESs need to be *consistently* publicized – even beyond orientation sessions. The publicity efforts should come from various sources so

that there is a greater chance for students to be exposed to and retain this valuable information.

### 3. *Campus Alert System Policy*

- Currently, the university is not mandated to report hate crimes to the student body (Saugier, 2005). A new policy should be created which would require the university to report hate crimes to students within 24 hours. The reports should be distributed through the campus e-mail system. The reports should include specific details about the incident and information about whom students should contact if they have additional information about the incident.

### 4. *International Student Services (ISS) Improvements*

- Arisa, Eddy, and Sarayu all recounted stories which highlighted their frustrations with the ISS office. Arisa suggested that the ISS staff be required to undergo sensitivity training. She felt several of the staff members had treated her rudely.
- Eddy said that the staff was friendly, but unable to help him. In fact, Eddy has been waiting nearly six months for the ISS staff to help him with a paperwork issue. Apparently the procedures that the ISS staff members handling Eddy's case are following are ineffective; Eddy has decided to hire a lawyer in an effort to ensure the staff members at the ISS take care of his paperwork issue. Staff at the ISS office should be thoroughly and properly trained to handle the kinds of paperwork-related questions that are common among IGSNNESs.

- Sarayu recounted having been ridiculed and harassed by ISS staff. There should be a way for IGSNNESs to inform the university administration if the ISS office workers are behaving in a way that is unprofessional.
- Based on my limited yet troubling findings, I would recommend that an evaluation of the ISS office's practices and procedures be conducted by a third party. Even if the evaluation were to contradict some of the statements made by the participants in my study, an impartial evaluation of the ISS office will likely result in ideas for more specific improvements which can be made to help ensure the IGSNNESs who use the ISS office will be better served.

##### 5. *Emergency Phone Boxes, Lighting, and Sidewalks*

- The Faculty and Staff Committed to an Inclusive Campus (FSCIC) at TAMU have recommended adding more emergency phone boxes in the Northgate area (Watkins, 2005a). I agree that additional emergency call boxes are a good idea. I would also add that with the addition of the emergency boxes should come educational programming on how and when it is appropriate to use the boxes.
- Ahmed mentioned the lack of sufficient lighting in the Northgate area as one of the reasons he now avoids the area. Lighting should be increased in Northgate to make not only IGSNNESs, but everyone, feel safer.
- Some areas in Northgate do not have paved sidewalks. Without sidewalks it is necessary for students to walk or ride their bicycles in the street. The assailants who attacked Rajiv and Ahmed were driving vehicles through the streets of Northgate. Other IGSNNESs in my study reported having beer bottles thrown at

them from cars as they were walking in the Northgate area. Though adding sidewalks will not entirely eliminate access of would-be assailants in cars, I feel that sidewalks will add an additional degree of safety for students walking and bicycling in the Northgate area.

6. *Northgate/TAMU Alliances and “Safe Place” Program*

- The Northgate area is a place where some students live; it is also a place where businesses that cater specifically to TAMU students are located. Some of my respondents mentioned that the recent assaults had made them weary of frequenting Northgate businesses. If Northgate businesses do not want to inadvertently turn away business from IGSNNESs, they should partner with TAMU officials and student organizations to find new ways to attract a more diverse clientele. Following Rajiv’s assault, a student task force was formed. The members of this group also supported collaboration between students and local businesses “Texas A&M officials should work with student organizations and local businesses to ensure the safety of students, said several student leaders...during a meeting of the Student Leader Assault Task Force” (Watkins, 2005b). It seems to be in the best interests of the IGSNNESs at TAMU and the local businesses (as well as TAMU officials, the rest of the student body, and the community at large) to work together to create a more welcoming environment particularly in the Northgate area.
- A “Safe Place” type program could be implemented; one such program was launched in 1991 in Australia as a way to protect members of the lesbian, gay,

bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community (Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project, 2006). The Safe Place program could easily be reworked to serve *all* students and visitors to the Northgate area. I am not alone in suggesting that a Safe Place program could work to improve conditions for IGSNNESs at TAMU. “Graduate Student Council President Jamie Rae Walker said the University should team up with Northgate businesses to provide "safe places," in which students who were being harassed could enter for refuge” (Watkins, 2005b). In the Australian version of the Safe Place program businesses who wish to participate are given a placard to post in their window proclaiming the business as a safe place. The placards are only good for a one year period. In order to receive a new placard, the businesses must update the emergency phone numbers they have on hand and train their staff to be aware of the program (Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project, 2006).

I believe it is apropos that the Safe Place program I am recommending to be used in the Northgate area primarily for IGSNNESs is inspired by a program that was originally designed for the LGBT community. The first hate-based assault I ever remember hearing about, which occurred in the Northgate area, was an assault on a gay former TAMU student - “Matthew Bryan Rooney was assaulted Jan. 24, 2004, by two men on College Main at Northgate due to his sexual orientation” (Meyers, 2004). Perhaps if the Safe Place program had been implemented after Matthew Rooney’s assault, some of the assaults on IGSNNESs could have been

avoided. On the Web site explaining the Safe Place program, information about when it is appropriate to utilize the program is provided:

You can access a Safe Place location whenever you feel your safety being threatened. Such situations may include: seeing a group of drunken young men walking towards you; being verbally abused by strangers on the street; or being threatened with violence. Depending upon the situation the staff at a Safe Place location may call the police, lock the door or simply let you wait inside until you feel safe to leave (Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project, 2006.)

A Safe Place program might foster a feeling of safety amongst visitors to the Northgate area, but only if certain guidelines are established to ensure that the businesses are not just signing up for the program in hopes of generating business from IGSNNESs. These businesses must be willing to train their workers how to react in the event that an individual should enter and ask to be protected under the Safe Place program. A committee should be created which includes members with vested and varying interests in order to ensure that the program is serving those it benefits in an equitable way. My suggestion is that the committee should include at the very minimum members from the following groups: the three local police stations, Northgate business owners, and student leaders from groups which cater to IGSNNESs.

#### *7. Golf Cart Escort Service*

- This is actually a recommendation that I have some reservations about. However, the golf cart escort service has been recommended not only by a couple of my respondents, but also by student leaders at TAMU. I am therefore including both pros and cons of this recommendation as well as a suggestion that

may help TAMU administration decide whether they want to support a golf cart escort program. Some proponents of the golf cart escort system explain:

Student Senate Speaker Pro Tempore Amanda Lanning said she wants to implement a golf cart escort service to transport students around campus at night. Lanning said if her plan was adopted, student volunteers driving golf carts would patrol campus at night and offer people rides to their dorms and cars.

Patrick Lukingbeal, SGA student advocate for diversity, said the program would complement and serve as an alternative to the Corps of Cadets escort service. Several meeting attendees complained that some minority students had incidents with the Corps escorts and felt uncomfortable using the program (Watkins, 2005b).

If students are avoiding using the walking escort service that is already available on campus through the Corps of Cadets, I can not imagine that they will suddenly begin using the golf cart escort program. However, at least one student claims that she has never used the Corp escort program, but she would use the golf cart program if it were an option:

Lanning said that although she felt that sometimes it's in her best interest to use the Corps Escorts, she is embarrassed to call them. Lanning said she would, however, use the golf cart service (Watkins, 2005b).

I wonder what would happen if the Corps of Cadets offered to run the golf cart program. Would this student still be able to get over her embarrassment and discomfort enough to take advantage of the service? What makes this escort service more attractive than the one currently offered - the golf carts or the imagined sensitivity of the drivers? In my focus group session, Ahmed also suggested the golf cart escort idea. However, when I asked him if he would take advantage of the program if it were available he said that he would rather take his own car. Ahmed still felt that the golf cart escort idea was a good one, and



claimed that he had IGSNNES friends without vehicles who would take advantage of this program if it were available. Regardless of whether the golf cart escort idea is a good one, there are still numerous obstacles that will need to be addressed before it can be successfully implemented.

Although meeting attendees were supportive of the idea, some worried that liabilities could make the program too costly. The Task Force discussed seeking the aid of Transportation Services and CARPOOL to implement the program. "There are some roadblocks that the program could run into but I think that (the golf cart escort program) is a great preliminary idea that has a lot of potential," Lanning said (Watkins, 2005b).

Though the golf cart escort program certainly has potential, I believe before any logistical planning takes place regarding implementation of this program, a survey of students should be conducted. The survey should include questions that go beyond whether or not students think the service is a good idea. Instead, the questions should seek to ascertain how often each student at TAMU would actually use the golf cart service if it were to be offered. My suspicion is that the actual demand for such a program would be nearly non-existent even though the idea is a good one in theory.

#### 8. *Community Outreach Programs*

- The local TAMU program "Bee a Good Neighbor" should be expanded to include the entire B/CS community. The Bee a Good Neighbor program could serve as a complement to the "Neighborhood Watch" program which is run through the National Sheriffs' Association. Members of the Neighborhood Watch program receive information about deterring and reporting a variety of criminal activities. Neighborhood Watch programs have been proven to reduce

overall crime rates and increase the number of apprehensions of criminals in the communities where the programs are implemented (National Sheriffs' Association, 2006). The Bee a Good Neighbor Program and the Neighborhood Watch program both offer specialized training and resources that prepare and educate participants to practice safer behaviors and habits. Every effort should be made to work toward 100% participation in these programs by all B/CS residents and business owners.

- The Student Leader Assault Task Force and other TAMU groups that are made up of members who represent a wide range of interests and backgrounds should present age-appropriate informational programs about diversity, inclusion, and safety to local B/CS elementary, middle, and high school students. Consider again the lyrics I mentioned in the "Statement of Problem" section of this paper: "southern trees bear a strange fruit, blood on the leaves and blood at the root" (Meeropol, n.d.). I believe that racism that is strong enough to motivate some people to assault others doesn't develop overnight. I think that it develops over a period of time. Perhaps if there is an effort to prune racist and discriminatory thoughts, these thoughts can be changed before they translate into actions. It is important to note that in the case of Ahmed, the assailants who were apprehended and charged with the assault were minors. Educational and institutional changes at TAMU in response to the assaults on IGSNNESs are crucial, but it is also of critical importance that changes are made to local K-12 school programming as well.

### 9. *Increased Funding for IGSNNESs Salaries and Housing*

- When Sarayu tried to fill out her I-20 form, she was told that she did not have sufficient funds. However, according to Sarayu, the reason that she did not have enough money was due to her insufficient salary allowance:

SARAYU: I was promised funds by the university to come to this university, and I have spent so many years completing my courses and there is no other way that I can get extra income to show . . . because the university has increased its tuition over the years exponentially and our salaries have remained the same. I went to AERA last time and I spoke to a guy who was a student here in the '90s and he had the same salary then that I still have now.

A study should be conducted which would determine if the average salary for an IGSNNES at TAMU is high enough to be considered a living wage and whether or not it is sufficient for documentation on the IGSNNESs' required I-20 forms.

If the study results support Sarayu's claims, than TAMU employed IGSNNESs' salaries should be increased immediately. It is not fair to IGSNNESs to entice them into enrolling at TAMU with promises that they will be able to support themselves once they get here, only to have those promises be left unfulfilled.

- Another separate study should be conducted comparing the pricing, amenities, and building upkeep of the University Apartments (UAs), which are almost exclusively occupied by IGSNNESs, with those of other apartment complexes in the B/CS area. The study should be conducted by a third party to avoid the potential for skewing of results due to the vested interests of the university. The UAs are designed primarily to house IGSNNESs and in my opinion the apartments should help IGSNNESs feel appreciated, welcome, and safe. Sarayu

does not believe that this is the current message the UAs upkeep and pricing are sending.

SARAYU: When it comes to the university, I mean, they are pretty good at many services they provide to us, but when it comes to the crucial point, they are . . . I don't know, they are deficient. . . . [At the UAs] the rent is so high [pause] they keep on hiking it, and any other apartment in this entire town is much better than staying at the UAs, and they don't care about that because it is taken only by international students. . . . I mean, they wouldn't even go and live in that place. It is shacks literally.

If what Sarayu is claiming is correct, and TAMU really is housing IGSNNESs in apartments that are worth less than other apartments, than the university is running a risk of sending a message that IGSNNESs themselves are worth less than other students and thus that IGSNNESs are worthless, or at least less valued than other non-IGSNNESs. I do not believe that this is a message that would fit in with the TAMU Vision 2020 plan of becoming one of the top ten research universities in the United States by the year 2020. My study was not specifically focused on the conditions of the UAs, so again, I recommend that a third party study be conducted to see if Sarayu's complaints about the UAs have any merit.

#### 10. *Class Additions and Changes, and Reworking I-Week*

- Sarayu mentioned frustrations with her graduate level history of education courses. She felt that her courses did not provide an accurate and inclusive recounting of history. Perhaps new courses and new syllabi for current courses could be developed that would be more encompassing of *world* history instead of just *American* history.

- Rajiv suggested that *mandatory* workshops be developed to provide *all* TAMU students, faculty, and staff with an opportunity to learn about each other through meaningful discussions. When I asked him if he thought the ethnicities of the facilitators of such workshops would be important, he said:

RAJIV: Anyone. As long as the content is good and people who taught about it believed in it. . . . That is the point, right? I mean, it is not about which would be more acceptable; it is about telling people what should be acceptable and, you know, you have . . . students from a department just go and sit there and it is mandatory that they talk about it and then they would talk about discrimination. . . . You know, you kind of . . . start talking about it . . . I guess . . . you can talk about whatever mechanisms TAMU has because whenever things like this kind of happen, they don't know how to handle it.

Workshops such as the ones suggested by Rajiv may help to foster meaningful relationships among those in the TAMU community.

- International Week (I-Week), a program designed to raise awareness and honor IGSNNESs, should be reformatted to better serve the needs of students at TAMU. According to the International Student Services (ISS) Web site “I-Week (International Week) is an event that celebrates and presents the international community to Texas A&M University” (International Student Services, 2006). I perceive two main problems with the current stated mission of I-Week. First, the goal of “*present[ing]* the international community to Texas A&M University” seems to connote to me an objectification of the international community – as if I-week is an opportunity for international students to be put on display for Americans. I believe the goal should instead be to stimulate meaningful interactions between American and international students. The second problem I perceive with the current stated mission of I-Week is perhaps addressed best by

the IGSNNESs themselves. Several of the IGSNNESs I spoke to in the focus groups mentioned their frustration with the lack of attendance at I-Week by anyone other than international students. The lack of attendance by Americans made the IGSNNESs I spoke with feel as if they were celebrating themselves.

