

Diversity as The Modern Racial Incorporation Strategy and The Unseen Burden of  
Diversity-Work

By

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## Abstract

Americans generally see diversity as a fundamental American value. Most Americans when asked if they support diversity, will overwhelmingly respond they do. Diversity is viewed as the next step, after the controversial law and policy affirmative action, in leveling the playing field for people of color to access spaces once forbidden to them.

However, the present research suggests that the legal framing of “diversity benefits all,” which has become the common framing for civil rights in the twenty-first century, is something that lacks reference to past or present discrimination. This framing results in real mental and physical consequences for students of color, especially African Americans. The students are tasked with enacting diversity through what I term diversity-work. Diversity-work is defined as the physical, mental and emotional work, often unwelcome, demanded of marginalized individuals by White individuals and organizations to enact the “diversity benefits all narrative” established by the federal judiciary. Diversity-work has a history based in national ideologies around race.

I also make the argument that, over time, various strategies of what I call racial incorporation have attempted, with varying success, to welcome African Americans into the mainstream society along four dimensions: full citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence. I posit that diversity is the most recent racial incorporation strategy of African Americans in the United States. Specifically, I argue that racial incorporation policies based in the diversity narrative maintain and perpetuate racial hierarchies by demanding African American students to enact diversity by doing diversity-work.

Four years of ethnographic research along with in-depth interviews with two diversity scholarship programs at a large Midwestern university support this finding. The first chapter outlines the concept of racial incorporation. The second chapter lays out the history of racial incorporation strategies used in the United States, with a special focus on the shift from laws and policies regulating affirmative action to the presently used “diversity benefits all” narrative in higher education. The third empirical chapter summarizes the ethnographic fieldwork and interviews and presents a discussion on the implications of diversity-work.

The present findings suggest that, in contrast to the goal of offering a new way to incorporate racially marginalized individuals into institutions of higher education and employment opportunities, framing racial incorporation through the diversity narrative results in diversity-work and can undermine efforts toward equity.

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## Introduction

### *Epigraph*

“I think a lot about the internal world of the performer. It feels like she [Emily Dickinson] is inside the performer, so we’re reading it from the inside of that state of being rather than a spectator. But oftentimes when you hear a poem about a performance, it’s about watching it, as opposed to what the state of being for the person being watched is.”

-Jill Johnson, dancer featured in the *Poetry in America* documentary on Emily Dickinson (New, 2017).

For at least four centuries African Americans in the United States have been fighting to be full members of US society. I call this full racial incorporation. And despite the election of Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States, and significant advances in racial justice in educational spaces through the work of the Civil Rights Movement and subsequent justice efforts, Black students in higher education in the United States still report issues of racial injustice and discrimination on college campuses (Solorzano, Ceja and Yosso 2000; Evans and Moore 2015; Mayorga-Gallo 2019).

My motivating question in this project is, “What is the experience of self- and other-identified African American students under the diversity ideology?” My claim is that we are in a modern era of diversity, in which the "diversity benefits all" ideology serves to maintain the racial hierarchy in the United States, with African Americans at the bottom. I present ethnographic data drawn from the experiences of students of color to show that the practice of diversity programs today creates a burden of diversity-work.

The ideology of diversity that creates a system in which African Americans must labor to benefit Whites is not justice nor equal protection. Diversity, as the predominant way to enact

civil rights in the present era, is both a representation of the durability of racism and a trojan horse in the fight for real freedom; bringing what looks like progress while providing a framework to perpetuate the racial hierarchy. Put another way, the "diversity benefits all" ideology is akin to the current "All Lives Matter" rhetoric which erases the unique and specific claims for justice advanced by the Black Lives Matter movement.

Understanding the diversity ideology, how diversity is practiced in institutions, and how this impacts everyday people in daily life is critically important. The diversity ideology has quickly spread beyond higher education into business organizations, churches, and neighborhoods, as well as internationally. But if we hope to make real progress in addressing the specific justice claims of African Americans, we must be clear about what justice looks like and that the diversity ideology, that necessitates diversity-work from people of color, fails to achieve true justice.

I believe the experience of the burden of diversity-work, which I first identified in the everyday experiences of African American students, extends into most arenas of cross-racial interaction in the United States. This dynamic should be uncovered, recognized, and addressed so that we can move more directly towards true racial justice.

The documented stress and strain of moments of "acute racial disrespect," as Professor Elijah Anderson calls them, result in lower success rates to graduation and overall dissatisfaction with the educational experience (Anderson 2011; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado, Carter, & Kardia, 1998; Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, Allen, & Milem, 1999; Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). There are also documented increased rates of stress-induced physical and mental health issues in individuals who experience racial discrimination (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson 2003).

African Americans have not always been present in primarily White institutions of higher education. In terms of education, affirmative action policies aimed at rectifying past

discrimination began in the 1960s and made it possible for greater numbers of African American students to enter universities once closed to them (Karabel 2005; Stulberg and Chen 2014). But within a couple of decades, conservative detractors began to chip away at the legal standing of affirmative action by bringing cases against universities that tried to increase their numbers of underrepresented minority students by using race-conscious admissions policies (*Regents of the University of California v. Bakke 1978*). What resulted was a downturn in race-conscious affirmative action and a sharp increase in race-neutral affirmative action programs that used the “benefits of diversity” argument instead of the remedy-for-past-discrimination argument of previous race-conscious affirmative action policies and programs. In this new paradigm, diversity is not an end in itself, but a means to enhance learning and the overall undergraduate experience (Berrey 2015). In this new paradigm, majority White students are the implied beneficiaries of increased campus diversity.

The implicit bargain is that students of color supply this diversity in exchange for receiving the social, economic, and cultural benefits of college. Now, almost all programs aimed at increasing diversity broadly — in terms of race, class, gender, geography or otherwise — are known as diversity programs. But, the current study finds that not all categories of diverse individuals get called on to share the “benefits of diversity” at the same rate. Racial minorities, particularly African Americans, are burdened with doing what I term diversity-work, the physical, mental and emotional work required of persons of color, particularly African Americans, to provide the “benefits of diversity” to a White space; a place where whiteness is centered. Diversity-work is the act of African Americans being called upon to share their experience with Whites in a formal or informal way under the auspices of building a more diverse environment.

## **Theoretical Background**

This dissertation focuses on students of color recruited to majority white universities in diversity and inclusion programs. It considers universities, and diversity programs in particular, as sites of racial formation. Although a growing literature examines the effects of microaggressions and outright racial slights (Milem et al. 2005; Pierce, Carew, Pierce-Gonzalez, and Wills 1977; Stefancic and Delgado 1992), we still know little about how the introduction of diversity as the primary racial incorporation strategy has affected the overall system of racial interaction that fuels persistent feelings of “otherness” by those students of color in majority white educational spaces.

To address this gap in the literature, this study investigates African American student experience, supplemented by administrator interviews about the student experience, to come to an understanding of modern racial interaction in this era of diversity. Who shoulders the burden of enacting and embodying diversity and what opportunities and costs does it create for the students whose embodied identities bring diversity to campuses? What does this say about where we are as a nation around race, justice and equality? Does the language, ideology and practice of diversity improve campus interactions along racial lines?

This ethnographic study interrogates how policy and rhetoric around diversity from the Supreme Court down to the classroom serve to impact everyday interactions between people of color and White people in this diversity era on campus. I draw on campus observations, in-depth interviews and document analysis to learn how the diversity rhetoric manifests in classroom settings, diversity and inclusion programming, informal interactions and formal diversity policy statements. Findings will contribute new understandings to the underlying processes that continue to contribute to the unequal treatment and systemic inequalities we see in the lives of

students of color in majority White spaces. This research will illuminate areas of persistent concern in establishing equitable educational opportunity for all students, especially those from historically marginalized groups.

### **Empirical Research on Diversity**

Contemporary research on diversity is split into two main approaches: studies of the benefits of diversity and studies that take a critical view of the turn toward diversity. Benefits of diversity studies are largely found in the education literature, and critical diversity studies are largely found in the social science literature; although there are outliers in both areas.

Benefits of diversity studies proliferated after the 1978 Supreme Court decision in the case *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*. Justice Lewis Powell, in a solo-authored dissent, advocated for the benefits of diversity argument to supplant the affirmative action as a remedy-for-past-discrimination argument in higher education. Powell's reasoning caught on. In an effort to "save" affirmative action using the diversity justification, scholars wrote about the "benefits of diversity" contributing to better student learning (Cabrera, et al. 2002), increasing cross-racial interaction (Hu and Kuh 2003) and preparing students to work in a global society (Shaw 2005). Collectively, these studies made the case for diversity as a "compelling governmental interest," that could withstand the test of strict scrutiny in a court of law.