Sarayu laments:

SARAYU: Oh, those International Week (I-week) celebrations that they say is, you know, to bring awareness for all students on campus [pause] if you go and see the auditorium can seat about 3,000 students and almost everybody you will see is an international student. American students barely know about the celebration. It is like we are celebrating (Arisa and Sarayu in unison say “ourselves”) and . . . you don’t see Americans there except for those people who probably volunteer and probably have to go there for a class credit and that is the maximum that you will get from them, but I tell many of my friends that the I-week is coming up and they will say, “What is I-week? What does the *I* stand for?” So I think they are trying to make an effort, but it is not at a level where it will reach everybody.

If the purpose of events such as I-week is really to help bring the population of TAMU together to celebrate our differences as we learn more about our similarities, than we need to make sure that the week involves *all* students at TAMU in some way. Americans as well as international students have unique heritages, and I-week should be a way for members of the TAMU community to come together as equals to share in mutual respect and meaningful interaction. It should not be an opportunity to objectify international students and put them on display, and it should not be an event which results in IGSNNESs feeling as though they have celebrated themselves. Perhaps one way to help involve all students in the I-Week celebration would be to combine I-Week with the mandatory workshops that Rajiv (and I) have proposed. Students, faculty, and

staff would each randomly be assigned to a workshop cohort group to help ensure diversity of such things as classification, major, ethnic group, etc. Each workshop cohort group would meet once every other week during the course of a semester. In addition to having meaningful discussions within the group about the similarities and differences of each individual in the group, the group could be assigned a country to specifically learn about. At the end of the semester, all of the cohort groups would convene in an I-Week celebration. The groups, regardless of their own personal backgrounds would be responsible for sharing information about the food, geography, culture, customs, etc. for the country they were assigned. At the very minimum, there should be cohorts assigned to each of the countries that are represented in the TAMU community, including the United States. I think that a program such as this has real potential to bring the TAMU community together and to provide a catalyst for a deeper understanding of the value of all people. Even if the exact parameters that I have suggested for a workshop cohort program and reformatted I-Week celebration are not implemented exactly, and instead are modified to aid the ease of the execution of such a program, I still believe this suggestion would be a worthwhile endeavor. For example, it may not be practical to have cohort groups made up of a mixture of faculty, staff, undergraduates, and graduates. The schedules of these groups tend to be different, so the cohort groups may need to be designed within each classification, and perhaps just for students. Again, I think that minor changes to the workshop cohort group and I-Week structuring ideas I have

presented may be necessary, however I believe that there should be every effort to implement such a program.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT YET RELATED RESEARCH

I believe that the next research study should analyze some of the root causes of racism by looking closely at IGSNNESs *and* NESs. I think that it would be a good idea to conduct a study such as the one Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) conducted. In their study, they had White participants keep journals in which they recorded what was discussed that was racialized when only White people were present. The Picca and Feagin (forthcoming) study was primarily focused on racial statements that were made in general, and not necessarily those specifically aimed at NNEs. I believe that such a study would be even more enlightening than mine. In my study, I simply tried to get a peak through the curtains of the front and back stages, but a future study could have the potential of throwing the curtains wide open. Future research could be designed in a way that would encourage IGSNNESs to keep journals about all of the discriminatory comments that are made about NESs when they are exclusively with other IGSNNESs *and* NESs could be encouraged to keep journals about all of the discriminatory comments that are made about IGSNNESs when they are exclusively with other NESs.

Additionally, future studies that include larger numbers of participants could create more categories and groupings of students which would make data analysis more meaningful. For example, future studies might separate students based not only on



whether they are Native or Non-Native English speakers but also by things such as: country of origin, gender, religion, classification, major, and length of time at TAMU.

No matter how future researchers choose to build upon and adapt my study, my main hope is that there will be future research on this topic. I wish that the assaults on IGSNNESs had never happened. However, since they did, it is my sincere hope that others will think about the assaults and other more hidden and seemingly mundane acts of discrimination so real improvements can be made. Given that it was Rajiv who inspired my research, I find it only fitting that I end with his words and not mine:

RAJIV: [We need to] put it out there in the open, you know, so that other people can notice it and talk about it [pause] like you are doing, like I am doing and ask hard question[s] and wait for answers.

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## APPENDIX 1

## CAMPUS CRIME ALERT E-MAILS

<b>From:</b>	"William L. Perry" <viceprovost@tam.u.edu>  <a href="#">Add to Address Book</a>  <a href="#">Add Mobile Alert</a>
<b>To:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	Tue, 21 Jun 2005 12:34:11 -0500
<b>Subject:</b>	Campus Alert Concerning Assault in Northgate

In an effort to keep the university community informed, we want to report that an international graduate student reported being physically and verbally assaulted in Northgate at about 10 p.m. on Wednesday, June 1, 2005, by unknown individuals in a white van near the corner of College Main and Church. The student was riding a bicycle from the campus to his home in Northgate when the incident occurred. The case is being investigated by the College Station Police Department.

## SAFETY TIPS

Students can enhance their safety and reduce their risk of being assaulted by taking preventative actions.

- Avoid areas where alcohol is being served as alcohol increases the likelihood of impulsive behavior.
- Avoid traveling alone after dark and whenever possible move about in groups that contain friends and acquaintances.
- Be aware of what is going on around you.
- Trust your instincts. If something feels wrong with a person, building or situation, something probably is wrong. Change your plans, move away from the person, and get out of the area - whatever is necessary for you to feel comfortable.
- Do not confront anyone who is making disparaging or demeaning remarks or exhibiting threatening behavior





- If you think you are being followed, stay in well-lighted areas and go into a store or restaurant.
- Know the locations of the emergency phones (phones outside have a blue light on top).

#### IF YOU ARE ASSAULTED

Call the University Police Department (UPD) at 845-2345 and/or the Office of Student Life at 845-3113 as soon as possible. The UPD telephone number is printed the back of your Texas A&M ID card together with emergency telephone numbers for on campus (9-911) and off campus (911). Try to remember as much as you can about the assailant. Important characteristics include: sex, race, hair color and length, body size, clothing description, scars, tattoos, mode of travel, vehicle type, color and license plate number. UPD officers will coordinate with law enforcement in College Station or Bryan and will immediately begin a search for the suspect(s). The Office of Student Life will assist, support, and guide you through the aftermath of any such incident. And we encourage you to report any incident with hate or bias as a component.

William L. Perry  
Vice Provost

<b>From:</b>	"University Police" <bertvk@tamu.edu>  <a href="#">Add to Address Book</a>  <a href="#">Add Mobile Alert</a>
<b>To:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	Wed, 02 Nov 2005 10:11:32 -0600
<b>Subject:</b>	Campus Crime Alert

#### Campus Crime Alert

On Sunday, October 30, 2005, at approximately 2:00 a.m., an A&M international graduate student reported to the College Station Police Department that he was assaulted. This offense took place in the 500

block of Cherry Street within the area of Northgate.

The victim was walking to a friend's house after leaving a Northgate bar. He was approached by a pickup truck occupied by four to five males. After stating that they would give the victim a ride, the male suspects assaulted the victim. The suspects got back into the truck and drove away from the area. The victim received a possible broken nose, abrasions, and swelling in the facial area. No property was taken from the victim. The victim stated that the assault could have stemmed from an earlier encounter at the bar involving possibly two of the suspects.

The suspects are described as:

Four to five Anglo American Males

Ages: College

Heights: approximately 5'5" - 5'8"

Facial: Clean shaven

Clothing: All wearing "Maroon Out" shirts with Aggie baseball caps

Vehicle Description: Possibly a light colored Toyota Tacoma

If you witnessed or have any information regarding this crime, please call the College Station Police Department at (979) 764-3600. If you wish to remain anonymous, you have the option of contacting Brazos County Crime Stoppers at (979) 775-TIPS. (775-8477)

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Confrontations can occur without provocation, through no fault of your own. When such confrontations do occur, there are some actions you can take.

Remain as calm as possible. This will not be easy if you are confronted, but it is your first step towards an escape. Your own initiative and clear thinking are your best defenses.

Report the incident. Call the police immediately and report what has happened. If you call from an "on-campus" land-line telephone, dial 9-911. If you are calling from an "off-campus" or cell phone, dial 911.

Provide the police with a description of the incident.



Try to notice detailed physical and clothing descriptions of the person

(s) involved.

If a vehicle is involved, try to note the vehicle's license plate number or the vehicle's manufacturer, model and color.

Seek support after the incident. Victims can benefit from university support services. Faculty can contact the office of the Dean of Faculties (845-4274); staff can contact the Department of Human Resources (845-4141) or the Employee Assistance Program (845-3711); and students can call the Student Counseling Service (845-4427; 845-2700 on evenings and weekends).

Texas A&M University Police Department  
TAMU 1231  
College Station, Texas 77843-1231

<b>From:</b>	"University Police" <bertvk@tamu.edu>  <a href="#">Add to Address Book</a>  <a href="#">Add Mobile Alert</a>
<b>To:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	Tue, 29 Nov 2005 17:05:58 -0600
<b>Subject:</b>	Campus Crime Alert

Campus Crime Alert

Assault

Date(s): November 27, 2005                      Time(s): 11:00 p.m.

Offense: Assault

Location: Olsen Road near the Student Recreation Center

Timely Warnings to the campus community complies with the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act).

On November 28, 2005 at approximately 8:30 p.m., a female international student reported to the University Police Department that she had been the victim of two incidents during the past week while she was riding her bicycle on Olsen Road near the Student Recreation Center.

First Incident:

According to the victim, the first was a verbal assault that took place approximately a week ago from this date at approximately 9:00 p.m. while she was riding her bicycle on Olsen Road in the southbound lane in front of the Student Recreation Center. A black four-door car pulled up next to her and the occupants began to yell at her. The vehicle was occupied by approximately four male individuals. The victim stated the language spoken by the subjects was not English except for one derogatory word directed at her. The vehicle then proceeded southbound towards George Bush Drive without further incident.

The suspects were described as:

Four males with dark skin complexions

Ages: 20-25

Heights: Unknown

Facial: Clean shaven

Clothing: Dark colored clothing

Vehicle Description: Dark colored four-door sedan.

Second Incident:

Then on November 27, 2005 at approximately 11:00 p.m., the victim was again riding her bicycle southbound on Olsen Road in the area of the Student Recreation Center when she felt someone strike her back. She indicated that she was not aware that a vehicle was behind her until she felt the strike and a hard tug on her backpack. She then observed a dark colored vehicle occupied by two males. The subject who apparently struck her and tugged at her backpack was hanging out of the front passenger side window of the vehicle. The vehicle then proceeded southbound on Olsen Road without further incident. The victim advised she was not injured.

The suspects were described as:

Two males, unknown race

Ages: Unknown

Height: Unknown

Facial: Unknown

Clothing: Unknown

Vehicle Description: Dark colored four-door sedan (The victim stated the vehicles in the two incidents were similar but she was not certain they were the same.)

The victim advised that in both incidents, she did not get a good look at the subjects and she was unable to obtain any information off of the license plates.

If you witnessed or have any information regarding this crime, please call the University Police Department at (979) 845-2345. If you wish to remain anonymous, you have the option of contacting Brazos County Crime Stoppers at (979) 775-TIPS. (775-8477). Additional crime prevention tips may be received by calling Sgt. Baron at (979) 862-8125 or use the University Police online reporting form at <http://police.tamu.edu/submitform.htm>

Additional crime prevention tips may be received by calling Sgt. Baron at (979) 862-8125. webpage at <http://www.tamu.edu/upd>.



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SAFETY TIPS:

Confrontations can occur without provocation, through no fault of your own. When such confrontations do occur, there are some actions you can take.

- Remain as calm as possible. This will not be easy if you are confronted, but it is your first step towards an escape. Your own initiative and clear thinking are your best defenses.
- Report the incident. Call the police immediately and report what has happened. If you call from an "on-campus" land-line telephone, dial 9-911. If you are calling from an "off-campus" or cell phone, dial 911.
- Provide the police with a description of the incident.
- Try to notice detailed physical and clothing descriptions of the person(s) involved.
- If a vehicle is involved, try to note the vehicle's license plate number or the vehicle's manufacturer, model and color.

Seek support after the incident. Victims can benefit from university support services after the incident. Faculty can contact the office of the Dean of Faculties (845-4274); staff can contact the Department of Human Resources (845-4141) or the Employee Assistance Program (845-3711); and students can call the Student Counseling Service (845-4427; 845-2700 on evenings and weekends).

<b>From:</b>	"University Police" <bertvk@tamu.edu>  <a href="#">Add to Address Book</a>  <a href="#">Add Mobile Alert</a>
<b>To:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	Thu, 15 Dec 2005 13:57:19 -0600
<b>Subject:</b>	Campus Crime Alert

#### Campus Crime Alert

Timely warnings to the campus community comply with the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act).

On Monday, December 12, 2005, at approximately 11:35 p.m., a male A&M international student reported to the Bryan Police Department that he was a victim of an assault with bodily injury on College Main.

The victim was walking northbound in the 4100 block of College Main and was struck in the face by an object thrown from a southbound pickup truck. His injuries included facial swelling and, possibly, a broken nose. The investigating Bryan PD Officer found remnants of a water balloon at the scene of the assault. The victim was taken by private auto to the St. Joseph's Hospital.

The description of the suspects is unknown at this time.

Suspect's Vehicle: Red or white pickup truck.

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While investigating the above incident, a male A&M student approached the same Bryan Police Officer and reported that he too was a victim of a water balloon assault on Boyett Street.

The victim reported that he was walking on Boyett Street near the Traditions Dormitory. He was struck in the chest with a water balloon that was thrown with such force that it nearly knocked the wind out of him. The victim believes some type of device was use to launch the balloon. The victim was not injured.

Suspects: Three white males

Suspect's Vehicle: Newer model silver 4-door Nissan Altima

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If you witnessed or have any information regarding these crimes, please call the Bryan Police Department at (979) 209-5301 or the University Police Department at (979) 845-2345.

If you wish to remain anonymous, you have the option of contacting Brazos County Crime Stoppers at (979) 775-TIPS. (775-8477).

The University Police Department has an on-line reporting form at:  
<http://www.tamu.edu/upd/>

The Bryan Police Department has additional on-line contact numbers at:  
<http://www.bryantx.gov/departments/police/cbpd/contact.htm>

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Confrontations can occur without provocation, through no fault of your own. When such confrontations do occur, there are some actions you can take.

Remain as calm as possible. This will not be easy if you are confronted, but it is your first step towards an escape. Your own initiative and clear thinking are your best defenses.

Report the incident. Call the police immediately and report what has happened. If you call from an "on-campus" land-line telephone, dial 9-911. If you are calling from an "off-campus" or cell phone, dial 911.

Provide the police with a description of the incident.

Try to notice detailed physical and clothing descriptions of the person (s) involved.

If a vehicle is involved, try to note the vehicle's license plate number or the vehicle's manufacturer, model and color.

Seek support after the incident. Victims can benefit from university support services. Faculty can contact the office of the Dean of Faculties (845-4274); staff can contact the Department of Human Resources (845-4141) or the Employee Assistance Program (845-3711); and students can call the Student Counseling Service (845-4427; 845-2700 on evenings and weekends).



## APPENDIX 2

## ONLINE SURVEY DATA

1. Please choose a pseudonym (fake name) to maintain your confidentiality.	2. Please state your gender. (If you would prefer not to state if you are female or male, please skip this question.)	3. How long have you lived in the US?	4. How long have you been a graduate student at Texas A & M University (TAMU)?
Mia	Female	2 years	2 years
Verissimus	Male	5 years	5 years
charlie brown	male	6 years	6 years
Shankar	Male	18 months	18 months
Mickey	F	5 years	4 years
gil	male	8 months	8 months
inter4007	male	3.5 years	3.5 years
archies	female	18 months	18 months
Oliver klosov	Male	32 years	4 years
Medina	female	7 months	7 month
djinn	male	2	2
nancy	female	6 months	6 months
everydaylucy	F	3 years	1.5 years
Nathat Sayarath		One year	One year
Champaklal	male	5 years	4 years
liberation	male	8 months	8 months
Margarita	Female	10 years	2 semesters
area51	male	1 yr 8 months	1 yr 8 months
Eddy	Male	One and a hlf year	I'm in the fourth semester now.
Sarayu	Female	5 yrs	5 yrs
arisa	female	almost 2 years	3 semester.

Pseudonym	5. How would you describe yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity and/or country of origin?	6. When people at TAMU first meet you, what do they think about your English speaking status, and how do they indicate this to you?
Mia	Hispanic	Was ok
Verissimus	Asian	They've spoken normally to me, especially when I have initiated the conversation.
charlie brown	Asian Indian	They think I can speak comfortable english and start off a conversation in english without asking the question - Do you understand english?
Shankar	Asian/Indian	Good spoken skills; they were surprised.
Mickey	Asian	Good English
gil	asian	first 2 months it was a bit tough formme but later on i got accustomed to it an dnow its poretty good.
inter4007	china	ok
archies	Asian/India	nil
Oliver klosov	Race is white Ethincity is Hispanic Country of origin is the United States of Mexico	They believe I speak better English than most English speakers. They are surprised to hear that I'm not an USA citizen.
Medina	asian, Kazakhstan	ok
djinn	Indian	My spoken english was just OK, when I came here. Sometimes people had difficultu in understanding what I was saying, so they just ask me again.
nancy	asia	Better than they thought
everydaylucy	Asian	nothing particular.
Nathat Sayarath	Asian	My English is Good.
Champaklal	asian	pretty good because american speak grammatically wrong english.
liberation	asian	good
Margarita	Hispanic/Colombian	They ask me where I'm from and I say I'm born here (I was born in NYC). Then they ask where my family is from and I respond. Then they say they noticed an accent.
area51	Indian	Most of them dont make a comment. But some tell me that my English is very good for an international.
Eddy	Asian from South Korea	At first, the treat me as a perfect speaker, but later, they treat me as a second language person by making their speech slower and trying to find easier vocabulary.
Sarayu	Indian (Asian)	They dont try to understand my accent although it is close to British. But if a Brit/ a French would talk with an accent, they would make an effort to understand it.
arisa	Asian	Most of them told me my English is good.

Pseudonym	7. Have you heard of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so: Please tell me a bit more about what you have heard.)
Mia	No I haven't heard anything about it.
Verissimus	Haven't seen or heard of any myself, but have heard stories.
charlie brown	Yes, if you are not american, than some resturants do not serve you properly.
Shankar	People simply don't speak to you in a natural way. But after you've convinced them your English is indeed good, they don't give a damn.
Mickey	Yes, someone's baggage is checked more carefully in the airport.
gil	no
inter4007	when you teach, students complain
archie	No, I never heard about any discrimination against non - native English speakers
Oliver klosov	Yes. I have heard of several incidents from the TAMU police E-mail that I've received.
Medina	no
djinn	Yes, couple of them in Northgate area. I read about it in Battalion.
nancy	Do not want to go out with them. Teacher do not like them and give them lower grades.
everydaylucy	yes. the incidents at northgate
Nathat Sayarath	Yes, 1. Through the Newspaper about the North Gate incident. 2. One of my friend told me about the discrimination in College of Engineering
Champaklal	no, I have found americans very patient and more keen to listen.
liberation	no
Margarita	Yes, through the Crime Alerts that the University Police Department sends via e-mail and through the news. I've heard of the numerous assaults on foreign students around the Northgate area.
area51	Many incidents of hate bias and discrimination has come to my notice. There have been over 6 international students assaulted in the past year. There have been reports of bias against minorities, esp. african americans, at the Bars in northgate, specifically The Library and The Corner bar.
Eddy	I think that conscious discrimination is very rare. Instead, unconscious discrimination which influences me badly when I need acculturation here. In other words, I need to know and learn the customary practices or cultral behaviors here (that are usually subconscious, intangible, and spontaneous) but their guess that I'm already culturally familiar with their behaviors and ideas makes me miss the chance to ask and learn those practices. In my opinion, some officers, such as driver's licence testers could be regarded as source of discrimination; sometimes, they do not consider the applicants English ability and instruct loudly, which ultimately intimidate the non-native applicants not to perform their ordinary driving capability.
Sarayu	Definitely. In one of my classes when I was talking, I used the word derogatory and said it plainly as derogatory. A girl in my class said, 'what?'. I repeated the word. She again said, "what?". I repeated. This went on for about 5 times and then the professor interjected and said, "deROgaTOry". It is then that she understood and repeated mockingly, "oh, you meant deROgaTOry?". For a doctoral student (her), I dont think that is too difficult to understand.
arisa	Yes, a lot of international students told me that the people in the International Students Service descriminate against international students( WHAT A SHAME THING!).

Pseudonym	8. Have you witnessed and/or been a target of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so: Please tell me a little more about what you witnessed or experienced.)
Mia	No never
Verissimus	No.
charlie brown	I had couple of incidents at Starbucks on Texas Ave. I was served with disdain.
Shankar	Nope
Mickey	No
gil	no
inter4007	no
archies	No
Oliver klosov	No.
Medina	no
djinn	No
nancy	no
everydaylucy	sure! when entering a restaurant receiving no attention from the host until my american boyfriend came in to the door.
Nathat Sayarath	No.
Champaklal	no
liberation	no
Margarita	No.
area51	no
Eddy	Interestingly enough, different minor ethnic groups sometimes show discrimination to each other more than the major group show it to them.
Sarayu	Yes. see above. (answer number 7)
arisa	YES. First, the people working in the international student service are very impatient to international students. Sometimes they are very rude. If you ask most of international students and if they trust you, they will tell you how rude these people (I think 95% international students think their attitude are not nice). Also, they often make mistake in their work, but do not want to apologize. I can tell you many stories about them. One of my friends got an e-mail from them to ask her to stop by and pick up her document. She went there but they could not find the document for her. So they asked her: "Are you sure you get the e-mail? Do you really understand the meaning of the e-mail?" Another thing happened recently to another of my friends. She wants to get new I-20 (a document for international student) because she transferred from master to PhD plan. She went there in January with the whole document they need. The people told her that they will give the supervisor of ISS of her document. She went there several times to make sure everything is ok, but everybody gave her different answer.
arisa (cont.)	(cont.) At last, she found out that they lost her document and she could not change I-20 this semester. NO APOLOGY at all. I called ISS yesterday to ask some question about registration, they are so impatient. This is not the first time and I think it is not only to me. The people in ISS know international students do not report anything to the university. Nobody really care about international students. We do not trust the people. We know there is nothing happend even we report it. Off campus, they are too many happened. I rode bicycle back to home, there was a truck passing me very closely, and there is two guy shouted to me: "Go back to your country!" My friend put some traditional paint in his apartment door; someone wrote "Go back! Fuck you!" in that paint

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>9. Do you live in the Northgate area (yes/no)?</b>	<b>10. Please tell me a little bit about your typical exposure to the Northgate area. (How often you go through or visit, what time of day you are typically there, what you are usually doing when you are there, etc.)</b>
Mia	No	I have never go there except for lunch
Verissimus	No.	Gone about 5-6 times with friends (sometimes Americans, sometimes other)
charlie brown	No	I haven't been there often. Say once a month for lunch.
Shankar	Yes	Very rarely; I've been there probably 15 times totally. I go at night with my neighbours and co-research groupmates - our whole group will be multi-racial; we go and drink and get back home.
Mickey	No	When I am learning.
gil	no	i never visited
inter4007	I did, but not any more	only pass by
archies	No	Everyday I pass by the northgate area for my work. In late evenings and night at 10:00pm.
Oliver klosov	No.	I never go to Northgate. The last time I went to northgate was about 6 years ago.
Medina	no	no
djinn	No	Very rarely .. say once or twice a month, that too if I have to go to Post Office
nancy	yes	I live at college main. I often go home very late about 11:00 pm.
everydaylucy	no	just eat there once a while
Nathat Sayarath	No.	Rarely, Just pass by in the car
Champaklal	no	I don't visit Northgate because I don't drink.
liberation	yes	quite often
Margarita	No.	I go there to have lunch or in the evenings to go to a bar. I usually go there once or twice a week during the day and maybe twice a month in the evenings.
area51	yes	I walk through the northgate area every day during the day. I drive through there atleast 4-5 times a week. On some weekends I go to the bars in northgate in the evenings for a few drinks.
Eddy	no	N/A
Sarayu	No. I used to.	very rarely. On friday nights. Generally a scary/unsafe place for non-Americans.
arisa	Yes	No. I do not go there.

Pseudonym	11. There have been several assaults on non-native English speakers and other visible minority students in the Northgate area. Does this affect the frequency with which you visit this area?
Mia	No really, I only go there at noon to have lunch (and not every day) and I am always with someone else.
Verissimus	Yes
charlie brown	No, since I visit that area during daylight.
Shankar	Nope. I trust the cops!
Mickey	Yes
gil	not at all
inter4007	sure, I will watch out the surrounding people when I pass by
archies	No, i can't stop my visits to Northgate area , as I have to go to work everyday.I get more concious while passing Northgate.
Oliver klosov	No.
Medina	I do not visit that area due to the events that happen to non native citizens
djinn	No
nancy	Yes. If I were alone, I went home on the other side of college main st.
everydaylucy	no
Nathat Sayarath	It can be. I truely afraid to go to that place. If there is a meeting over there, my first thought must be the incident.
Champaklal	no.
liberation	no
Margarita	No. Fortunately I don't 'look' Hispanic. However, when I visit the area at night I make sure to bring a weapon with me (usually a small knife) in the event that someone assaults me.
area51	No. But it has changed the way I get there. I used to walk before, but now I drive.
Eddy	Indirectly, I think so.
Sarayu	Definitely. I avoid it as much as possible.
arisa	NO. Again, I do not go there.

Pseudonym	12. Do you feel safe where you live and/or on the TAMU campus? Why or why not?
Mia	Yes I feel safe where I live and in TAMU campus as well, because I haven't heard or seen anything bad in my complex or in the area of TAMU that I use.
Verissimus	Yes. It's a quiet family area.
charlie brown	Yes, because I am aware of my surroundings and haven't seen any suspicious activities.
Shankar	Yes but not as safe as it used to be when I came here. Still this is one of the safest campuses you can see in the US considering the complaints I receive from my friends studying elsewhere.
Mickey	Yes, there are a lot of police
gil	ya i feel safe as the police are very alert
inter4007	basically yes, most people are friendly
archies	Yes, I have friends near my apartment.
Oliver klosov	Yes. I am very assimilated. I live in a great neighborhood in Bryan that is very safe.
Medina	to some extent I do feel safe but sometimes I do not
djinn	Yes. People are very friendly here
nancy	Most of time, yes, I feel safe here.
everydaylucy	yes. as long as I don't wonder around late of the nite. some areas are dark
Nathat Sayarath	Not so sure. I live off campus. But when I talked to friends, they said there was no problem.
Champaklal	yes, with some precautions and alertness, I feel, its safer than many other places in world.
liberation	yes
Margarita	Yes. I'm always alert and aware of my surroundings, plus I feel like I can defend myself well. I feel that knowing self defense techniques makes me feel prepared, but I never 'let my guard down' - especially when it's dark outside.
area51	I feel safe on campus coz most the areas are well lit and there havent been any reports of assaults on campus so far.
Eddy	Yes. On campus or in my neighborhood, there are usually acquaintances in my vicinity.
Sarayu	Yes. It is a quiet locality. Peaceful.
arisa	Better than off campus.

Pseudonym	13. Would you recommend TAMU to a non-native English speaker or a visible minority student? Why or why not?
Mia	Yes because I have had a good experience here.
Verissimus	Yes. If one is focussed, a few incidents (which could happen anywhere) should not deter someone from grad school.
charlie brown	Yes, because of great university in terms of research and academics. Also, the city is very safe - one can go out at 3:00 in the night without thinking twice, as I have often done.
Shankar	Oh yeah. People are very hospitable and friendly. More opportunities exist here - people are more accepting.
Mickey	Yes. Discrimination does not really serious to me. I am minority.
gil	sure, there is no as such discrimination in tamu and this is a good uni
inter4007	yes, overall it's good
archies	yes, TAMU is a great school and great campus.
Oliver klosov	Yes. Because I know statistics and the percentage of assaults of very very very very very low.
Medina	I would recommend, it's a safe and good place to live and study
djinn	To non-native English speaker - I'll recommend To visible minority student - I'm not sure
nancy	Yes, b/c I feel the big city is worse.
everydaylucy	i don't recommend, but I am not against that either.
Nathat Sayarath	Yes for sure, eventhough it has a discriminative history. But with the effort of us as internationanl students to make known to Native students, the condition will be better.
Champaklal	yes, because it warm and friendly place.
liberation	yes
Margarita	Yes. I have actually had the opportunity to do so already. I tell the prospective students about the academics and about living in the area. I have mentioned the incidents because I feel they should be informed about these possibilities. through awareness, if they decide to come here, they'll be better prepared for the possibility of such an incident.
area51	I would recommend TAMU to a non-native english speaker or minority student because academically it is a good institution, and outside of that, and experince in TAMU will prepare them to be stronger advocates for the causes of diversity and inclusion in the future.
Eddy	Yes. Relatively safe and there is a long tradition of non-native or international students' residence and study.
Sarayu	Yes. The school is good. It is some people (including faculty) who have a sense of hegemony who are the problem.
arisa	No, I do not think TAMU welcome to international students. They just want them to pay the tuition.