Critical diversity studies have looked at the effects of diversity as a discourse, diversity as an ideology and diversity in practice. Studies that investigate the discourse surrounding diversity find that diversity has become the acceptable way to talk about race, as part of a larger racial project aimed at finding a way to talk about difference. But diversity discourse is devoid of discussion of social inequality or racism (Bell and Hartmann 2007; Berrey 2015).

Studies that view diversity as an ideology posit that viewing civil rights through the lens of diversity organizes mental frameworks, thoughts and categories (and the individuals represented by those thoughts and categories) into a system that centers Whiteness and ultimately stalls real racial reform (Moore and Bell 2011; Mayorga-Gallo 2019; Warikoo 2016).

Studies about lived experience in the diversity era have revealed the contours of continuing racism and discrimination despite speeches from politicians, Supreme Court justices and university administrators to the contrary (Evans and Moore 2015; Steinbugler 2012; Randolph 2013; Randolph 2018; Anderson 2015; Lerma, Hamilton, and Nielsen 2020).

In this dissertation, I consider how the three primary perspectives in critical diversity studies-- diversity as discourse, diversity as ideology, and diversity in practice-- speak to each other to reveal how diversity has created a modern form of social interaction between African Americans and Whites. Juxtaposing and re-theorizing the three perspectives has illuminated a new understanding of the current strategy of racial incorporation for African Americans and the effects that strategy has on students in cross-racial interactions.

Chapter 1 focuses on introducing the concept of racial incorporation and explaining why this is important to understand the experience of African Americans in the United States through an analytic framework that accounts for full citizenship rights, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence over time. Chapter 2 focuses on the racial incorporation strategies of key historical eras; from slavery to the present diversity era. I follow transformative legal decisions and how the justifications used in the holdings brought about or hindered full racial incorporation. Chapter 3 focuses on diversity-work itself, reporting the findings from a four-year ethnographic study of the experience of African American students in two diversity programs at a large Midwestern university.

**Fieldsites: Urban Voice, President's Fellows and classroom observations**

My research took place on the campus of a large Midwestern university I call University of Westrock with two diversity programs and in a classroom discussion section. Westrock is a city known both for its history of progressive politics and its stark racial disparities. This is an ideal context for this project because the university has been on the leading edge of diversity and inclusion programming since the 1990s while its students are still overwhelmingly non-Hispanic Whites. Based on 2019 enrollment numbers, only about two percent of the over 30,000 undergraduate students at Westrock identify as African American. The increase in diversity and inclusion programs at this university is representative of what has occurred nationwide: as the justice-oriented arguments for affirmative action have come under fire in court proceedings, more and more universities are opting for the “diversity benefits all” narrative as the only safe justification for racial integration; making diversity programs race-neutral or expanding race-conscious programs to include class diversity.

My research took place in two diversity programs, one I call Urban Voice and one I call President's Fellows. Both programs are comprised of students of color at a large Midwestern university. Both programs require students to first be admitted to the university through the standard admissions procedure all students go through. Then, they are offered a spot in their respective diversity program that provides a tuition scholarship and programming to promote community among students.

I also completed twenty hours of supplementary classroom observations in a sociology course discussion section. Classroom observations were added near the end of the ethnography because students I interviewed referred to classroom interactions as some of the most fraught with what I coded as diversity-work.

Below, I share information about the two fieldsites and ethnographic vignettes from each diversity program to give a sense of what each program is like. I also provide a vignette from a classroom observation.

### *Urban Voice*

According to their webpage, “The Urban Voice Hip Hop and Urban Arts Learning Community is a cutting-edge multicultural artistic program,” established on three pillars: academics, arts and activism. Urban Voice is a diversity scholarship program boasting fifteen students in each year’s cohort. The primary criteria for selection are academic excellence and talent in hip hop arts--skills such as writing spoken word poetry, song writing, rapping, break dancing, writing and acting in theater productions, MCing, and DJing.

Urban Voice is the first program of its kind in the country to award hip-hop artists a full tuition scholarship to form a cohort that will live, study and create art together. Students may major in anything they wish. Urban Voice is often featured on university websites, in brochures and in speeches given by university administrators highlighting innovative programs. Notably, identification as a racial minority is not a selection criterion, although the majority of the students in the program are students of color. This is most likely because hip hop began, and has continued to be based, in major city centers such as New York City, Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago and Philadelphia.

The diversity program was founded in 2007 in the shadow of *Gratz* (2003) and *Grutter* (2003) cases that came before the Supreme Court and tightened restrictions on race-conscious admissions. While I am unable to say if the university’s decision to make Urban Voice race-neutral was directly related to the outcome of those cases, I think the proximity to the seminal cases is a detail not to be overlooked. After *Gratz* and *Grutter* it was clear how the Supreme

Court would come down on race-conscious programs in universities in an anti-affirmative action political climate. At worst, a university might be taken to court if a White student or applicant thought they were being discriminated against and at least it might receive negative press that could affect alumni relations and donations.

The fieldwork with Urban Voice included three years of ethnographic observations (2012-2015). I first became interested in Urban Voice not as a researcher, but as a friend of an alumnus from the inaugural class of the program. It was through hearing about the program from someone who could talk in retrospect about the experience of being an urban, minority student in Westrock that I began to sense Urban Voice was something worth studying. I heard my friend say things about Urban Voice like “we are family,” “it’s true love,” “I learned to be a real leader,” “I survived college because of Urban Voice.” I was able to “get in” with Urban Voice through my connection to my friend, and after clearing the research with the administrators I began attending program events.

The fieldwork with Urban Voice took place in four primary locations: weekly poetry writing workshops, performances in and around Westrock, travelling on the annual tour with the Touring Ensemble to NYC and multiple observations at a pre-freshman orientation session where Urban Voice performed. At one particularly important event for program recruitment, prospective students are invited to perform for their peers and are told all about the program and the benefits it offers: tuition, opportunities to perform, rehearsal space, opportunities to travel with the touring ensemble, and a group of like-minded artists to support them. Mention of campus racial diversity or lack thereof is strikingly absent in a room full of students of color, while the students bustling outside that room were majority White.

The following vignette from a fieldnote gives a taste of being in the field with Urban Voice.

*The Wednesday night writing workshop*

A typical Wednesday night workshop of Urban Voice begins with students strolling in one-by-one, often a few minutes after the start time. The feeling in the dance studio in Presser Hall is very casual. It feels home-y. Students will often come in and grab a blue gymnastics mat to sit on the floor. Most people bring snacks ranging from what one student called “hood snacks” (Mountain Dew and Flamin’ Hot Cheetos) to full dinner meals from Wingstop of chicken wings and French fries. The students often share food with each other. What is shared and how much food there is to share does not matter much. No amount is too small to offer some to a friend. I saw this sharing happen at nearly every Urban Voice event I attended. After the initial five to ten-minute period where students are catching up with one another (“Hey girl, how you been? I haven’t seen you in a couple weeks.”), Travis, the assistant artistic director, will hand out between two and four poems on white office paper we will read and dissect for the evening. The poems range from prose accessible to the non-poet to so esoteric that even Travis does not quite know what the poet is talking about.

Student interest in the poems chosen for the evening varies widely, as does their knowledge of poetic devices. One young woman, Chelsea, knows quite a bit about poetic forms and word choice and which poets are in dialogue with each other through their poetry. She refers to poetic concepts such as sonnet, sestina, and ghazal. Other students stare at the poems attempting to mine for meaning and come up with something to contribute to the conversation. Some students, one young man in particular from New York City, is often doing physics homework on the outskirts of the circle we all sit in on the floor.

But then, the creative part of the evening begins. Travis says, “Ok, get out a sheet of paper and something to write with. We’re going to write our own poems.” It is as if the didactic, but necessary first act of the show is over, and everyone knows the main attraction has started. Eyes brighten, textbooks close, and smartphones slip into bags. The only thing that is important is the paper, the pen and the most important asset, their creative mind. Knowledge of poetic forms is not needed for this exercise. Every person in the room turns into an expert of their own story. And they are ready to tell it. “Ok, fifteen minutes to write,” Travis says and each one is off into their own world. The room is dead silent; everyone is working. Some people sit for the first five minutes to think about what to write, but others begin immediately; they have been itching to write all day. Some write poems in an orderly fashion on lined paper, others scribble, almost frantically, in what looks like shorthand that only the author of the poem can read. The poems are deep and descriptive, using phrases like “shimmering glass,” “ripe and juicy plums,” “the sun shone like fire on the red clay dirt.” As each person reads his or her poem, all the students sit with rapt attention, giving a “mmm” when a certain part resonates with them or giving the quintessential snaps of approval. The artists are at work perfecting their craft.

### *President’s Fellows*

According to their webpage, criteria for selection into the President’s Fellows merit-based scholarship program are student’s “demonstrated academic success in high school, the impact of their leadership skills, commitment to volunteer service, and potential to excel in the university’s rigorous educational environment.” In addition, there are criteria based on racial background: “academically talented, underrepresented ethnic minorities- African, Hispanic, Native and Southeast Asian Americans- and socioeconomically disadvantaged undergraduates.”

Students in the program receive a full tuition scholarship and a small book stipend each year and may major in anything they wish. The President's Fellows program was founded in 1984, just six years after *Bakke* was decided in the Supreme Court. The holding from *Bakke* most featured in the press was that the use of numerical quotas was prohibited. However, *Bakke* was also the first time diversity had been used as a rationale for race-conscious affirmative action. I would argue that the war against race-conscious affirmative action had not reached a boiling point by 1984 and therefore, President's Fellows was formed with race-conscious criteria in a way that by 2007 and the founding of Urban Voice, it was not able to do. By 2007 diversity was the policy of the day.

The fieldwork with President's Fellows included one year of ethnographic observations (2017-2018). The fieldwork took place in three primary locations: weekly program meetings, monthly large group meetings and informally at class events such as evening study breaks, tailgates and football games. I first became interested in President's Fellows after a faculty member at the University of Westrock mentioned to me that, "some of the best students in my courses, by far, are President's Fellows." After gaining permission from the administration of the program I began to attend class meetings (all freshman, all sophomores, etc.). Below is a vignette about attending a program meeting.

### *The evening program meeting*

It's 6:00 pm and I enter the student center where I know the President's Fellow's junior class meeting will be held. The weekly email says to look on the electronic screen in the lobby for a listing of the room where we will meet. Since the meeting doesn't start until 7:00 pm I go into the student center cafe to bide my time. I see two other President's Fellows students in the cafe doing the same thing as me; they lift their hand to wave hello to me. Around 6:50 all three of us

begin to make our way to the electronic screen and find that the meeting will be on the second floor in a room with nice views over the student center balcony. When I enter the room there are ten rows of eight chairs facing the front of the room, with a pathway down the middle. The students file in and sit with people they know.

One young man who appears mixed-- Asian and White, Eric, is talking to another young man who appears mixed White and Latino, about his study abroad experience. Eric has glasses, is wearing a Westrock hoodie, jeans and Converse high-tops. He explains how it was a big ordeal to get his visa. "We had to wake up early and take the train all the way to Vienna. It took forever, like seven hours." It was pretty common for students in President's Fellows to study abroad and to share their experiences in the class meetings.

The meeting starts with what they call Fellow's Shout-outs. Students can stand up and recognize other Fellows or stand up and tell what they've accomplished since the last month. "Shout-out to Miguel, he went to Oktoberfest in Germany. Shout-out to Kelly, she got a summer internship at Google. Thank you to Whitney for making cookies for the meeting tonight. Shout-out to Kayla who won her cross-country skiing race. Antonio aced his psych exam. Shout-out to Ashley who was accepted into med school. Shout-out to Jake who started a business." These shout-outs are common to the class meetings I attended. The students in President's Fellows had quite impressive accomplishments in terms of internships, graduate school acceptances and after-college plans. And many appear to come from middle- or upper-income families. It was not uncommon to see Patagonia jackets, new Apple computers and The North Face backpacks.

After the shout-outs there is a large group discussion. I sit near the left side of the room and notice all the other Black students, except for one young woman, are sitting near me. I mention this to a woman named Sarah. I say, "Seems like all the Black people are sitting over

here.” She says, “We tend to stick together.” Out of the room full of juniors in President’s Fellows it is hard to tell how many African American students there are. I would say no more than six out of sixty students.

When I look at a class meeting of President’s Fellows I am struck by how many White-appearing students are in the group. Many are mixed race (Latinx and White, Black and White, Asian and White). One day while I was hanging out with some students at a casual class party the topic of guessing other President’s Fellows ethnicity came up. “I know John is White. I went to high school with him. I know his family,” one student said. But the topic of an individual’s ethnic or racial identity is not openly discussed, even though one of the criteria for being a part of the President’s Fellows program is identification with an underrepresented minority group. A student can be White and be in the program, but they would need to be low-income. There is a distinct lack of discussion about race in class meetings unless the official “group discussion topic” is particularly about race. And even then, mostly Black students respond to the questions.

### *Classroom observations*

Classroom observations played a supplementary role, near the end of the overall project, as a way to deepen understanding of how discussion of race happens. Observations took place in three different discussion sections of a sociology course on race and ethnicity. Two of the discussion sections were led by female Asian graduate students and the last section was led by a male Asian graduate student. Each discussion section had between fifteen and twenty students who were primarily freshmen and sophomores. No section had more than two African American students. For the fieldwork I introduced myself as a graduate student writing my dissertation on

student interaction in various spaces on campus. I tried to be as discreet as possible in the space, taking a seat in the far corner.

## **Research Methods**

The goal of this project was to investigate the impact of the sociological, educational and legal understandings of diversity on the everyday life of students of color. Two overarching questions guided this project: 1) How do campus actors understand diversity and how it is done (or enacted)? and 2) What is the lived experience of students of color in relation to diversity? I employed participant observation, in-depth interviewing and content analysis of historical and legal documents to understand how the often-used concept of diversity is vastly under-theorized. I show how this has consequences for the people embodying it.

### *Origins of the Study*

As mentioned previously, I first became interested in Urban Voice, not as a researcher, but as a friend of an alumnus from the inaugural class of the program. It was through hearing about the program from someone who could talk candidly and in retrospect about the experience of being an urban, minority student in Westrock that I began to sense Urban Voice was something worth studying. My previous research as an undergraduate focused on the lived experience of low-income and first-generation students at elite universities. I have always been interested in stories of people who live and thrive in places “not made for them;” places where the hegemonic narrative is more about being the same than about embracing difference. So, in my first semester of graduate school I signed up for an ethnography course with Professor Alice Goffman. It was through that course I began thinking more about my friend’s comments about

Urban Voice and began making the trip to do observations. That class project became my Master's thesis study and from that fieldwork the ideas about diversity-work started to form.

### *Adding A Second Program as A Focused Comparison*

Once I had written up the results of my Master's project and come to the beginning ideas about diversity-work I was curious about further mechanics of the phenomenon. Working with Urban Voice was truly an ideal location to clearly see how diversity is performed. Students in Urban Voice are literal performers doing their art onstage for a waiting audience. Diversity-work was easy to see; at least to a trained sociologist of race. But I wanted to know if the experience of diversity-work was something shared by African American students who were in a diversity program that was *not* based in artistic performance.

It was difficult to secure access to a focused comparison program (among a few additional diversity programs) because program administrators were somewhat resistant to my requests. Some just refused to return emails and phone calls. But once I was connected with President's Fellows, I knew it would clarify things about the concept I was forming. I did interviews near the end of my time in the field so as to not influence the research subjects' behavior. Adding in the classroom observations was a natural outgrowth of the interviews. In each successive interview students talked about their experiences in the classroom as some of the most stressful cross-racial interactions. I knew I had to do some observations of the classroom space.

### *Immersive Ethnography versus Focused Ethnography*

When I started my fieldwork with Urban Voice my objective was to immerse myself into the life of Urban Voice students. My ethnographic training from both Elijah Anderson and Alice

Goffman emphasized “getting in” to the fieldsite and trying to understand how those in the site made sense of their life and how they dealt with the exigencies of life.

I spent three years in the field with Urban Voice and in that time felt I had begun to reach saturation on understanding their everyday lives, the types of concerns the students had and how they went about getting help for those concerns. I went to anything and everything that Urban Voice students attended--performances all around town and campus, events held off campus, memorial services for individuals close to Urban Voice students I did not have the opportunity to meet, late study sessions at the library. It was near the end of my fieldwork with them I began to hone in on the idea of diversity-work. I knew I wanted to learn more about that burgeoning idea.

That is when I decided to add a comparison with another program within the university field site (when I eventually gained access to President’s Fellows) for a focused ethnography. I felt choosing specific ideas to focus on in another program would help clarify some things related to the idea of diversity. I spent one year in the field with President’s Fellows; a shorter time than the previous program. The goal of adding this second program was to test my theory in another environment that had its own logics of behavior (Timmermans and Tavory 2012; Higginbottom, Pillay, and Boadu 2013).