Pseudonym	14. What suggestions do you have for the university to improve the current campus climate (the way that students feel about the campus experience)?
Mia	Would be nice if they have more cultural events, such as more concerts, theater plays, and so on.
Verissimus	I don't really know whether the university can do any more than what it is doing.
charlie brown	An escort service for northgate area resident and its publicity (I heard that cadets will escort you if you ask for it).
Shankar	Have fun programs among graduate students. Aggie spirit is least among graduate students; research is so intense here that the grad students simply cannot make it to most of the events held here and/or traditions.
Mickey	About the score, the teacher should be fair instead of only looking at the race.
gil	its good
inter4007	say Howdy and smile more frequently
archie	To provide better school transport so that international students don't have to walk and pass the Northgate areas.
Oliver klovov	Get rid of the George Bush Library. Since that is not going to happen, the next best thing is to make an effort to bring in more liberal speakers. Work with the ministers of congregations to have more acceptance sermons, i.e., Jesus associating with samaritans.
Medina	to have more buses running during Fridays and the weekends, because some students stay late these days and have to go back to their homes on foot. In some dark places they might be in danger.
djinn	Keep doing the good work
nancy	Have more different kinds of students.
everydaylucy	educate the faculty and staff first, especially the interational student service office
Nathat Sayarath	It should have more events and information confirmations to all native students about international students. Or in other words, more events which both local and international students have chances to meet and interact to build more relationship and more understanding.
Champaklal	Buildings are not architecturally good. They should be more open to outside than being dungeons. Even the newer buildings lack any sense of campus-oriented.
liberation	none
Margarita	Perhaps more cultural awareness programs or curriculum that deal with cultural relativism - in other words, seeing cultures and peoples' customs and beliefs from the culture's perspective. Perhaps making mandatory anthropology courses for all students, since these courses (such as ANTH 205 and ANTH 201) deal with this material in a theoretical and practical manner.
area51	Departments and colleges have to demonstrate more involmment with minority and international students. I university has to take proactive steps to ensure that the community around TAMU is made aware of the diversity of student population and is encouraged to provide the students (esp minority and international) a welcoming atmosphere. The TAMU administration has to lobby for more student friendly and tolerant directives by the city councils of Bryan and College station.
Eddy	I understand that they (campus staffs and native students or residential people here) are willingly try to help non-native students. I wish the situation would not worsen even though it could not be better.
Sarayu	More international students support. Create more awareness of other cultures. Even at the international week, only international students attend. You can hardly see Caucasian people in the entire auditorium of 2000 people.
arisa	I think people do not care. The president does not care. The people working for the international students do not care.....

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>15. To the best of your ability, please explain: 1. what an incident report is, 2. a few common reasons someone might want to fill out an incident report, and 3. how to file an incident report.</b>
Mia	No i don't
Verissimus	I assume it involves calling 911.
charlie brown	Yes, one files it with the local police.
Shankar	I'm afraid not. The procedure I would follow is to call up 911 from wherever I am. Then, I would e-mail the Battalion about the incident simply hoping that the required action will be taken.
Mickey	No.
gil	i dont know
inter4007	no, maybe dail 911?
archies	No
Oliver klosov	I would call the police.
Medina	I don;t know
djinn	Not sure... Call 911
nancy	no
everydaylucy	not sure
Nathat Sayarath	Incident report means report the incident anonymously to police or campus (I think). Call 911?
Champaklal	yes, call 911 immediately, if feel threatened.
liberation	---
Margarita	1. An incident report is a report filed with the University Police Department (UPD) or the local police department about an incident that violates regulations or laws 2. Being the victim of a violation or witnessing a violation 3. You can access the UPD
area51	Incident report is a formal account of an incident that is worthy of law enforcement's notice. Common reasons someone might want to fill out an incident report: Robbery, assault, accident, medical emergency etc.
Eddy	No.
Sarayu	Yes. Anything that is harassing. I can call 911 or the UPD.
arisa	I am not sure about this question.

Pseudonym	16. In an emergency it is best to call 911 (or 9-911 if you are using a campus phone). If you had to call the police for a non-emergency and you were off-campus at the time, which police department (Bryan, College Station, or University) would you call? Please explain your choice.	17. If you are willing to be contacted to answer more questions about your perceptions and experiences, please provide your contact information below. If not, please skip this question.
Mia		
Verissimus		
charlie brown		E-mail given.
Shankar		E-mail given.
Mickey		
gil		
inter4007		
archies		
Oliver klosov		Phone number given.
Medina		
djinn		E-mail given.
nancy		
everydaylucy		E-mail given.
Nathat Sayarath		E-mail given.
Champaklal		
liberation	university	
Margarita	If I'm on campus, the UPD because they're on location. If I'm off-campus, the College Station department since that's where I live.	E-mail given.
area51	Depending on where you are. If you are in CS, then call CSPD, if u are in bryan, call BPD. If you are on university apts, then call UPD	Phone number given.
Eddy		E-mail given.
Sarayu		E-mail given.
arisa	College Staion. I do not know.	E-mail given.

Pseudonym	18. Is there any information you would like to add or are there any questions that you think I should have asked you?
Mia	No
Verissimus	Perhaps you should ask whether people perceive a difference in the way they're treated when they're in the company of Caucasians, as opposed to other races.
charlie brown	No.
Shankar	This is a good survey. Good luck for your thesis!
Mickey	No
gil	nope
inter4007	no thanks
archies	No
Oliver klosov	Have assimilation classes. How to dress, look and act like a USA citizen is important because most assaults seem to be done based on appearance.
Medina	good survey, we feel that our issues are being addressed
djinn	None - I am not sure what is purpose of your study !!
nancy	no
everydaylucy	if u need an interveiwee. i m here
Nathat Sayarath	No, thanks.
Champaklal	no, thanks
liberation	no
Margarita	No.
area51	no comments
Eddy	I wish you continued to be interested in this topic...
Sarayu	NO.
arisa	NO.

## APPENDIX 3

## FOCUS GROUP 1 TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWER: Please state your chosen pseudonym.

RAJIV

AHMED

INTERVIEWER: Please state your gender. (If you would prefer not to state if you are female or male, please skip this question.).....

RAJIV: Skip

AHMED: Male

INTERVIEWER: How long have you lived in the US, not necessarily here, but how long have you lived in the US?

RAJIV: Two and a half years

AHMED: One and a half years

INTERVIEWER: How long have you been a graduate student at Texas A & M University (TAMU)?

RAJIV: Two and a half years

AHMED: One and a half years

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity and/or country of origin?

RAJIV: South Asian

INTERVIEWER: Ok, and that is how you would, like that is the extent of the description or do you usually say more?

RAJIV: Well if I am talking to any non-Indian I would say I was South Asian.

INTERVIEWER: But if you were talking to someone who was Indian you would say

RAJIV: If I was talking to someone who was from South Asia I would say I was Indian, but of course I use South Asian and Indian interchangeably.

AHMED: Yeah, same with me. I use both.

...

INTERVIEWER: When people at TAMU first meet you, what do they think about your English speaking status, and how do they indicate this to you (both before you open your mouth and also after you start talking)?

RAJIV: It is tough to say. I mean I think that by looking at me they would form some kind of opinion about me how I will talk, but I cannot say-I can not notice it before I start talking. And once I start talking it is quite apparent that they don't understand my accent....

INTERVIEWER: And what do they say, what do they do? How do you know that they don't understand you? Is it a facial expression or do they say, "What did you say" What exactly happens?

RAJIV: They ask me to repeat what I am saying and sometimes they think I am mispronouncing because I am using British English and they hear in American English and it is just I think that sometimes they think that they respect you, but they don't.

INTERVIEWER: And for you Ahmed?

AHMED: For me like many friends do not understand my English because I speak too fast sometimes. And I am not so clear. But one thing that I really appreciate is that whatever I speak they will never make a mockery of it or they wouldn't you know [repeat back what I said as I said it to make fun] they wouldn't try to...they would try to understand while I am speaking so that is the one thing that I really appreciate and if they don't understand they will politely ask me to repeat it or something.

INTERVIEWER: That is interesting because in one of the online interviews, one of the females had stated that usually things are pretty equal, and people treat her pretty well, and then all of a sudden she had this incident that she was talking about where she had been talking in class and had said the word derogatory, and people had asked her what she meant, and they asked her like five times in a row. And then somebody mocked her and said, did you mean DEROGATORY? Oh, that is what you meant. You meant DEROGATORY and she was saying that you know that was a PhD class (RAJIV: Really?) So do people not mock you at all or now that I said that, does that remind you of some other instances or

RAJIV: Yeah, I have got friends that will correct me and those who do not...I have got used to people correcting me.

AHMED: Yeah, people have miss understood me, but they have corrected me in a very good and decent manner I do not remember any instances where they have made a mockery of it.

INTERVIEWER: And what about for you. I mean people say that you have an accent, but obviously Americans have an accent too, is it difficult to distinguish different accents? Do you ever tell somebody that they have an accent or not?

RAJIV: I mean the way you know that is when you interact with African Americans, they have a very distinct way of talking and it is considered to be an accent and sometimes I wonder how these people understand. I mean it is hard to understand that accent. So everybody has an accent, I mean there is no such thing as an accent free language (AGREEMENT FROM AHMED) but when you think that it is really not...it is something you can get used to. I mean it seems like people understand Blacks pretty well, but I don't understand African Americans or British or South Americans-I can tell if a guy is from North or South.

INTERVIEWER: Is it the same for Hispanics or East Asians or do you understand?

RAJIV: I haven't interacted that much with Hispanics or who else did you ask?

INTERVIEWER: Asians

RAJIV: Asians I did interact and I find it hard to understand Asians, it is East Asians I am talking about, but yeah I can't really tell from the accent where the person is from.

AHMED: I have found that many people have different accents, like as you said-Hispanics or Africans or Asians who have been in America or have been staying in America a long time, but I don't feel that their accents have to change. Even considering the Chinese people who are in our program, but regarding the people who are in America, at least, not now I can not distinguish if their accent is from different geographical regions in America.

INTERVIEWER: Have you heard about, we are not going to talk about your incident yet, but have you heard about incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so: Please tell me a bit more about what you have heard.) I guess if you have heard about each other that would be ok to talk about, but let's not talk about your incident yet, we will get into that. What have you heard about people being discriminated against?

RAJIV: Here at Texas A & M (TAMU) or

INTERVIEWER: Here at TAMU and in College Station and Bryan.

RAJIV: I hadn't heard a lot about it until I got assaulted and then everything started...I mean what do you want me to tell you, you have heard a lot of this before.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I mean the people who are going to be reading this may not have heard all of the things that you have told me in private ("RAJIV" and I, the interviewer, are friends) so you need to tell me here.

RAJIV: Like people who are...one of my friends he is a Pakistani, and they followed him and threw beer bottles at him and were calling him names. (LONG PAUSE)  
Matthew (PAUSE)

INTERVIEWER: Sheppard?

RAJIV: No, not Matthew Sheppard

INTERVIEWER: Matthew, oh Rooney

RAJIV: Yeah, Matthew Rooney. I heard about that even before my assault...you want me to describe that?

INTERVIEWER: Sure, I mean I need it in the transcription.

RAJIV: I mean I didn't talk to him about that personally.

INTERVIEWER: What did you hear about it though? I don't know what you heard about it, I mean I only know what I heard about it. I don't have a clue what you know about it.

RAJIV: See I knew that Matthew got assaulted before I came to A & M but I don't know the details very much.

INTERVIEWER: How did you hear that he got assaulted before you came to A & M?

RAJIV: I was talking to my faculty who is gay and he told me about it. That was an insult I mean belonging to that community, but after that I read about Matthew from newspapers and then I talked about Matthew to faculty like Harry (Berger).

INTERVIEWER: Were most of the incidents that you heard about - about Americans or people of color, or were they about Non-Native English Speakers (NNEs)?



RAJIV: Matthew's case was an exception I guess. He was assaulted because he was gay, but uh other than that, most of the incidents that I hear about that are motivated by hate are related to NNESSs.

INTERVIEWER: What are some of the more mundane things that you hear about. Like what do some of your friends complain about - like, "Ugh, these Americans are so-they do this or"

RAJIV: Well they just won't talk to you...you become invisible in the college. ...you know the way students behave. I think it is the non-verbal communication that represents it.

INTERVIEWER: And what do they do, do they walk away from you?

RAJIV: ...you don't feel comfortable. That is why I feel more comfortable in Houston because they don't differentiate you so much. When you go to a bar here you step in and people turn their heads like oh it is not usual to see people like you here.

INTERVIEWER: What about you (Ahmed), what have you heard people talk about?

AHMED: I have heard of a few incidents, I don't remember the name of the person but a few instances where two or three Indians went to a bar, the Library, and they were pushed out of the bar by the bouncers...yeah I have heard two or three things that were like that. I have heard one instance where one guy was walking on College Main Rd. and he was beaten by four Americans.

INTERVIEWER: And what was his ethnicity, do you know?

AHMED: Um, I don't know his name, but it was around 9pm in the night sometime around three or four months ago, maybe he was drunk, I don't know. Two of them were walking on College Main and after one of them left, that guy was beaten

INTERVIEWER: Beaten unconscious, yeah. What about like smaller incidents, and it seems like to me there have been a lot of incidents specifically to Indian students is that your impression or do you think that it happens

AHMED: Um, I have never heard about any instance that any African American or even a Chinese or a Hispanic guy. I have never heard of such instances, but yeah, maybe it is because, I mean I generally talk with Indians and because no Indian complains that, "Oh, such a discrimination happened with an African guy." Obviously an Indian complains that much of the incidents are happening with an Indian guy.

INTERVIEWER: That is interesting that you say that you had never heard about that. Because we are going to be getting into your incident in a moment, and the same thing

that happened to you, that same evening happened to the parent of a Chinese student. So, had you heard about that? Does that ring any bells about what happened that night, or did you only hear about what happened to you.

AHMED: Yeah, I heard about it, but only after a long time afterward and I did not know that it was the parent of a Chinese guy but I knew that some old guy at the University apartments, that the same incident had happened to him.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything that you would like to add now that you have heard Ahmed?

RAJIV: Well, I mean there have been incidents after my incident right? I mean...I mean do you want me to talk about this?

INTERVIEWER: Everything, yes. This is where I am going to have my evidence in my research from what you are telling me.

RAJIV: I mean those incidents where the guy in the parking lot where people stopped by and tried to hit him. And someone else got hurt on College Main he got his nose broken on Northgate by someone else and things like that that I came to know...

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else now that he said that, or no?

AHMED: Yeah, one of my friends actually, it was not one of these incidents but uh he was walking on the road one night and somebody threw a beer bottle at him.

INTERVIEWER: Also an Indian student?

AHMED: Yeah, I mean they did not hurt him much but obviously that incident was...scary.

RAJIV: I don't know, I mean why do these incidents seem to happen to Indians?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I know.

RAJIV: It seems to be a trend. Like this guy said, I haven't heard of any East Asians being beat up or yelled at, or maybe it is just because Indians stay out at night, I don't know.

AHMED: Yeah.

RAJIV: I don't know, maybe it is that Indians enter the social scene more than other...but I mean Africans, Blacks do that too right?

INTERVIEWER: Well, I don't know-who do you see out at night? I mean who do you see out at night when you are walking back across Northgate or across campus....I mean people of color, do you see African Americans or East Asians?

RAJIV: No I don't think I have seen East Asians as much, but I don't think

AHMED: No I haven't seen much East Asians.

RAJIV: I mean a lot of students what is it like 800 out of all of them are Indians.

INTERVIEWER: I don't know; I have to look that up. All I know is about 2-3,000 students at A & M are graduate students. I know that a large percentage of them are Indian but I do not know off the top of my head how many.

RAJIV: When I did my research in the first semester I found out that out of 3,000 of them 800 were Indians, the largest group were Indians; that might be one reason.

INTERVIEWER: And then perhaps some of the other groups the people don't necessarily know if they are international students. I mean that is not to say that Indian students couldn't have been born in the US or have lived in the US for a longer period of time, but I just think that many of the students at A & M have experience with a couple of Eastern Asian students or a couple of Hispanic students in their class as *Americans* you know as a or as a you know, but I don't know that they have had as much experience with an *Indian American* (AGREEMENT FROM AHMED) that are in their classrooms

RAJIV: Although East Asians have a look more like white. I mean if you look at their face, but if you look at their bodies it is almost like white it is very hard to notice, where as I am quite noticeable. I walk into a bar and they notice that someone different is around.

INTERVIEWER: Ok. So here we go, your favorite part - so the question is: Have you witnessed and/or been a target of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (GROAN FROM RAJIV) So I know that you have been a target so I definitely want you to talk about that, (RAJIV: No way) but also if you have witnessed anything at all.

RAJIV: You know what happened. I am not going to get into that, I have repeated it so many times. You are permitted to write whatever you would like.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, well I will use the newspaper articles that were written about it. Are there other articles that you would like me to use?

RAJIV: With this type of research, can you just put in the things that you know already?

INTERVIEWER: I can, but at the time I was not recording things, so you are going to be working with my recollection of the events, and there have been several times when I have recounted the events and you have started laughing because I have added things to it, right? (AHMED LAUGHS) So you may want to have it in your own words. Just like the Battalion where they write the paper and they change the words, but I am actually going to write word for word what you say, you know I am not going to change what you say. If you don't say it, I won't know exactly what to put in, I don't know what to tell you. I mean you don't have to talk about every last detail....if you want I can say what I remember and you can correct me if I get it wrong...

RAJIV: You can use the lines you can think of and if you think there is something, you can run them by me.

INTERVIEWER: Can I run them now?

RAJIV: Oh g-d.

INTERVIEWER: It was a Wed. night. It was 9 or 10pm, do you remember?

RAJIV: 10pm.

INTERVIEWER: And you were riding your bicycle on College Main. You were about to turn the corner, a white van came up. Was it going the opposite direction or the same direction?

RAJIV: Same direction.

INTERVIEWER: Same direction and then they passed you but they were going slowly.

RAJIV: No they did not pass. I can not do this. I can not do this again.

INTERVIEWER: I don't know what happened, I wasn't there...you don't have to do this...I am your friend.

RAJIV: Ok fine. Oh god, I hate this.

INTERVIEWER: So the white van passed you.

RAJIV: This is the other thing, when you go through an assault the drama it stays. There is an urge to clamor; it is not-there is an element of drama that surrounds it that you cannot make go away.

INTERVIEWER: So are you upset that this research project is done? Or do you think that this research project is necessary?

RAJIV: I think that it is necessary, but I think that it is the fashionable thing to recount what happened, but after sometime you want to see what you can get out of it like I was telling you. I mean we have read about how everybody wants to get something out of it. Why, really what fun is it to sit and read about it? What is the point?

INTERVIEWER: It is all going in there (RAJIV: Arrrgghhhhh) You don't have to, I mean it is ok, but I

RAJIV: I mean you know this right?

INTERVIEWER: I just, I don't remember all of

RAJIV: The van passed and I noticed it, then I took a right-hand turn and they came beside me and they followed me and they came beside me and the passenger leaned out and hit me with a baseball bat.

INTERVIEWER: It was metal because it was shiny right?

RAJIV: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And do you remember exactly his words, because I tell people what I think he said, based on what you told me, but I wasn't there, do you remember what he said or

RAJIV: One thing that I really heard was "Fuck you foreigner" they were saying things, but I was more in shock that I wasn't registering whatever they said.

INTERVIEWER: And the license plate was smudged out and you couldn't see it.

RAJIV: Right, and they stopped, you know it was not like they were in a hurry or that they were apologetic for what they did, you know?

INTERVIEWER: Right. Were they laughing or

RAJIV: Oh yeah, of course, that is how I knew that whatever they were yelling they were taking pleasure.

INTERVIEWER: And you had the backpack on which is why-I mean it would have been so much worse. We will get into the police, your favorite part later (AHMED LAUGHS, RAJIV GROANS), yeah, that is your favorite part I know. But this is going to the police chiefs of College Station and UPD and to Bryan, and to Gates' desk

(RAJIV: Ooo, I've been wondering who) Which is why when you use the other name, even though they know that it must be you and it must be you who are giving me this information they cannot act on it, so it may or may not have come from you. You know what I am saying, it is confidential who knows - maybe somebody else had very similar incidents. That is why I am protecting your confidentiality. That is exactly the reason, because I don't want to have to hide my thesis on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Annex. I want it to go to the people who need to see it. I am going to ask you some specific questions about Northgate too because if the businesses know that this is making students uncomfortable, and this is why students aren't visiting, then maybe they will change their policies. It is about money right? So if they don't know that it is happening - alright, I will give you a break for now.

AHMED: Regarding me, can you use the article from the Battalion?

INTERVIEWER: I of course will be using the articles from the Battalion as a part of the research as well. Do you want to add anything, or is that

AHMED: No, I think that was pretty accurate.

INTERVIEWER: Ok. Ok. And you did not - you mentioned earlier that you did not know about the other incident until much later that happened the same night.

AHMED: No, I did not know about any

INTERVIEWER: And you didn't witness any other

AHMED: No

INTERVIEWER: You didn't witness any incidents either before or after then.

AHMED: No I didn't witness, but I heard about incidents after my incident, but before my incident I did not even hear about his incident.

INTERVIEWER: Wow, interesting.

AHMED: Actually at that time (INTERVIEWER: Were you here during the summer or no?) No, not during the summer, I was in Seattle at that time.

INTERVIEWER: Afterward when people mentioned it were they surprised that you didn't know about it or?

AHMED: Yeah, they were surprised actually that I didn't know about his incident but I wasn't here in summer, I came back for September and then this incident happened so there wasn't much time that I could know about any incidents that had happened before.

INTERVIEWER: What has changed for you now that this has happened? I mean what is different now? Are you more afraid? Most of the people from my survey said that they would recommend College Station to other visible minority students and that they were (RAJIV: They would recommend it?) Yeah, they said that it was pretty safe here and that comparatively speaking they have been treated well and (RAJIV: Compared to what?) I don't know.

RAJIV: I am not saying that there are different acts of discrimination everyday, but – how can you do a comparison- how can you reach a conclusion without having anything to compare it to?

INTERVIEWER: I don't know. I guess they are comparing it to their own countries, or other things that they read about. I am not sure. I can't answer that. But why would you say definitely not? Are you saying definitely not or are you saying that they have nothing else to compare it to?

RAJIV: I am saying that I don't have anything to compare it to except for the big cities I have been to.

INTERVIEWER: And you feel it is better in the big cities?

RAJIV: Yeah because they are used to you. And just for the fact that they know people like you exist. It is almost like you are an alien - I mean they have read about us sometime on National Geographic or something (AHMED LAUGHS) but it is almost like some of these students don't even know

INTERVIEWER: Now do you think, you know to be fair, that you are stereotyping them? I mean I understand you had a really terrible incident, but can you tell me, I mean I am sure, you mentioned that there is this feeling that when you walk into a bar that people give you this look with their body language. Does that happen to you on a regular basis and can you be a little more specific because the people who are reading this are not going to understand, I mean they are going to be predominantly White folks and they might not understand all the little tiny things that happen over and over and over again, (AHMED makes noise of agreement) so if there's little things that bother you, mention them now. This is a good place to mention them. I mean if not, then that's fine.

LONG SILENCE

INTERVIEWER: You were uh-huh-ing (to AHMED) was their something that you wanted to add?

AHMED: No.

RAJIV: See after this incident happened I mean...I noticed that when I walk into a predominantly White environment I feel-and I wonder if it is just me who perceives it as a hostile environment but their have been other friends and when I ask them it is not the same. And there are other things like when you are holding hands or when you are dancing that is when you know that there is a difference there and it is hard to think about but that is when you know that there is really a difference there it happens on a repeated basis and somehow you develop a kind of distaste for it. Now I hate going to bars in College Station because they are not used to you. You know with their body language. And now it has become a habit to look in and see you know - what is the color combination, and you know those are the kinds of things that make you feel like you don't belong there...

INTERVIEWER: What about when you are with a bunch of Indians? Like, I don't know, maybe the two of you aren't in any Indian associations, but the other day I walked into a party in fact I heard that you had just left (gesture towards AHMED) at the Rec Center and you know was that different for you or do you still see the White people who are walking around looking at you?

RAJIV: The fact is that I haven't been involved with very many Indian associations so it is very hard for me to say that out of experience, but if I am with a group of Indians like if I hang out with my colleagues it is not noticeable because you are all into it, but then suddenly...you stop and look around and if you are moving in the MSC - the other day, uh the other day I just suddenly felt - and I don't know, I mean like you said, I may be over doing it, but I have been to other places where I can't notice it, you know like Backstage Racism but you know it is an international thing. It is normal to discriminate against other people, but to me that is not acceptable.

INTERVIEWER: What about for you. Do you notice smaller things now, are you more sensitive?

AHMED: No. I don't feel like anything has changed. Yeah, the one thing that has changed now that I have stopped walking on Northgate during the night, but that - except that I don't think that anything has changed. I would recommend my friends from India and some other places to come to TAMU it is just that they will have to be a little cautious about walking during the night, but apart from that, I don't see any reasons to (AHMED'S PHONE BEEPS)

INTERVIEWER: Ok, alright.

....

[AHMED indicates that he will need to leave shortly so I begin questioning only him]



INTERVIEWER: Do you live in the Northgate area?

AHMED: Yeah, I do.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me a little bit about your typical exposure to the Northgate area. (How often you go through or visit, what time of day you are typically there, what you are usually doing when you are there, etc.)

AHMED: Initially when I came over here, it was a fascination to go to the clubs and pubs on a Saturday night, so like two or three times I went but after that I haven't been to the clubs specifically in the Northgate area. But before my incident I many a times it happened that I walked from my department to my home at 2 or 3 in the night and I would walk through the Northgate area and I never had any fear about that, but after my incident I don't like walking on that road at night and I definitely avoid that so fortunately I have a car so I usually use my car to drive anywhere I want.

INTERVIEWER: There have been several assaults on non-native English speakers and other visible minority students in the Northgate area and obviously your incident affected the frequency with which you visit this area- Did hearing about these other ones affect it too or was it, I guess in other words, would your incident in and of itself and if there had been none others that you have ever heard of and even afterwards you had never heard of this happening to anybody, would it have changed the frequency, or was it knowing that there were other incidents as well?

AHMED: No, it was definitely knowing that there were other incidents that were also happening. It was not just that I was afraid of my incident happening, but afterwards I heard of two or three incident like [mentions name of the student who was beaten unconscious] and I heard of two or three other incidents so that adds to the fear and that adds to the caution that I follow.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel safe where you live and/or on the TAMU campus? Is the only place that you feel unsafe where you cross Northgate, or

AHMED: I feel actually - I feel safe once I am on campus. Because there I see um that area is not lighted enough and also because that incident happened that you know so it haunts. Once I go over there I just remember about my incident.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have nightmares at all (AHMED: No I don't.) or once you are in your apartment you feel fine?

AHMED: Yes, once I am in the apartment complex I feel fine.

INTERVIEWER: What about the parking lot of your complex, or once you drive past Northgate are you ok or

AHMED: Yeah, I mean I won't say even the whole Northgate area but the territory near the apartment is where, so even if I am just driving at night on that street or if I am just walking then I never go there.

INTERVIEWER: So you avoid the street?

AHMED: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You go around?

AHMED: Yes, I go a different way.

INTERVIEWER: Would you recommend TAMU to a non-native English speaker or a visible minority student? I know that you had said that you would, but you would caution them or

AHMED: Yeah, I would just ask them that they be a little cautious in the night time, apart from that, there is nothing.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any suggestions for the university to improve the current campus climate or to make it safer?

AHMED: I had heard that we had started carpools from the entrance to the off-campus apartments.

INTERVIEWER: Would you use that and do you know the number you would call?

AHMED: No I don't know that. But I had just heard that there are- I would definitely recommend to those living in the Northgate and especially the Cherry St, Spruce St, and a few streets over there.

INTERVIEWER: Would you use that kind of service? Would you ever use or could you ever see yourself using a carpool kind of service? Or would you just use your car?

AHMED: If I had my car I would definitely use my car, but there are many people who don't have a car and they have and because of their assignments and their heavy course work they have to work in the labs during night so it would definitely be useful for them to use the carpools.

INTERVIEWER: If you have to go, you can go, but I just have a few more questions.  
[AHMED INDICATES I SHOULD PROCEED]

INTERVIEWER: \*To the best of your ability, please explain what an incident report is. Do you know what that is?

AHMED: Sorry?

INTERVIEWER: An incident report. Do you know what that is?

AHMED: On what?

INTERVIEWER: On anything. Do you know how to fill one out or where you would go to get one, or why you fill one out?