### *Data Analysis*

Data analysis was an iterative process; comparing previous field experiences to the one at hand and comparing fieldnotes to see patterns in real-time. I used focused coding and interpretive analysis with my fieldnotes and interview transcripts. While still in the field I began coming up with descriptive codes that began to give shape to the theory building (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014). I coded data and developed codesheets using NVivo software.

### *Interactive Approach in The Field*

My approach to interacting with students in the fieldwork was guided by what roles there were in the spaces. Urban Voice spaces, even official program meetings, were informal and casual in nature. Most began a few minutes after the start time and could continue anywhere from fifteen minutes to an hour after the official end time. But there was a clear organization to the meetings. This organizational structure was undoubtedly influenced by the casual and supportive ethos of most hip-hop spaces. It required me to engage in more small talk than I was used to, being an introvert.

In Urban Voice writing workshops there were only two roles available, that of writer and that of facilitator. Very quickly it became apparent that I could not just take the “fly on the wall” approach of blending into the background. At my first writing workshop I tried to sit and observe, and they called on me when the time came to share the poems we had written. I did not have a poem, but I did not let that happen again. I became a poet. And eventually, I was asked to serve as a judge for the touring ensemble auditions and offer feedback on poems.

My approach to interacting with President’s Fellows was much more formal. Program meetings started exactly on time and ended right on time. The meetings followed an agenda that at times felt too regimented. My role was pretty much that of a student. And I overheard one student asking another if I was a student they had never met before. This meant I would come in and sit with the students. If they broke out into small groups, I would join a small group and join in discussion. If I attended a tailgate I brought a snack (my signature item was Jimmy Dean pancake wrapped sausage on a stick). Eventually, the staff of President’s Fellows looked at me as a surrogate member of the staff team, but I tried to create enough distance from the official

program as possible to help the students feel like I was one of them, rather than in a supervisory role.

### **Chapter Overview**

In Chapter 1, I ask what makes full incorporation of African Americans into mainstream society possible. I develop the concept of racial incorporation as an analytical tool to measure four domains: *full citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence*. I find that over time African Americans have not been afforded full racial incorporation, but instead have been engaging in a “one step forward, two steps back” political environment. This has resulted in the current strategy of racial incorporation, diversity.

In Chapter 2, I outline racial incorporation strategies that have been applied to African Americans. I begin with a broad survey of the slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow and integration eras, relying heavily on historical documents and analysis. I end with the affirmative action and diversity eras; providing more direct and original sociological analysis. In particular, I investigate Supreme Court decisions that involved issues of race and focus on what justifications were used in each case in the majority opinion and dissenting opinions that had special and long-lasting impact. Chapter 2 demonstrates the impact of eras past and how echoes of the racial incorporation strategies from the slavery era on, help to explain something of our present situation concerning race.

In Chapter 3, I ask how the racial incorporation strategy of diversity impacts social interaction on college campuses. Through a four-year ethnographic study of the two diversity and inclusion scholarship programs and classroom interactions, including twenty-three interviews with students and administrators, I show how African American students are required

to do what I term diversity-work, the act of African Americans being called upon to share their experience with Whites in a formal or informal way under the auspices of building a more diverse environment.

The conclusion contains thoughts on the broader impact of the racial incorporation strategy of diversity on the goal of social justice. It makes the point that diversity as a racial incorporation strategy is not based in social justice and it has real consequences -- mental, emotional, physical -- for African Americans and other people of color.

## Chapter 1: Racial Incorporation

### Introduction

Diversity related to race is commonly viewed as neutral or even justice-centered, but the history of diversity tells another story. In addition, the lived experience of those seen as racially diverse, particularly African Americans, problematizes what we think we know about diversity. The history of diversity is inextricably linked to affirmative action and the battles waged in the Supreme Court of the United States over the legality of affirmative action are directly relevant to diversity.

The back and forth process of defending affirmative action by civil rights activists and refuting the constitutionality of affirmative action by conservative detractors produced arguments and justifications that have fundamentally altered the idea of who deserves affirmative action and why they deserve it. For conservative-backed plaintiffs in the 1970s their main question brought to the court was refuting how affirmative action was implemented; was affirmative action creating an affirmative bias towards people of color (DeFunis 1974; Bakke 1978). I call this the “how question.” But indeed, affirmative action as it was originally conceived and implemented in the 1960s was in response to the Civil Rights Movement. The wave of civil rights laws and legislation that came after the seminal case *Brown v. Board* (1954) was aimed at providing a remedy to past and present discrimination in hiring and admissions of persons of color, particularly African Americans.

Narrowing the focus to the cases brought to the Supreme Court between the 1970s to the present day, one can see a process of transformation of affirmative action into diversity. This transformation saw the shift from affirmative action focused on the original beneficiaries- people

of color- to an ideology of diversity that demanded that diversity had to benefit everyone. In other words, conservatives who claimed affirmative action was “reverse discrimination” against White people demanded a new reason as to why race could be considered as a justifiably important category of people benefiting from affirmative action. The task of justifying affirmative action for particular groups of people is what I refer to as the “why question.”

The question of “what shall be done with the Negro” (Mitchell 1865) has continued to nip at the heels of progressive and conservative politics alike, since the arrival of stolen Africans on U.S. shores. The Commissioner for Negro Emigration, Rev. James Mitchell, was at the time considering whether recently emancipated slaves had any place in US society, or whether they should be resettled either in Africa or in British colonies in Central America. This is to say, some thought there was no place at all for African Americans in the U.S. To understand how the famous question of “what shall be done with the Negro” has been answered over time, one must examine key political compromises or mandates surrounding race. Not only to understand the history of race, but to understand the “how” and the “why” that animated those times. This is what I term racial incorporation. Said another way, racial incorporation is how African Americans become part of the U.S. citizenry by way of political decisions and the implications of those processes. In the current times the key political mandate is diversity. To understand the impact of the diversity ideology one must look at diversity through the analytical lens of racial incorporation.

How diversity more recently became the default idea driving racial justice, even though diversity does not explicitly address racism or remedy for past discrimination, points to a much larger narrative around race in the United States. The hope for a post-racial America has been shattered by issues around police brutality, mass incarceration, documented health disparities and

disproportionate educational outcomes based on one's zip code of residence. Diversity, what I assert is an *ideology* that answers the "why question" and a *racial incorporation strategy* that answers the "how question," is merely the latest iteration of the maintenance of the racial hierarchy; with African Americans remaining at the bottom.

Not only does diversity maintain the racial hierarchy, but through ethnographic study of two diversity programs at a large, public Midwestern university, it is shown that there is specific work, what I have termed diversity-work, that is demanded of African Americans and is essential to the maintenance of the racial hierarchy. A larger explanation of diversity-work appears in Chapter 3.

This chapter explores the contours of the new conceptual framework of racial incorporation and examines what previous scholars have said about conceptualizing race, the politics of race and racial interaction.

### **Racial Incorporation as A Concept**

Although there are scholarly debates about when and how slavery was racially constructed in the earliest years of English colonial settlement in North America, by the late 1700s the settlers that formed the United States had constructed a system of racialized chattel slavery. In this system people of Afro-descent could be enslaved and enslaved persons were legally defined as chattel property with no human rights; not as people (Schneider and Schneider 2014).

Scholars have documented the various ways African Americans have been excluded from social life from 1619 to the present day (Gates 2019; Kendi 2017). And scholars have also documented the various ways African Americans have fought to be included into society through

social movements, legal and political action (Morris 1986; Jenkins, Jacobs, and Agnone 2003; Oliver 1989). But what is still needed is a way to talk about, in broad terms, both *how and why* African Americans have been accepted or marginalized in the broader American society over time.

There are moments in history, that whether realized or not in the moment, were paradigm shifts for how African Americans were incorporated into American society. That shift could lead towards equality or away from equality, but briefly defined, the justifications for the shift would come to explain how and why African Americans deserved a place at the table. This is racial incorporation. This chapter delineates different eras of racial incorporation based on crucial Supreme Court rulings and federal mandates that served to define the status of African Americans. Said another way, *racial incorporation is an analytical frame by which different policies and eras can be assessed for how much they allow for the full citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence of African Americans.*

Racial incorporation as an organizing concept is important because with it one is able to begin to make sense of the marginalized location of African Americans even in times when legal and political battles seem to be won. Understanding the *reasons* for racial incorporation over time and hearing from those who are living in each era helps to illuminate how racial incorporation is lived: as a move toward equality or away from it.