AHMED: Uh. I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Ok. Of course in an emergency it is best to call 911 (or 9-911 if you are using a campus phone). If you had to call the police for a non-emergency which police department would you call (Bryan, College Station, or University) and why?

AHMED: Uh, it happened once when my bicycle got stolen. (laughs) I did not know what number to call, so I just called 9-911 and then they delivered me to the University police. Actually they didn't connect me but they just gave me the number and then I called UPD.

INTERVIEWER: Who called for your incident? Did you call or did somebody else call for you?

AHMED: A friend of mine called.

INTERVIEWER: And do you know which police department they called?

AHMED: They called 911.

INTERVIEWER: And which police department came to you? Do you remember or no?

AHMED: I don't remember, but I guess it was CSPD.

INTERVIEWER: And why do you think that is, not UPD or?

AHMED: Maybe because my incident happened in the Northgate area which comes under CSPD.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, last question. Is there any information you would like to add or are there any questions that you think I should have asked you or that I should ask other non-native English speakers or?

AHMED: Um. (long silence)

INTERVIEWER: What do you want the University to know? You know what I mean? I mean you had all kinds of people interviewing you, but what do you want them to know?

AHMED: Hmmm. I don't know. Maybe because, maybe they can interview a lot more people who are off campus who are non-native speakers and who are like people who have not been discriminated-what they feel. I know that I have been discriminated but I don't think that only I should be interviewed, but maybe they can also interview them. Maybe my views are biased because of this incident and what happened to me. Maybe they won't feel any fear by walking on the road so it would be a good idea to interview them.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, that is my plan to take those who are willing from online survey and interview them in person too (AHMED: OK), because some of them have had very positive experiences. Well thank you. I am sorry that you have to leave. Can I contact you if I have any more questions?

AHMED: Yeah, yeah sure. (AHMED LEAVES)

INTERVIEWER: Ok, back to you....so basically those questions that I had for Ahmed, I have for you. Do you live in the Northgate area right now?

RAJIV: Not right now.

INTERVIEWER: Did you?

RAJIV: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: During the incident you did, right?

RAJIV: Yeah, even after.

INTERVIEWER: Why don't you live there now, does it have anything to do with the incident or?

RAJIV: Yeah (sighs), the incident kind of set a lot of things in motion and made certain things more tangible and noticeable. I felt more and more uncomfortable being here and that is the reason I moved to Houston.

INTERVIEWER: So you are in Houston now. Do you ever go to the Northgate area now?

RAJIV: No.

INTERVIEWER: And when did you move to Houston? It is April 5<sup>th</sup> now, when did you move?

RAJIV: February 15<sup>th</sup>.

INTERVIEWER: So basically you moved in the Spring semester. In the Fall semester what was your exposure to Northgate? Why would you go there? What time?

RAJIV: Because I lived there and I had to pass through Northgate. I want you to know that I am not scared. I don't like being intimidated. Although I need to, maybe I feel like I am not going to be intimidated because I don't like going to the Northgate area and I try consciously in my mind to think, oh nobody can do that to me. But that is very noticeable.

INTERVIEWER: Now would you go on the same streets that you were on or would you go around?

RAJIV: Oh yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And what about the businesses there? Would you frequent the businesses?

RAJIV: I don't repeatedly think about going there. I mean I don't feel like going to those businesses anytime because yeah I don't feel comfortable.

INTERVIEWER: So the assault that you were a part of, or you know that you were a target of, that didn't necessarily affect your encounters with Northgate? I mean you said that you consciously have made it a point

RAJIV: It affected it in the sense that I am more conscious of my presence there. Before I would just walk through it, but now I go through it and I see it you know and it becomes more sentient you know, I mean you experience your being. I mean that is how it affects you I guess.

INTERVIEWER: And do you think that that was JUST because of your incident or because of hearing about the others too or you aren't really sure or

RAJIV: There were other things too I mean always sensed it but when it becomes tangible like an assault then....repeatedly things happened after my assault and one would expect them to go down, but it seemed like afterward there were more assaults I thought that there was more talk about it and more incidents after my assault.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, actually the title of this is called "After Rajiv" because my personal take is that things did change, even if it was just more of an awareness I don't think that things necessarily got safer, I mean obviously we heard about more incidents afterward. Um, do you want to talk a little bit about the rally or any of the groups that came out of this? I mean do you think that anything positive came out of this of this experience or do you think negative? What happened after this experience in your opinion?

RAJIV: See, I think what my incident had was newsworthiness. It was something that hadn't happened before, or maybe it happened before but nobody took it seriously and I kind of took it seriously and that required help. So it carried that weight with it you know it brought a punctuation with it normal White conservative flow of A & M and it punctured it and sent a ripple through, you know it really made waves and I mean people who were like-minded came together and joined hands and all that and something. And to that effect it became conscious and it served and presented for some people to see and take notice. And that is the reason why I think when the other incidences happened we came to know about it and I mean it didn't remain quiet because people thought that they could talk about it. But at the same time you could see the trajectory going down...when each incident happened it didn't have the same sort of appeal to it, then [says name of the student who was beaten unconscious] got assaulted and then someone else got assaulted right before the school ended in the fall and no one even made an issue no one even talked about it. So it kind of loses the...and I don't know if we have hit the iron when it was hot because you know I don't think this is the kind of thing that people hold back on to report these kind of crimes...I think that there is still so much that is kind of Backstage you know it happens elsewhere where we can not confront about it. And I don't see the University taking a very active approach, at least I am not a very social person, but at least it has not come to my attention or it is very meek weak sort of thing that I do not think can make any sort of difference.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, and I mean I feel overwhelmed to with this survey too. I mean there should be several researchers interviewing all of the NNES graduate students. I mean there shouldn't just be – I am hoping that my research will spawn that because I feel like, you know this is just like a ripple, it is not even a wave.

RAJIV: Yeah, I mean that is so – I mean I don't know I mean - is it just because the incident had sensational value to it? (INTERVIEWER: I don't know) I mean because

surely it is ridiculous that there were confrontations at two or three bars and it loses – it fizzles out pretty quick and I don't know they should be somewhere making the most out of it rather than trying – (sighs) I think we did our best given our limitations it was summer so. I have mixed feelings about it. I think that something better could have come out of it, but something good did come out of it. And that's the difference.

INTERVIEWER: So, I mean (sigh) are their specific things that you would like to see? I mean not matter whether it like happens tomorrow or like a week from now or a month from now, or just things that you think REALLY need to happen? Bottom line?

RAJIV: It is a tough question to answer because here you always have a utopia in your mind you know a utopia of what kind of things - you know academic things that can be done. You know if I really were to talk about the idea of the situation that I want to be there you know there should be more...we should really be able to engage in debate rather than rolling over and accepting what impractical instructors tell them and I think that is where it starts, but I don't know how you reach there I think it is a very symbiotic thing one thing feeds off another.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it is just for the university students or do you think that we should start reaching out to the high schools or where do you think it should start?

RAJIV: I think it is – I mean if I were to put my money in it I would put it on the university because this is the cultural hub for this area and if you go to Bryan...it is a very diverse neighborhood I mean it is predominantly Black I don't know that you would go in there and educate them about racism, I mean maybe, but you – I don't think that you would get the bang out of your buck that much there. Whereas College Station is predominantly White and very conservative...but I think it is a very - it is something I have been trying to grapple with all along. How do we change a culture that is so engrained? I mean where do you start? I don't know I mean – one way of doing it...is for people to be voicing their opinions, you know people coming out and telling what they think and not being scared you know. I mean not being scared of going to Northgate I mean I wouldn't do that I mean someone has to start, someone has to move forward to have a resistance if everyone were to go meekly, how would things change? And of course you don't want to be the first person. But at the same time, someone has to be there at the front of the group you know I mean who kind of pushes them along.

INTERVIEWER: Do you wish that you could be here longer to take that on, or are you – I mean it shouldn't have to be the victim's responsibility. I mean should it?

RAJIV: I mean it is, I mean it is a good way of looking at it – it is like getting an opportunity to tell other people what is happening with you and see if you can make them change if you can't triumph from it then things won't change at all. The one thing that is at least one way of looking at it – at least that is the way that I am looking at it – you know, I mean I am here and it happened to me, let me see what I can do. Although I

haven't done as much as I could but I have done my share of it I guess; I mean I wouldn't go to sleep at night feeling guilty that I didn't stand up for myself. But it is more about people coming from other countries other ethnicities to engage it. To engage this institution that they are going to, to notice it and put it out there in the open you know so that other people can notice it and talk about it - like you are doing, like I am doing and ask hard question and wait for answers.

INTERVIEWER: Just don't ask the questions about what really happened because they don't want to answer those questions. I don't blame you, I wouldn't want to either! Did you feel safe where you were living and on the TAMU campus or was it just when you would go through Northgate, I mean obviously you said that you didn't stop going there, but you said that you were more aware and sensitive. Did that at all change how you felt where you lived and at school or just in that area?

RAJIV: Yeah, I didn't really feel safe...

INTERVIEWER: Did you before?

RAJIV: Before it wasn't always conscious. I noticed it was dirty and all, but then even when that happened you know I didn't get all I mean I didn't retract into my apartment or be as though I were kicked in the groin just because I am a man of color I mean I think that that is where...to be frightened at the very level of your identity that you get scarred, I am scarred. You know for me it is just a struggle to go through my day to day life because wherever I go I look for racism you know because you know what it feels like for you so you are aware of it. And that is a very bad I mean it is a good thing but also a bad thing because you are a walking talking target in a way and how many times I mean you don't know how to voice it all the time, you know what I mean because it is so subtle. And it is difficult...you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, it is difficult having to explain that. I think you did a good job of trying. So overall though, would you recommend TAMU to a NNES or visible minority?

RAJIV: No.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

RAJIV: Absolutely not.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely not?

RAJIV: Because there are other things, I mean that is what I was talking about, I don't know about other places other college towns. Like Davis would be a healthier...but I think TAMU I would never suggest it I mean I would never suggest to come here, but



again it is...between academia and academic goals than I think they should also think about their social life.

INTERVIEWER: I also know you, and I know that you are not happy with your academics, so do you think that is part of it? What if you had had a stellar academic time here at TAMU, do you think that that would have influenced it? Do you think that you would have been able to overlook the safety issues or never?

RAJIV: Put it this way, if you have offers from two colleges with the same academic level I would say go for the other. And if you were like me, I would even bargain on that level, you know I would say if you were to get into a college in San Francisco and a college like TAMU, I think you live your life on the street more than you learn in the academic ivory tower.

INTERVIEWER: So would you suggest to the students that they come visit first or should there be a program where the Non-Native English speakers you know, phone home to the people who are planning on coming here and give them the real scoop first or they have a mentor or you know?

RAJIV: I think that it depends on what kind of social life they are...most of them are so tied to their academic goals that they don't look beyond that, but I mean all this is a package deal. I mean no one gives a shit, they want to go there and make the big bucks and they are like oh who cares. But it is not good to go here to live day to day life...but it depends on your instructors, but you have to see that you look around and you don't have a life but it is like a monastery and they are booking you and telling you to keep quiet...I think international students should have more self-esteem. I mean they should be trained to stand up for themselves....and we can educate the White folks...but they don't even notice that it is this bad.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I mean I think that there is a difference in cultures too. I mean would you say that you are a typical Indian, I mean your personality?

RAJIV: Oh g-d no!

INTERVIEWER: So some of them like you said might not even want, they might not notice (the lack of social life), you know they might not care, I mean it might not matter to them. And they will just avoid Northgate or they will just stay in the lab all day.

RAJIV: You know that is how I see it, you know I mean, but no matter how much I may, I mean everyone is a party to that and I don't want to do that. I mean who would want that? International students have a certain accountability for keeping quiet and having an asocial life and only sticking with their own crowd. And sticking with their own crowd kind of saves them a lot of shit. You know? (INTERVIEWER: Mmm hmm) But at the same time, what do you learn when you come to a new place and you don't

want to think about those kinds of things, I have seen the White students stay with their own folks and you know they think that oh, coming from a small town in Texas is the be all and end all of existence and that is where the epicenter of whatever, you know superiority, and they need to be educated too, so going back to the question you know what changes do you want to see? You won't be able to entertain or stick to what you believe in but be willing to debate about it and that comes from enough educational culture that a university propagates and I don't think that this university propagates – my friends for example don't talk because they are TOLD not to talk or be critical and you know it is comfortable and you know when a student comes here he wants the way with the least amount of resistance. You are supposed to be giving it you know in corporate education.

INTERVIEWER: So the suggestion that you think the University should do, would be to have some sort of classes where the students are taught to think critically and are encouraged to debate ideas? Would that be?

RAJIV: Like other universities I mean I don't know exactly what they do, but where people can go and have some sort of workshops where they can go and talk to students about racism and discrimination and raise doubt and there should be one in every department.

INTERVIEWER: Should it be white people who are doing these workshops or a mix?

RAJIV: Anyone. As long as the content is good and people who taught about it believed in it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think they would be respected equally no matter who the students?

RAJIV: That is the point right, I mean it is not about which would be more acceptable it is about telling people what should be acceptable and you know you have just a one hour workshop and students from a department just go and sit there and it is mandatory that they talk about it and then they would talk about discrimination. Like why shouldn't people call African Americans "Black" you know or is it ok for people at the post office to laugh at you? You know you kind of bring up – and you can start talking about it, but these situations. And one hour one semester wouldn't be all that hard I guess but you can talk about whatever mechanisms TAMU has, because whenever things like this kind of happen they don't know how to handle it. That is one way of dealing with it I think.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, that is a good idea for sure. Um, do you know what an incident report is, and if you do, can you explain a little bit about it.

RAJIV: Yeah. An incident report is where you put if you have gone through some sort of incident that you think shouldn't have happened to you.

INTERVIEWER: Does it have to be violent?

RAJIV: No.

INTERVIEWER: Can you give an example of a non-violent incident?

RAJIV: That is the trouble - that is the other thing that I don't know about and that I was asking about. What about verbal threats? Does it count as a crime or racism? And no one gave me answers. But...sex discrimination, oh that is a very tangible noticeable kind of a thing where people who have been discriminated against sexually know that they have.

INTERVIEWER: Sometimes. I mean the feeling is very tangible to the person, but what it is that happened to them might not be so tangible, just like you said, when you go to the bar, you might not be able to write down exactly what it was that happened to make you feel uncomfortable, but you felt uncomfortable and you felt that people were *doing* something to make you feel uncomfortable, but you are not exactly sure what it is. So sometimes it can be difficult to

RAJIV: So how can, I mean I don't know how to

INTERVIEWER: You mean how to report it?

RAJIV: And what would be considered enough to report? I don't know that.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I think that there needs to be more training on that, but where do you think that you would go to fill out an incident report anyway?

RAJIV: I thought it was police station?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah and there are actually other avenues too. I think that is something that we need to do. Ok, and I think that you probably have a very informed experience about this, and you can talk as much or as little as you want about why you know the answer to this better than most, but who would you call if you had an emergency and you were not on campus? Which police station and why?

RAJIV: My instinct would be to get home or if I had a cell phone - now that I have been through this I think it would be very...I mean it would be colored by what I experienced.

INTERVIEWER: Do you want to talk about that a little or no? Or at least tell which station you went to first and then why they said it was a bad idea to go there and you needed to do the other one?

RAJIV: See in Northgate there is no way to tell where one city ends and the other city starts so it is hard for me to make the judgment anywhere near the border. So at that time that is the reason why I called Bryan police station because that is where I lived and they responded very late, like two hours after I called them and I came home and I wasn't around and I called them and it took another two hours and then also I told them in the beginning where it happened and...even then...the Bryan cops came to my house four hours after my incident and they told me that I was supposed to go to College Station.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

RAJIV: Because that is where the incident happened?

INTERVIEWER: That is where it happened.

RAJIV: So that was – I think we need to call the police station where the incident took place and I think that is how it goes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that there should be education on that for the NNEs and for everybody on which police station to call? Or do you think that the police stations need to take care of it so that you can call any of them and they can take care of the incident no matter what?

RAJIV: I think they at least should be knowledgeable enough to know what is their property and also they shouldn't put you through all these loopholes...you call them and then...they should be able to tie you to the other police station that you need to talk to. And then I told you that I did not have the number to call the police station directly and my roommate said that you should have the number to call them directly.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else that you would like to add or questions that you think I should have asked you or the other students?

RAJIV: You didn't ask me how I define discrimination.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah - how *do* you define discrimination?

RAJIV: (long silence) I don't know, I just know that is a question that you are supposed to have. (BOTH LAUGHING)

INTERVIEWER: Now you know why I didn't ask that question. That could be a thesis in and of itself!

RAJIV: But then how will you write it? I mean if they have an incident that they don't think is discrimination, they won't tell you about it.

INTERVIEWER: That is why I didn't define it. I figured I would ask it open-ended and that would leave it open for people to tell me about incidents that are non-violent or violent (RAJIV: I mean) and I would get a better understanding of what that meant.

RAJIV: Maybe you should end it with that question, so it wouldn't color it or the other questions.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, so I am ending it with that question, how do you define discrimination?

RAJIV: (long pause) Now I know why you didn't ask (BOTH LAUGH)

INTERVIEWER: On the transcripts it is going to say "laughs maniacally"! (MORE LAUGHTER BY BOTH)

RAJIV: How do you define it? Um (pause). I would say that if you are dealing with a person and your dealing with him or her is affected by their skin color or by their language or if I were to ask, "What is 1 plus 1? You would say 2." That is a very, in a way, a very valid and true statement, but if I were to ask you for example, "What is the best way to reach Bryan/College Station?" and you go to answer that they won't laugh at you. It is hard to put your finger on, but it is more of just a feeling of course I mean...when you feel the other person is treating you differently because of your skin color or any number of things: skin color, language, sexual orientation, gender, whatever it might be – if they are treating you differently – I don't know it is just a feeling.

INTERVIEWER: What if you don't feel it? Can it still be discrimination if somebody does something to you and you don't realize that they are doing it to you but they are treating you differently?

RAJIV: Yeah, you wouldn't call that discrimination, there is no way to define your relationship if someone is abusing you and you are enjoying it, is it discrimination?

INTERVIEWER: But not - you are not necessarily enjoying it, but maybe they weren't allowed into TAMU or they are being kicked out of the bars, but they don't realize it is because of their skin color or sexual orientation or whatever or they just think that it is because of what they are wearing or because they didn't make the grade. I mean sometimes that happens, where the person is not aware. Is that still discrimination? I mean does a tree that falls in a forest still make a sound? Is it still discrimination if someone doesn't realize. Or for example in sexual harassment they say that the definition is "unwanted sexual advances." So if someone winks at me and I don't like it when they wink at me, then that is sexual harassment, but if they wink at someone else, and that person doesn't mind, then it is not. But what if they wink at me and I don't see it but if I were to see it, it would have bothered me, is it still sexual harassment? Is it

still discrimination if somebody is doing it to you and you don't realize they are doing it to you, but if you did you wouldn't like it?

RAJIV: I would say it is still discrimination, but if I tell you that what that person did to you can be treated as discrimination, and even if you want to go with evidence or not...it is not a discrimination.

INTERVIEWER: I don't know if I understand. Can you explain?

RAJIV: Winking, someone is winking at you. Or someone whistles at you, a very good example, here this one woman might take it as a compliment because they think you are sexy or hot or whatever, but in India if someone whistles at you it is an insult and you don't compliment women to their faces because it is really considered to be rude, so if you were to come to India and a guy was whistling at you everyday. That would be considered discrimination, but you would say that - no it is not, and for you it is not discrimination, but if suddenly you were to realize it is discrimination and you want to go and file a report it is discrimination. I don't know, that is a very gray area that we are going into. You know if you are willingly accepting change than I don't know. I don't think there is an objective viewpoint but the only way you know is that given all of the options if discrimination is what you want to call it than I think that is the way that you need to go with it.

INTERVIEWER: That is probably why they had such a hard time defining your incident as a "hate crime" for that same rhetoric and logic. Because some people would consider what happened to be a hate crime and some people wouldn't. I don't know who the people are who wouldn't consider it a hate crime, but apparently they are the ones who are in authority because they are the ones who won't call it that.

RAJIV: But then again, naming something is always a value judgment. I am not sure, I mean I don't have any great answers, but if you think it is discrimination than you need to voice it to know if it is discrimination or not there is no way that you will know if you are silent on the situation.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, so the final word. I mean knowing that I am going to try and publish this and get it on everybody's desk that needs to really read it. What do you want them to hear? What do you want them to read?

RAJIV: I want them to know that racism is still around and people do experience it everyday although it is not noticeable most of the time...and I am scarred for it. It is not a good feeling to go through and I think it is punishable - it just depends. And these things that are happening, they shouldn't just let them happen they need to do something about it. If they don't you know you never know who is next.

INTERVIEWER: Well thank you very much for talking to me!

## APPENDIX 4

## FOCUS GROUP 2 TRANSCRIPT

...

INTERVIEWER: If you don't mind, out of my own curiosity, what is your major? If you don't want to tell me, just say pass.

SARAYU: Urban Education and Statistics

ARISA: Education

EDDY: Anthropology

INTERVIEWER: When people at TAMU first meet you, what do they think about your English speaking status, and how do they indicate this to you?

SARAYU: With the undergraduates and even some of the faculty...they don't make an effort to understand, if I were a European student...once I was standing with a French guy and we both were talking and both of our English must have been equally incomprehensible but they tried more to understand the French guy than me and I think my English was closer to that of the Americans than the French guy but still...there is a sort of discriminatory in their effort.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that has to do with the color of your skin as well, like because he was more white, or...

SARAYU: Absolutely. Probably because he was French and they think the French are cute.

ARISA: For me...if it is in the classroom...and I try to say something they say, oh she is trying to say duh duh duh duh and they don't really try to pay attention to listen and sometimes I had an experience like I tried to talk in my class in a small discussion and a white male turned in the other direction and didn't listen...he is outspoken, he is always talking talking- talking, but whenever he is talking he doesn't look at me. It is like you are not here.

EDDY: I have had mixed reactions. Sometimes students and faculty listen to me when I am speaking...but sometimes I think students unconsciously do not want to engage me in the conversation and I can feel it, but I also am intimidated by their fluent and speedy conversation so I usually can not participate...anyway their official and general reaction to be is very general and they are trying...and I appreciate that but the unconscious part

of their behaviors I understand, but sometimes I want more. I want to be acculturated here and I still have many problems...

ARISA: I feel in small classes I can talk...and I think professors, if I trust the professor...I had a professor who was so gentle and she at the beginning of the class said that she had to create an environment where everyone could talk and that is why in that class I had that situation and I told her I was so disappointed I cried and even after the group discussion we talk about in the whole class and that guy and the other girl, I said a lot of things in the group and they didn't include any of my experiences or opinions and after class I asked that girl...is my English so poor that you didn't understand?...and she said she noticed that that guy did ignore me but she didn't say anything to create an environment to let me in...but at that time she was like, oh I am so sorry, I noticed and she was like crying for me and I was like isn't it too late. You know I don't want you to say that after class. I need you to help me to let me in at that time she noticed, she didn't do anything, but after class...

EDDY: And what about that guy, did you talk to him?

ARISA: I talked to that professor and she asked if she should talk to him or if I wanted to, and I didn't want to be like children like I reported it and had the professor take care of it so I talked to him. He said I am sorry I didn't notice because you said you are not feeling well at that time my physical condition was not good...I didn't say I don't want to participate. I didn't say I didn't want to discuss. And I said a lot in the discussion and I am critical of what they guy said...because he didn't include what I had said.

INTERVIEWER: You have mentioned that people sometimes do not engage you in discussions in class. Do you think that they are trying to make you more comfortable, and does that make it any better or is that not good enough?

SARAYU: I think I have more problems with the undergraduates trying to understand me but I think that is because they are more homogenous or mostly white community here at A & M and the graduate school has lots of international students....I had one experience where I was supposed to give a lecture about dance in class and the professor had obviously introduced me as a dancer and all this, and I was telling them that their all types of classical dances in India and a group of people said What? I said dances. They said what? I said dances...they said OH DANCES I mean it is not that difficult to understand. If a British person were talking they would have understood but with me they don't try....I know a lot of friends of mine from India try to change their accents but I don't try to do that, I think that my English is good enough that any...person could understand....I mean I think it is a derogatory thing to call me a person of color [insert story about "derogatory" from online survey]....I think the exposure makes a difference, I know one of the reasons this happens here is because we are so heterogeneous.



INTERVIEWER: And what about the faculty when they try to help, does it make you more comfortable?

SARAYU: It differs from department to department I have been in several departments. In the department of Education they are pretty good about making you feel comfortable...I got my masters from a different department and they would see international students as beggars mostly because we always have to go and ask them for graduate assistantships and scholarships so the moment we walk up to them, they think what sort of money is this person going to ask of me? Instead of thinking, oh, does she have a doubt or a question...

ARISA: I think here it is more competitive...I think the undergraduates don't care. They don't care so they don't try to find out about your culture or what is different than Texas. I mean even in the graduate school, I mean in the first class, I don't think that anybody came to talk to me. How long have you been here? Nothing like that. I had a chance to go to Austin once...and I mean the first thing, I was shocked...I mean in that class there was only one student from Texas and the students were from all of the countries and they had more diversity and they were more interested in how I felt about Texas...it was interesting to see the difference between the universities in the same state.

.....some professors really try. I mean one professor, I told him I really feel uncomfortable to talk...and sometimes I don't know when to talk...and he was like you know sometimes he really sees and feels whether I am comfortable or not so he lets me not participate sometimes whenever he feels I don't want to share...sometimes he...I think most professors I met are really very sensitive for international students and they really try to make it comfortable...so far.

EDDY: ...two years have passed since I have been here so I think I have gotten over a little bit of my uncomfortableness...there is a guy I work with from Mainland China and he kept being silenced in the classroom, and I realized I was exactly like him when I first came here....now I remember that I was really not very comfortable...sometimes their trying to make me comfortable made me UNcomfortable...usually smaller groups are more comfortable than larger ones. Like more than eight is uncomfortable...

ARISA: I think in our culture, the Asian culture, usually we do not interrupt other people when other people are talking so you can't catch the exact time that you want to jump in. So when you have something you want to say, someone else will just take what you want to say and jump in.

LOTS OF LAUGHING

So I wait until the last minute and I have nothing to say, so that is another problem for me and those in my culture...

EDDY: You reminded me of another Korean guy who told me that he usually tries to speak as the first one in his class at first time he took time and waited for his turn but when the time had come LAUGHING but after changing his approach he could get a could grade.

INTERVIEWER: Have you heard of incidents of discrimination against non-native English speakers or other visible minority students? (If so: Please tell me a bit more about what you have heard.)

SARAYU: I don't know if this qualifies as that, but my boyfriend's (Asian Indian) professor you know every week he would come to class and he would say this part of my computer is not working and I had to call and the call went to India and you guys speak like this and he would try to imitate the accent so badly and he would do that every class, every week and then finally my boyfriend got so annoyed he said why don't you try talking Hindi for a change and we will see. I mean it was outrageous he did that for one complete semester and finally he just couldn't take it, I mean usually we are not the talking back kind, usually we think of professors as gurus but this was just beyond...

It is offensive because people keep saying that we are losing all the jobs to India because we are giving all... the call center jobs to India but even if it is a professor of mine I will say you know that is not the only field we are coming up with so...I think it is just a matter of them being ignorant...I mean the only context that they know of India is the call centers.

INTERVIEWER: That and the 7/11 character from the Simpson's and they don't know the difference between Indian and Pakistani.

SARAYU: Yeah, one of my friends went on a job interview and the person asked him about the Apu character. And my friend was like What? I came here to interview for an engineer's position and you cannot ask a request like that.

EDDY: I have an idea. I think that India could be much larger than America but they do not acknowledge the size of the culture of other countries.

....

SARAYU: I think it is the hegemonic feeling. I mean even when it comes down to our history of education courses we will be taught about how the Greek and Romans...but Chinese and Indians go back... even further than that, I mean we had the first universities...like thousands of years ago, but nobody even knows about that...I mean does that not qualify under a system of education? I don't understand.

ARISA: ...my experience...with International Student Services (ISS) I mean they are really bad...whoever I met at this university...I mean international students, didn't give

any positive feedback of ISS, but [insert story about ISS from online survey] I mean she was like, ok I am graduate student here I passed, I mean I (must) understand English to come here...

And another thing in my experience I know as an international student I can not take more than 3 credits online. So I called and asked her if I took last semester can I take this semester...and last semester at first the course was not an online class but the professor automatically changed it, but I don't think it showed it on the form, but I just wanted to make sure, I didn't want to make trouble and I called and they were like oh...they asked me so many questions...I mean I just wanted to ask my question, I was like ok, be patient I mean you are at ISS right, you get money from international students right. And she was like (silence)...and because they don't complain, because international students don't complain, they don't think international students will make trouble because...you know they don't think they will make any complaints so they think they can do whatever they want...and they didn't hear, I called several times to call for scholarships. I tried several times to explain, but they just shut down after the first sentence and think about themselves and totally miscommunicate.