Different tactics can be used to further include African Americans or exclude African Americans from society. For example, after the Civil War, there was an impulse to fully incorporate newly freed persons as full citizens with both full political rights and redistribution of the land that they had worked to them from former slaveholders. Full incorporation was actively pursued but also met active violent resistance. *Plessey v Ferguson (1896)*, which

established the rationale of “separate, but equal,” essentially closed this era of contest by creating a new legal order of disincorporation. The result of racial incorporation defined by “separate, but equal” resulted in the constitutionality of segregation of African Americans away from the majority society. It was not until the case *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)* that *Plessey* was overturned, and a new era of racial incorporation began: integration. More will be said in the historical section about the transitions from slavery, to Reconstruction, to Jim Crow, to integration, to affirmative action, and finally, the focus of this chapter, the era of diversity.

Next, I will further outline what elements make up full racial incorporation, drawing parallels to an existing concept, immigrant incorporation.

### *Immigrant Incorporation*

Scholars of immigration have examined what they call immigrant incorporation to explain how immigrants go about incorporating into dominant social institutions, building their own social institutions and the tensions that arise from that process.

Sociological studies of immigrant incorporation have roots in the early Chicago School where William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki’s classic study of “The Polish Peasant” (1918) and Louis Worth’s studies of immigrant communities established the University of Chicago as a powerhouse in studies of race and ethnicity.

Given the interest in immigrant studies and then the later studies of African American life in Chicago, it is somewhat surprising those in the Chicago School did not apply some of the theories of what we would now call immigrant incorporation to the African American communities they observed. While the Chicago School did write about how African Americans were faring similar to or worse than immigrant groups, there was not an analytical correlate to

immigrant incorporation developed that captured the ways African Americans were or were not welcomed into American society.

One report that did compare the African American experience to the European immigrant experience was the Kerner Report of 1967 (Zelizer 2016). It was requested by the Johnson administration in response to the riots that had occurred in Watts and Detroit. The report drew conclusions and made recommendations on a wide array of issues including the need for community policing, improving conditions in the ghettos and how the media should respond to issues of civil unrest. In comparing African Americans and immigrants, the Kerner Report was interested in what elements provided a way out of poverty. They found that deindustrialization had limited “Negros” from getting low-skill jobs that European immigrants of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century had been able to step into easily. They found that racial discrimination against African Americans posed another great barrier to escaping from poverty as jobs once filled by African Americans had been filled by migrants from Europe. Immigrants also had access to the political sphere in ways that African Americans did not; being the heads of unions and political organizations. Much of the success of immigrants was based in them being viewed as White and it was therefore easier for them to enter spaces that African Americans could not (Ignatiev, 2009; Roediger 2006; Lieberon 1980).

Contemporary scholars of immigrant incorporation have attempted to develop general models of incorporation, but these models have failed to capture the complexity of the immigrant incorporation process. Immigrant incorporation is not merely assimilation or multiculturalism alone. And the field has struggled with how to articulate immigrant incorporation without the final step being assimilation into the dominant culture. On the other hand, the concept

of multiculturalism has had more to do with cultural exchange of immigrants with those in the majority racial group without underlying changes to racial hierarchies.

There are two primary ways to view the immigrant incorporation literature. On one side is the assimilation literature that in more contemporary iterations has focused more on assimilation as a process (and not necessarily a linear one). On the other side is literature about multiculturalism or what some scholars call diversity. Assimilation has similarities to a colorblind ideology that as an incorporation process seeks to flatten difference and coalesce to the majority culture. Assimilation has more to do with culture and the ability to learn the social mores of the dominant social sphere. Of course, the ability to mix in with the dominant culture can have great economic consequences. But something the assimilation literature does not account for is how immigrant groups are incorporated politically and how they can not only mix in with society but interact with the majority group with a sense of power.

Gary P. Freeman, professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin presents a new way to conceive of immigrant incorporation; what he calls a “radically dis-aggregated perspective that conceives of incorporation as the product of the intersection of migrant aspirations and strategies with regulatory frameworks in four domains - state, market, welfare, and culture,” (Freeman 2004:954). Another scholar, Suzanne Mettler, compares the political incorporation of men versus women in her book *Dividing Citizens*. Mettler defines incorporation as “the manner and extent to which people are included, consolidated, and organized as members of the political community” (Mettler 1998).

Freeman and Mettler have independently come to a definition of incorporation applied to immigrants and men and women, respectively, but no one has applied such an idea of incorporation to the particular situation of African Americans in the United States. One probable

reason is that African Americans are not immigrants. African Americans as a group differ from immigrants to the United States in that they have been in the United States since before its founding (along with the indigenous peoples). However, I am arguing that African Americans have been put in a secondary position in which they have had to fight for political, economic and social influence, similar to immigrants; often being seen as less integral to US society than some new immigrant groups who are categorized as White (Ignatiev 2009; Roediger 2006). My definition of racial incorporation is based in citizenship and the markers of the power to utilize the benefits of citizenship. It can be argued that African Americans have not achieved full citizenship and therefore, not full racial incorporation.

While research has been done about immigrant incorporation in American society and how immigrant incorporation has the potential to reshape patterns of ethnic and racial inequality, very little research has been done on how the patterns of immigrant incorporation could provide a way to understand the incorporation, or lack thereof, of African Americans in the United States. While African Americans are not immigrants, having lived in the United States for over 400 years, there are key markers of incorporation in the immigrant incorporation literature that African Americans are still fighting to achieve. The concept of racial incorporation is needed as an analytical tool that can provide a way of understanding the elements of full incorporation still outstanding and how the varying methods and justifications for incorporation over time have influenced the current high levels of documented and reported racism, racial discrimination and racial inequality African Americans experience.

Before moving on, I also want to distinguish between diversity and multiculturalism, as these two terms are often used synonymously by the general public. I define diversity by its use: it is an ideology that values difference, is often referring to racial difference in terms of Blacks

and Whites and is codified in legal documents as a compelling governmental interest. On the other hand, multiculturalism is associated with international identity and is defined as “the experience of having been exposed to and having internalized two or more cultures (Benet-Martínez 2012; Hong et al. 2000; Nguyen and Benet-Martínez 2007). President Barack Obama said in his inauguration speech that multiculturalism is a national strength (Obama 2009). And psychologists have written about the importance of multiculturalism (Hermans and Kempen 1998; LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton 1993). In terms of comparing multiculturalism and diversity, one could think of multiculturalism as the interacting of cultures. Someone could be seen as being multicultural if, for example, they know two different languages or have lived abroad. Diversity, on the other hand, is an institutional strategy and is about power. It is tied to legal debates about the place of African Americans in US society.

### **Elements of Full Racial Incorporation**

The primary elements that make up full racial incorporation are citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence. The selection of these four elements is found in a broad reading of the sociological and historical literature on the ways in which African Americans have been excluded from society over time. Examples of what Reskin calls the race-discrimination system includes residential location, schooling, employment, health, housing, credit, and justice (Reskin 2012). Each element will be taken in turn and I will rely on previous literature to give breadth and depth to how each element’s presence or lack thereof has been important to the history of African Americans in the United States. While each element is present in the literature on race, what is new here is juxtaposing all the elements into one concept

(racial incorporation) and using that concept to test different eras for their degree of full or partial racial incorporation.

### *Citizenship*

Sociologist T.H. Marshall gave the following definition of citizenship in 1950:

“Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (Marshall 1983 [1950]: 253). But, the first definition, by law, of citizenship in the United States was declared by the Naturalization Act of 1790. Citizens were defined as, “any alien being a free white person, who shall have resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for the term of two years, may be admitted to become a citizen thereof.” (Smith 2002). So, from the beginning, the definition of citizenship ruled out slaves, free Blacks (both groups considered property and not people) and White indentured servants who were not of European origin (Smith 2002). Since 1790 the designation of citizen brings with it the right to vote, the right to a “prompt, fair trial by a jury,” the right to run for elected office and the right to equal protection under the law (USCIS 2020). To be granted citizenship is a critical step to being a full member of a society, with the ability to speak out on things of importance to you and to do something about it through the act of voting or otherwise. But citizenship is a necessary, but not sufficient way to be racially incorporated. As will be outlined in the rest of the chapter, African American men received citizenship in 1868 through the ratification of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. But citizenship alone does not guarantee full racial incorporation.

### *Self-determination*

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, self-determination is “the process by which a person controls their own life” (Oxford University Press 2020). The ability of someone to make a choice, unhindered by external influence, is an essential part of human life and flourishing. Research psychologists Deci and Ryan have done prolific work on what elements fulfill self-determination and its role in various domains of life (e.g. health care, education, work, sport, religion, and psychotherapy). They find that self-determination, “enhance[s] versus undermine[s] intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and well-being. The findings have led to the postulate of three innate psychological needs--competence, autonomy, and relatedness-- which when satisfied yield enhanced self-motivation and mental health and when thwarted lead to diminished motivation and well-being” (Deci and Ryan 2000:68). Therefore, the ability of an African American to have control over the direction of their life is crucial to human flourishing. This fundamental aspect of human nature has been in one way or another thwarted for African Americans since their arrival in the United States.

### *Economic autonomy*

Economic autonomy is defined here as the ability to ability to find work commensurate to one’s level of skill and experience, the ability to make money, keep said money, purchase what one would like and see that money grow into wealth. Studies of African American economic activity have indicated discrimination in hiring (Pager 2007), disproportionate challenge in the ability to secure a loan (Black, Schweitzer and Mandell 1978; Yinger 2018) and lower overall levels of wealth accumulation finding its explanatory roots in the stolen labor of enslaved Blacks (Coates 2014), among other economic measures. African Americans have been boxed out of the

economy with such persistence that individuals and non-profits have begun to venture into an alternative economic framework, the solidarity economy. The solidarity economy “encourages governance that creates equity, shared prosperity, power, and ownership may help provide jobs, help build wealth, and yield other positive outcomes in African American communities,” (Bell et al. 2018). The ability to enter and maintain a place in the marketplace is crucial for full racial incorporation.

### *Social influence*

In this chapter I define social influence as the ability to choose who one wants to interact with, and when, under one’s own terms. And, for that choice to be respected. Social influence goes hand in hand with self-determination, but social influence includes an external element: how one chooses to interact with others. Having social influence can translate into financial power as well, leading to the accumulation of wealth; thereby economic power.

The presence of these four elements of full racial incorporation, or the lack thereof, will establish evidence for how included into the majority society African Americans are in a given era.

### **Where racial incorporation fits into the sociology of racism**

Many previous scholars have written about African Americans' place in American society and those studies have contributed to my understanding of racial incorporation. Important ideas and thinkers will be examined next, to get a sense of where the field has been and where I see racial incorporation sitting in relation to the current literature.

The consensus among sociologists is that race is a social construct. Meaning that race is not biologically real. But this fact has not stopped the proliferation of “an ideology of racial domination” (Wilson 1999) in which the presumed biological or cultural superiority of one or more racial groups is used to justify or prescribe the inferior treatment or social position(s) of other racial groups,” (Wilson 1999:14, quoted in Clair and Denis 2015). The effects of racism have very real appreciable effects of racial discrimination (the unequal treatment of races). This unequal treatment can lead to racial inequality, unequal outcomes in domains such as health, education, wealth, etc. (Clair and Denis 2015). But, as we will see in this review, “Contemporary racial inequalities and forms of discrimination are not always the immediate result of contemporary racism [rooted in domination],” (Pager and Shepherd 2008). This quote rings particularly true when considering the justification for diversity and diversity’s effects.

First, it is important to note that the Chicago School broadly conceptualized the term “group” to mean those persons who shared similar “social worlds.” One definition of “social worlds” used by Cressey is a shared “vocabulary, norms, values, activities, interests and ‘scheme of life’” (Short 1971:194). So, while my conceptualization of African Americans as it pertains to racial incorporation assumes a “group of African Americans,” I am using the broad definition of group used by the Chicago School and Wimmer (Wimmer 2008). When I refer to the group “African American,” I mean those who share types of interactions with the dominant population that are raced interactions. In other words, those who 1) self-identify as African American and/or 2) those who generally share the common phenotypic characteristics of African Americans that others recognize and group together as African American.

Early studies in the sociology of racism focused on overt forms of racism and saw racism as an individual problem; “one bad apple” (Alport 1954). But post-Civil Rights race scholarship has focused on the covert racism that happens both through individual micro-level processes of interpersonal interaction and racism that happens through macro-level processes of historical change over time. There is, however, interaction between the micro and the macro. And the theories most aligned with shedding light on racial incorporation combine the micro and the macro; the individual interactions and the structural, systemic forms of racism. Both of these process-oriented approaches will be explored in turn.

The micro approach to studying race begins with the work of social interactionism by W.E. B. DuBois. DuBois also did studies highlighting structural, systemic racism in his magnanimous study of the Black population in Philadelphia (DuBois 2008), but that will be examined in the following section on systemic racism. His contributions to social interactionism came through his work on “Double Consciousness” and “The Veil.” DuBois illuminates The Veil, or the gaze of White people, through which African Americans cannot escape. This Veil creates a Double Consciousness wherein African Americans understand themselves through their families and community on one hand and on the other hand through the interpretation of Whites. This work by DuBois has, since its first publishing in 1903, provided a way to understand social interactions between Whites and Blacks and how spaces where Whites and Blacks interact are influenced by this layer of race consciousness. While DuBois was doing scientific sociology in the late 1800s before the founding of the sociology department at the University of Chicago, he has not been given the credit for establishing sociology in the United States. Work by scholar Aldon Morris in his book *The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. DuBois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (2015) lays plain the work of DuBois and his rightful place in academic history.

Following DuBois' tradition on micro-processes, George Herbert Mead (1934) and his student Herbert Blumer (1986) are credited with studies under the header symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism posits that individuals interact with categories of things based on the meanings that have been ascribed to those things. Therefore, being able to scientifically observe interactions between people of different races allowed symbolic interactionists to understand the meaning ascribed to race through those interactions. Studies such as Erving Goffman's *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1958) that advanced the idea that individuals are engaged in a dramaturgical dance of everyday interactions. Professor Elijah Anderson follows in the social interactionist lineage with his studies of the *Cosmopolitan Canopy* (2011) and *white spaces* (2015). Anderson finds that white spaces are those where Whites dictate what is done in those spaces and gate-keep the space to allow only those designated to enter. There are, however, spaces called cosmopolitan canopies in which people of different races can interact civilly, but overlaid on top of the cordial interactions is a "gloss." The gloss is the understanding of civility which allows for the interaction to happen, but is also removable should the person of color do something which angles them above the racial hierarchy.

Scholars such as Michael Omi, Howard Winant, Eduardo Bonilla Silva and other structural sociologists have added to the social interactionists interpretation of racial interaction by bringing in a deeper understanding of the impact of social structures and institutions. These social structures concretize ideas of race into policies that serve to not only add meaning to the idea of race, but use that understanding to reify race into a thing that can be taken up by institutions and have a life of its own without individual actors taking on a racist attitude.

### *Racial Formation and Racial Projects*

Omi and Winant in their seminal book *Racial Formation in the United States From the 1960s to the 1990s* laid out a theory of racial formation that was seen as revolutionary at the time of its publishing. Omi and Winant asserted that rather than being an epiphenomenon that could be reduced to something like class or ethnicity, race was itself a central aspect of society and social interactions. Their theory of racial formation explored, "...how groups become racially identified, how racial identities and meanings changed over time, or how racial conflicts shape the American polity and society... (Omi and Winant 1986). In addition to presenting a theory that raised race to a level of proper analysis, Omi and Winant also introduced the idea of a racial project, "A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines. Racial projects connect what race *means* in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized*, based upon that meaning." They also outlined five types of racial projects influenced by the political environment: neoconservative, liberal, far right, new right and radical democratic.

The analytical tool of the racial project is useful for theorists of race because it allows us to study the complex of intentional and unintended ideas, actions and institutions that continually change the meaning of race in a society.

Omi and Winant's theory of racial formation and of racial projects allows us to analyze key moments in racial incorporation in the United States. Through this lens, it appears that there has not been a movement toward equality and social justice, but rather, a reiteration of the established racial hierarchy. Each era will be considered in turn, below, ending with a deeper

analysis of diversity as the latest iteration of racial projects with the effect, if not intention, of maintaining a racial hierarchy.

The two types of racial projects most relevant to the present diversity era context of the United States are neoconservative and liberal. Generally, neoconservative racial projects are structured around denying the significance of race as something that has an impact on the structure of society. Colorblind ideology is an example of a neoconservative racial project (Frankenberg 1993; Lewis, Chesler and Forman 2000). In contrast, a liberal racial project does recognize the significance of race and may even react to social movements or other activist-sponsored reform demands. Affirmative action-- a race-conscious remedy for past discrimination--is an example of a liberal racial project. Omi and Winant refer to affirmative action as a liberal racial project quite extensively in their writing. This chapter complicates the story of affirmative action as a liberal racial project given the present political landscape that surrounds race-conscious admissions policies or even race-neutral admissions policies that disproportionately admit more or less students of color.