INTERVIEWER: Are they mostly white or...

ARISA: Yes. I mean the student workers and the advisors and this white lady I know who she is I know her voice and I know how she is.....My friend went into the office to turn in some papers. She wanted to give them directly to the advisor but the student worker wouldn't let her see the advisor and she told her that she would turn them in...now I know that you need to write down the date and who you talked to, but she didn't so she gave the papers and she left. One month later she returned and she asked her what was happening with the papers and she said that it takes a lot of time, so she went away and she came back. She turned it in at the beginning of January. She went back...and she told them she couldn't finish it and then she went there a third time and they told her that the document was not there and she couldn't transfer to the PhD this semester and she needs to get a new document to get the signature from the advisor, and you know she will go back to Japan, you know, to her country, for the vacation and she doesn't know what to do about it.

INTERVIEWER: I see some of you nodding your heads. Is this a common complaint that the ISS is not serving your needs?

EDDY: If it is possible, I would need more than ten minutes to explain...

INTERVIEWER: Ok, go ahead. You know the whole point of my survey I decided...you know there are all types of questions that I have, but I think I came to realize after I did the [online] study that I think I wanted to do it because I wanted to give voice to people who I don't think normally have a voice...um, not really that I am giving it to you. There is a difference between empowerment and agency. It is not like I

want to give...here, like here suddenly you have a voice, but I feel like you already had agency, and nobody has proved it before. So you know what, go ahead, we have ten minutes...can you take five maybe.

EDDY: Did she ever get the transfer from Masters to PhD?

ARISA: No. Not yet, so she needs to do it next semester.

EDDY: Now I am worried about my situation because this is the last semester for my MA and I need to uh transfer from MA to PhD for next semester.....

ARISA: ....

EDDY: ...Anyway my complaint is with the driver's license. When my wife came here to the Dallas International Airport she unintentionally wrote down her maiden name that is different from her visa but the officer at the entrance point did not catch the mistake. So we did not know about the mistake and we lived here very happily. But when she tried to take her drivers test at the DPS they requested her to show a different document to prove her status here.

INTERVIEWER: I don't want to cut you off, but can we go back to stuff at the University just because those are the things we...

EDDY: OK, So I need to fix the problem, so I wrote to the ISS office and that is December of last year and they, the advisor was of course very gentile to me but the procedure which they use are not effective. I am still waiting for their answer and they usually told me that why don't you send an e-mail directly to the advisor, but there is no e-mail address for advisors, there is only one e-mail address for ISS [iss.tamu.edu](mailto:iss.tamu.edu) and whenever I call the advisor she tells me oh this is a very complex problem I am looking for the solution for you so still I am waiting for their response but my wife couldn't wait and I couldn't believe their inability so we asked a lawyer here but it didn't help us yet.

INTERVIEWER: By the way, did you know that you can get free law services here?

EDDY: Free?

INTERVIEWER: Free.

EDDY: No.

INTERVIEWER: There is a lawyer here on campus for students, the only thing the lawyer can not do is go to court with you. So he can advise you here and then if you need to go to court, they can recommend a lawyer that you would have to pay to go to court with you but all of the stuff beforehand and talking about that they can help you.

(SIGHS AND FRUSTRATED SOUNDS FROM PARTICIPANTS) I didn't know it either, and if I didn't work for my office I wouldn't know.

ARISA: And you know what. They have an orientation for international students. And they don't talk about nothing. I mean nothing and I heard so many complaints from international students. Seven years from now, I know a person who has been here for seven years and she says, you know-it is better than it was before. I was like-that is better?

INTERVIEWER: Well how can it be better, I guess- what suggestions do you have?

ARISA: I don't know because I have already complained directly to the advisor.

SARAYU: My experience with the advisors has been exactly the opposite. The student workers have been nice to me, but one of the advisors I had been applying for my I-20 form and she told me that I didn't have sufficient funds but I was promised funds by the university to come to this university and I have spent so many years completing my courses and there is no other way that I can get extra income to show....just because the university has increased its tuition over the years exponentially and our salaries have remained the same. I went to AERA last time and I spoke to a guy who was a student here in the 90's and he had the same salary then that I still have now. And that is not my problem and she said you don't have sufficient funds to fill out your I-20. And I said where am I supposed to go now after this? And I had to get a letter from my advisor saying that she can help me with my funding and still this girl said this was not enough. And I had to get it done because I was going to India and I told her that I had to get this done because I was going to India and she said-Oh you have the money to go to India, but you don't have the money to show me in this I-20. (GASPS FROM OTHERS AND "WOW" FROM INTERVIEWER) I mean just because you give me all these things doesn't mean that I cannot visit my home country after five years I put it on my credit card. I think she was extremely rude and I will never forget that experience. That particular line that she said, I will never forget that.

ARISA: I complained to the advisor directly and she was like, oh I am sorry, but no change.

INTERVIEWER: So would you say that this is what bothers you more, I mean obviously there have been some incidents of violence on Northgate, but is it this persistent

ARISA: Yeah, and no one notices international students. You know if I could not go [to ISS] I would not go there. I go there because...you have to go there. It is not just a service, it is like I have no choice. I think most of the international students would say the same thing. I am really sure about that.

INTERVIEWER: So if there was one suggestion for the ISS it would be for them to start taking you more seriously? Especially with the whole Vision 2020 we are trying to get more international students to come. I think there are more international students as graduate students than there are Texas students (AGREEMENT FROM PARTICIPANTS) so they-Yeah, let's just ask this question: Do you recommend Texas A & M to other Non-Native English speakers (NNESs) to other international students?

EDDY: What?

INTERVIEWER: Would you recommend it. Do you say it is a good university and you should come here to your friends back home?

EDDY: I usually recommend my friends or people in Korea I recommend this university because of the less tuition (LESS TUITION PARTICIPANTS REPEAT) and the less cost of living (AGREEMENT FROM OTHER PARTICIPANTS)

INTERVIEWER: But what do you tell them? Do you tell them, Oh you should come here but- or do you just say, yeah-come on over?

EDDY: I usually-come on. (LAUGHTER FROM ALL) Because I agree with you about your opinions about the ineffectiveness of ISS but that is not the reason they should not come here.

ARISA: Yeah, and it is true.

SARAYU: Yeah, it is a very good university, I mean my boyfriend went to New Jersey and he did his masters there and there they had the ultimate discrimination so he says this is heaven compared to that so it is only a matter of comparison. If my friends ask me I would say it depends on where you have...I mean what university you are comparing it with. Because you know some of them are good and some of them are not. If you have got admission at Purdue and then at A & M I would say of course go to Purdue, don't come to A & M-don't even think of coming here. But if they say I've got here and University of North Texas, I would say oh, please come to A & M. (LAUGHTER) ...I mean the academics, I mean discrimination it is not one of the priorities to recommend or not recommend a university. I think it is mostly academic standing and the funding...

EDDY: I think it is one of the reasons why international students here do not blame too much...because they think anyway this university is good for their education. That is why they can endure.

ARISA: How do you critique?

....

INTERVIEWER: One thing that I want to ask you because it is a theme on my [survey]- Can you to the best of your ability explain what an incident report is, a few common reasons why you might want to file one, and how to file one?

SARAYU: Reporting any incident that you think harasses you I would think? But I don't know exactly. I mean I know how to complain because I have been to the University Police Department because I had to because I had a threatening e-mail-so...I kept getting these e-mails sent to my neo account and it was from all of these anonymous e-mail addresses and it had really bad content and I wanted to you know take action on this and I went to University services and they said, Oh we figured out who this is but we can't tell you who because we have to protect the interests of the person who was harassing you. I mean it was sexual harassment literally. I mean he was asking me you know about all of my bodily functions and stuff like that. It was so horrible. And they said they would not give me the name of this person. And I sent them another e-mail and I said to them, you know a lady was handling it and I said you know I am sure you are able to understand how I am feeling I am not even able to go to my department at night and every friend that I am seeing I am thinking, is this the person who wrote it to me and now they are talking so nicely to me? I couldn't trust anybody because it was a nightmare and she said seriously we can not reveal the name to you...and I was like What? So I called the police department and then they found out who it was they were telling me who it was and they took some action and all that stuff.

INTERVIEWER: But first you had gone to University Student Services?

SARAYU: Uh huh.

INTERVIEWER: And then you went to the University Police Department (UPD)?

SARAYU: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did you fill out a report at both places? Or you just verbally told at one and then filled out at the other?

SARAYU: I sent an e-mail to University Student Services...I mean I did not come into contact with anybody at that place. But the UPD I went to - to fill out a report.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting. But you do not know what other incidents to file. You knew that that was something that should be filed but you...

SARAYU: Yeah

ARISA: I didn't think about this question very seriously before, but yeah sometimes you couldn't you know you think you were hurt but other people say they were just

joking, don't take it so seriously. I mean like you know for which level confused is an incident or which level is just like oh a joke...so...one of my friends is from Taiwan and she put the traditional letters in New Year we put the lucky letter on the door, and there were some people you don't know who that wrote "Go back to your country. Fuck you." So how we need to report it? So when I rode back to my apartment and I told her there is a card that has been written on "Go back to your country" then they laughed and everything and I was like so depressed because that is a big trust and really they can hurt you anytime and I was just shocked. I know the people from where which building, but I don't know who so how can I report it? Is it a joke? Do they really make fun of you? Or is it...

EDDY: I never thought of any incidents like that, but that remind me of one experience like that I had. Last year I usually jogged around the golf course at the university and usually it was fun, but one day when I went around George Bush Street, maybe on a Friday so many people had a party. They drank beers maybe something like that. So when I jogged by they were enjoying. But one guy shouted me across the street something I couldn't understand so I just ran but in another one or two seconds all of them shouted me something like calling me names or "Fuck you" or I don't know exactly, but something like that so I am not sure if that is because I am an international or because they saw a guy who was running on the golf course I am not sure. Anyway that is the only thing that I can remember now.

INTERVIEWER: So you are not sure-I don't want to be putting words in your mouth so I am checking. You are not sure exactly what constitutes an incident. You know that sexual harassment constitutes an incident but you are not sure about other things and then you are not sure exactly where to file one, you know the UPD, but you don't know what campus organizations have them.

SARAYU: The thing is that we don't know the threshold because sometimes we think, oh that thing is too small to be reported, it is not enough, so we won't tell them somebody made a bad joke on me....I don't know if we took it right.

INTERVIEWER: I mean some of the things that you told me about ISS and having to contact a lawyer seem to me like somebody needs to know about that and you don't have a way-at least you don't know of a way of reporting that. I think we are doing a poor job as a university of doing that, which is why I am doing the study, but anyway I don't know that I am supposed to be disclosing all of that, but that is something that I think we definitely need to work on. Um, OK, we are out of time as far as what you guys told me you had, but if there is anything that you would like to add-suggestions for the university, those types of things, here is your chance.

EDDY: Can I ask you this question? How can this conversation effect the conclusion of your thesis is it positive?



INTERVIEWER: My thesis?

EDDY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I don't want to say it is positive or negative, I think it is what it is. I went into this thinking I was going to get certain data, and my data has all surprised me. I have gotten some very positive data of people who say that the university is wonderful and they've never heard of anything and they have never seen anything and they are perfectly happy here, and I have talked to some other people-I mean I talked to two people who were assaulted, so they obviously had a completely different experience. Um, it changed where I am going to send the information, um originally I thought I was going to be sending it to the president of the university and the police chiefs and now I think that the information needs to go to-for example, ISS and you know that is why again this is confidential so they won't know who you are, but also to the places that deal with incident reports on this campus. I cannot believe there are like three or four places that you can file incident reports on this campus and none of them are doing their job is nobody knows where they are, and what an incident report is, and how to file one, and what constitutes an incident. So those I think are-it shifted. I kind of like, by what I was told is where I decided to go. By what you told me is how I decided that I wanted to talk to you as opposed to other students.

EDDY: I think there is almost ten to twenty percent of student here who are international maybe. More than ten percent and I think that the study like your study I mean the study about international students or the study about the relationship between the students...that kind of study should be done by many other students like you. I think it should.

INTERVIEWER: With money. I think it should be done with money personally. And I want to ask you about this, how do you feel about ME doing the study as opposed to an international student or a group of international students? What would it look like if it was the other way around if the international students were asking the Americans, would that be-I mean that is going to be one of my recommendations, is that something you would agree with-or?

EDDY: And there is one more important area I think that should be in this kind of study. That is the relationship between international student and international student. Sometimes the relationship between international students are harsher than between international students and American students. I think-

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I thought that was very interesting, and that will be included too. Yeah, I mean even between the Asian-I thought it was interesting that you said you were both "Asian" and you didn't mention the country of origin because that could be a tension point as well. (LAUGHTER)

ARISA: That is great.

SARAYU: When it comes to the university I mean they are pretty good at many services they provide to us, but when it comes to the crucial point, they are...I don't know they are deficient, I don't know if that is the right word to use. Remember that incident at the University Apartments (UA) when that gas fire, the Bangladeshi family all those students. And if this had happened to an American student, I mean a White American student it would have been a big thing. It would have come on CNN...and everywhere that you can find. This hardly - hardly qualified as news, even for the Battalion. I mean they covered it...and we had meetings at the UA where they came and consoled us and they eventually changed all the burners, but still all the houses are dilapidated. The rent is so high, they keep on hiking it and any other apartment in this entire town is much better than staying at the UAs and they don't care about that because it is taken only by international students...I mean they wouldn't even go and live in that place. It is shacks literally. And a couple of other services when it comes to international students. I was just thinking of something but I forgot, um

INTERVIEWER: Write it down if it comes to you and then

SARAYU: Yeah, one thing-Oh, those International Week (I-week) celebrations that they say is you know to bring awareness for all students on campus-if you go and see the auditorium can seat about 3,000 students and almost everybody you will see is an international student. American students barely know about the celebration. It is like we are celebrating (ARISA AND SARAYU IN UNISON-"ourselves") and...you don't see Americans there except for those people who probably volunteer and probably have to go there for a class credit and that is the maximum that you will get from them, but I tell many of my friends that the I-week is coming up and they will say, "What is I-week-what does the I stand for?"-so I think they are trying to make an effort but it is not at a level where it will reach everybody.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that we need to go-like a lot of the incidents they think it was high schoolers. They think it was high schoolers that did the assaulting.  
(SARAYU: Yes) So not just have it be the undergrads that are getting educated, but also the neighborhood high schools.

ARISA & SARAYU: The community.

End of interview

## VITA

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