Professor Eduardo Bonilla-Silva asserted, however, that Omi and Winant and other mainstream sociologists of race had not taken their analysis far enough. Bonilla-Silva wanted to make sense of how structural systems themselves were predicated on understandings of race. He proposed that racism should be studied using the concept of racialization. Racialization is “the process of constructing racial meaning, including the creation of racial categories and the signification of these categories in relation to people, objects, and ideas” (Clair and Denis 2015 referencing Murji and Solomos 2005; Satzewich 2011). The process of racialization defines affirmative action as a policy that directly benefited African Americans by way of the historical experience of discrimination. But in this era of diversity, where race is the “thing that shall not

be named,” racialization helps to illuminate the tacit understanding of diversity as referencing racial difference. Not only does diversity mean racial difference, but the process of racialization means diversity refers specifically to the “group” African Americans. African American individuals are deemed diverse, organizations with African American members are seen as diverse organizations. And in policies, legislation, and judicial proceedings around issues of diversity as an acceptable justification for affirmative action, African Americans are directly implicated in the results of those political actions.

The development of the concept racial incorporation was done using the ideas of social interactionists along with structural theorists of racism. Bringing in the historical context of racial interaction over time has allowed for the creation of an analytical tool that can trace the changes of racial interaction as a result of the reification of race by structures and institutions.

The next chapter will examine each historical era in turn, outlining important judicial decisions and political compromises that had a direct impact on African American life, culminating with the present diversity era.

## **Chapter 2: Historical Eras of African American Racial Incorporation in The United States**

This chapter will examine the historical eras of racial incorporation- slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, integration, affirmative action, and finally, diversity. In addition to identifying the eras, the chapter will identify the crucial Supreme Court decisions or political mandates (along with the crucial “how question” and “why question”) related to race that had an effect on the racial incorporation of African Americans. It ends with an examination of the sociological finding that characterized racial incorporation in that era. Finally, I more deeply examine how diversity entered into the common lexicon of Americans through its presence in the courts and what that means for racial incorporation of African Americans and the fight for equality.

Each section will include general information about the overall history of each era, delineate the crucial Supreme Court case or political compromise related to racial incorporation, how the case or compromise entered the Supreme Court or otherwise, the holding of the case and how it set the tone for racial incorporation justification and strategy and the result in racial incorporation for African Americans.

The decision to begin and end my designation of the years of eras is based on a historical reading of when particular policies had “on-the-ground” effect in the majority of the country, not necessarily when a particular law was passed, policy enacted, or case decided. It is important to note that beginning with Reconstruction when African Americans were granted significant political rights, there has been a series of backlash attacks on that progress that begin to occur posthaste. Once the historical eras move from times of more overt racism (pre-Civil Rights Movement) to more covert racism you will see that the years of the eras begin to overlap. This is

because reforms of the Civil Rights Movement targeted legislative and legal laws and policies. Once racial discrimination was banned on paper, discrimination moved underground. It became harder to detect, but still felt.

### *Slavery Era (1619-1863)*

The history of African Americans began in the United States in 1619 when English renegades intercepted a slave ship that had departed from Angola in West Africa, headed for the Spanish colonies. The English stole “20 odd Africans” from the ship and rerouted to Virginia. These were the first enslaved African Americans. The institution of slavery endured from 1619 through 1863 with the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, but in that time, particularly between 1787 and 1863 there were two particularly pertinent events that happened that have direct consequences on how African Americans were racially incorporated into the majority society. The two events were the 3/5 Compromise of 1787 and the Supreme Court case of *Dred Scott v Sandford* of 1857.

By the time of 1787, slavery in the Southern and Northern states had already been an established total institution that structured social, political and economic life for 168 years. “The Constitutional Convention meeting in Philadelphia, adopted the three-fifths compromise [also called the Compromise of 1787] regarding apportionment of the House of Representatives.... The three-fifths compromise sanctioned slavery more decidedly than any previous action at a national level,” (Lynd 1966). The “compromise” of the Compromise of 1787 stated that Southern states would be able to count slaves as 3/5 of a person (as opposed to counting slaves as zero which is what the Northern states preferred) for the purposes of increasing their representation in the Congress. The important thing to note in the compromise is that while

enslaved Africans were the collateral of the compromise, in no situation were they considered a full person in the eyes of the nation's Founding Fathers. Given the standing of those enslaved by the Constitutional Convention, the results of the case of Dred Scott should come as no surprise.

The Dred Scott case came before the Supreme Court in 1856 when Dred Scott, who was enslaved in Missouri, but moved to Louisiana and Illinois (free states), claimed he should be free once he moved back to Missouri. In the case, the majority (7-2) held that 'a negro, whose ancestors were imported into [the U.S.], and sold as slaves,' whether enslaved or free, could not be an American citizen and therefore did not have standing to sue in federal court," (*Dred Scott v. Sandford* 1857). What is curious about the majority opinion is that it made reference to the "why question," that Dred Scott was not considered free because he was a Negro, but the case was ultimately not decided based on the why question. The case was actually decided for the defendant, Sanford, because the Supreme Court decided it did not have jurisdiction over the case and so the case was dismissed based on procedural grounds (i.e. the how question). What Justice Taney wanted to show through the holding of the court was to make clear that "Negros," no matter their enslaved status, could not be citizens. Indeed, Taney said, African Americans and their decedents were "altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations," and were "so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect," and that "that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit," (*Dred Scott v. Sandford* 1857). This was a major blow to the abolitionist movement and was a significant source of kindling, set for the Civil War to come. Using the four elements of full racial incorporation (citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy, and social influence), African Americans in the slavery era possess none of these elements in any significant way.

### *Reconstruction Era (1863-1877)*

Reconstruction is defined as the period from 1863-1877 bookended by the Emancipation Proclamation on one end and the Compromise of 1877 on the other. Reconstruction is the name given to the time after the Civil War when the United States was putting itself back together after the ravages of the Civil War. It was also the time when the Congress was taking decisive measures to bring Freedmen into society. This included the establishment of the Freedman's Bureau to help the formerly enslaved begin their life of freedom. Reconstruction also saw the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments to the Constitution; together called the Civil War Amendments or the Reconstruction Amendments. These amendments, respectively, abolished slavery, provided citizenship rights for all persons born in the US along with equal protection of the laws for all persons and prohibited discrimination in voting rights of citizens on the basis of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude," (Gates 2019). African Americans held elected office in the Congress from Southern as well as Northern states.

But Reconstruction was also a time when whites were asking the question, "What Shall We Do with The Negro?" (Mitchell 1865). Historian Paul Escott's book of the same name illuminates the life of this question by chronicling the life of Abraham Lincoln. Escott found in Lincoln, not an emancipator of the slaves, but rather someone whose main aim was to restore Rebel states to the Union, no matter the costs. Escott, speaking of the title question, says that the question was "deeply flawed..., reflecting in its language the assumptions that African Americans were objects... and that white people were entitled to decide their future" (Escott 2009: p.xviii).

The federal compromise most important to the story of racial incorporation in this era was the Compromise of 1877. This was a compromise, made behind closed doors, between moderate Southern Democrats and allies of the presumed winner of the 1876 presidential

election, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes. The compromise was that Hayes would be named the winner as long as Republicans would withdraw all the federal troops in the South that had been deployed to protect the Freedmen after slavery. The “why question” and the “how question” one could see posed in the question, “What shall we do with the Negro.” And the answer to the how question was, return them back to their former place in the social order and the answer to the “why question” was, because African Americans are not deserving to be citizens in the same way Whites were citizens. This compromise ended the social experiment of Reconstruction and ushered in the next era, the Jim Crow era, which saw even more restrictions on African Americans.

If we were to examine the Reconstruction era for its relationship to full racial incorporation, we see that the era ranks highly on the scale. While racial incorporation was not uniform across the country, Reconstruction did offer significant rights to African Americans that were not seen previously. The Thirteenth and Fifteenth amendments provided citizenship and the right to vote. For the first time since 1619, African Americans were provided a way to choose their own destiny and were protected by federal troops to do so. African Americans were able to earn wages in the free market. And African Americans ran for and won elections of public office, voted for by both White and Black peers. Reconstruction was truly a unique moment in American history, but it did not last long. As historian Terry Anderson writes, “The Civil War had changed the U.S. Constitution, but not the customs nor the feelings” (Anderson 2004:2). However, the taste of freedom for African Americans during Reconstruction was sweet and would not be soon forgotten.

### *Jim Crow Era (1865-1968)*

The Jim Crow era is defined as the period from 1865-1968, the end of the Civil War up until the end of the Civil Rights Movement. The reason for the unorthodox dates of the Jim Crow era is because I am basing the beginning and end of the era on what historians have said about when discriminatory policies were, in practice, used for the governance of society. Although Reconstruction was just beginning after the end of the Civil War in April 1865, by the end of that year Mississippi had passed Black Codes that put undue pressure on Freedmen to prove employment and South Carolina constrained Freedmen's work options to that of either farmer or servant (Blackmon 2009). The Jim Crow era goes until 1968 when the Supreme Court ruled in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* that segregated school systems need to be dismantled "root and branch" after segregation had been overturned with *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

The Supreme Court case that set the tone for racial incorporation in the Jim Crow era was *Plessy v. Ferguson*, decided in 1896. In this case, Plessy, a man from Louisiana who was "seven-eighths Caucasian [and one-eighth Black]" sat in a train car designated for Whites. Louisiana had enacted the Separate Car Act that required Black passengers to sit separate from White passengers. When Plessy refused to move he was arrested and he and an activist group took the case to court (*Plessy v. Ferguson 1896*). Plessy's attorneys argued that the Separate Car Act violated the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. In other words, they argued the "how question," that how the Separate Car Act was implemented violated the amendments in question. In a 7-1 decision for Ferguson, the justices answered the how question said the Louisiana law was constitutional because the Fourteenth Amendment provided for the "absolute equality for the races before the law," but that separate spaces did not necessarily imply inferiority of Blacks.

Therefore, the justices were quite clear that the answer to the “why question” was that, “segregation did not in itself constitute unlawful discrimination,” (*Plessy v. Ferguson 1896*). The result of this decision was that African Americans were *lawfully* excluded from using spaces used by Whites. Most often the spaces designated for Blacks were not equal to those designated for Whites (Anderson et al. 2004). Whether the justices knew that would be the result when they handed down their opinion, the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case ushered in a decades-long precedent that “separate was equal.”

Testing the Jim Crow era and the result of *Plessy v Ferguson* on all the elements of full racial incorporation we see the era was far less than equal. While African Americans did have citizenship rights and the promise of equal protection granted through the Fourteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court in *Plessy* went back on that promise by saying segregation for African Americans constituted equality. In terms of the elements of self-determination and social influence, African Americans were not sanctioned to go where they pleased or utilize resources such as educational institutions, stores, religious institutions, housing and even hospitals. In terms of economic autonomy, African Americans were shut out of well-paying jobs based on race, denied housing loans through red-lining and denied business loans (Rothstein 2017). Indeed, T. Arnold Hill, an African American leader of the Urban League, referring to the 1930s for African Americans was quoted as saying, “At no time in the history of the Negro since slavery, had their economic and social out-look seemed so discouraging” (Anderson 2004:10). In the Jim Crow era racism and discrimination was overt and supported by the federal government. The dream of full racial incorporation was just that, merely a dream.

### *Integration (1954-1978)*

The integration era includes the years 1954 to 1978; going from the decision of the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 up until the Supreme Court decision in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* in 1978. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, led by Attorney Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, had brought cases to court that challenged the legitimacy of segregation and the “separate, but equal” doctrine set by *Plessey v. Ferguson* (1896). But it was the *Brown* case about African American children being denied admission to public elementary schools that turned the tide of the Supreme Court.

The NAACP legal team knew they were unlikely to win the case by bringing a case on the “why question” of why the “separate, but equal” rationale made African Americans second-class citizens. Instead they knew the way to win the case was to focus on the “how question”: showing how separate schools for African Americans were indeed, not equal to those of Whites. Chief Justice Earl Warren delivering the unanimous decision of the Court said that “separate, but equal” facilities based on race are inherently unequal and that they violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (*Brown v. Board of Education*). The result of the *Brown* case was a major step forward toward full racial incorporation in both its symbolic meaning and as a rallying call for the Civil Rights Movement. Even so, some law and society scholars have written about *Brown* not having had the impact on actionable change on integration of schools that many people think it had in retrospect (Rosenberg 2007). But other scholars in sociology have disputed that claim saying *Brown* and the subsequent *Brown II* case focused on enforcement of school integration did have a deep and lasting impact that bolstered the Civil Rights Movement and put discussions of racial equality on the national radar (Morris 1986).

What is clear is that the implementation of integration laws and policies took effect at varying speeds across the country (Orfield and Yun 1999). And a report from the Harvard Civil Rights Project found that American schools “were more segregated in 2000 than in 1970 when busing for desegregation began” (Southern Poverty Law Center 2004; Orfield and Yun 1999).

In addition, as a result of pressure from the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the subsequent Voting Rights Act of 1965 were signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson (Cashman 1991). The Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination in public spaces and employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin and the Voting Rights Act prohibited discriminatory practices preventing African Americans from voting. These two pieces of legislation were a direct blow to Jim Crow laws and policies, especially those in the South, and upheld the legitimacy of African American’s Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment rights (Hersch and Bennett Shinall 2015).

The combination of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case and the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were two backbone pieces of the integration era that made it possible for African Americans to enter spaces formerly inhabited only by Whites. In terms of testing the era against full racial incorporation the integration era most definitely made strides in terms of legal citizenship (e.g. the protection of African American’s right to vote). On the measure of self-determination and social influence there was partial success as Jim Crow laws became harder to justify using the “separate, but equal” rationale. But, as history scholars have noted, the Jim Crow did not go down without a fight and based on location, Whites rejected the Civil Rights Act and made it difficult for African Americans to take full advantage of their newfound freedom (Kendi 2017). Economic autonomy increased for African Americans during the

integration era as the Civil Rights Act did provide legislation for protection against employment discrimination.

### *Affirmative Action (1941-2003)*

Many other historians and sociologists date the start of the affirmative action era at the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but I choose to start the era in 1941. I trace the early activism work of A. Phillip Randolph, which directly lead to a crucial compromise between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and opponents of reform.

In the 1940s the United States was engaged in World War II and there were plentiful jobs in the defense industry. African American activists wanted some of those defense jobs to go to Black workers. Black activist A. Phillip Randolph had the idea to hold a 100,000-person march in Washington DC to protest the discrimination of African Americans to fight in the integrated Armed Forces abroad and for domestic African Americans to have a fair share at defense jobs (Anderson 2004). Historian Lerone Bennett in his book *Confrontation Black and White* writes, “Up until then (the 1940s) the dominant issues in Negro life were poll tax legislation, anti-lynching legislation, ‘separate-but-equal’ school facilities and the white primary.” But, after 1941, the “Negro strategy would be based implicitly and explicitly, on the necessity for decisive intervention by the federal government. It would be based, too, on the need for unrelenting pressure on the government” (Bennett 1966).

These Black activists were advocating for something called Fair Employment Practices (FEP). Those supporting FEP supported a, “commitment to the idea that the government should take serious steps to make sure that jobs—and the measure of economic security that they conferred—were not denied to anyone on account of race, religion, or national orientation”

(Chen 2009:6). In terms of the elements of full racial incorporation, FEP advocated self-determination and economic autonomy.

But there were groups of conservative political actors from the business community, Northern Whites and conservative Republicans who were opposed to FEP and were also in the ear of President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR). The implementation of FEP would not only reallocate jobs from White men, but it would begin to support full racial incorporation; something that was fiercely opposed by this conservative bloc. As an alternative to FEP this conservative bloc instead advocated for something they called affirmative action. Scholar Anthony Chen finds that affirmative action as it was conceptualized by conservative actors focused on monitoring compliance with government regulations (or demonstrating compliance with self-regulation) rather than on the enforcement of the law by administrative agencies. So, affirmative action, while today is known as a liberal policy, was in fact started by conservatives. But the way affirmative action was conceptualized was not with full racial incorporation in mind, but rather in opposition to that; as a way to shuttle claims of discrimination into a government agency without enforcement or remedial powers.

To avoid a 100,000-person march set to descend on Washington, DC, in 1941 FDR started the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) and issued Executive Order 8802 that declared there, “shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in *defense industries* or *government* because of race, creed, color, or national origins” (Anderson 2004:22). This was the first version of what we today would call affirmative action (although the words “affirmative action” would not be used until the issuance of Executive Order 10925 by President John F. Kennedy in 1961). The signing of the executive order and start of the FEPC was a pragmatic compromise between liberal and conservative blocs that while on its face appeared to support

FEP, was still based in a conservative logic. EO 8802 was implemented in treacherous times. Treacherous times for the nation as a whole with World Wars impending, as well as US presidents walking lightly over complicated issues of race relations with fed up African American activists on one side and powerful Southern Democrats on the other. One wrong move and another civil war could have erupted. With this historical background we can make more sense of how FDR's executive order did not go nearly as far towards full racial incorporation as Black activists had wanted.

This self-regulating affirmative action model has made it difficult to directly enforce non-discrimination against African Americans and that in some ways helps to explain affirmative action's staying power in American politics since the 1940s. Affirmative action has provided a way into the middle class for some individual African Americans, but that position is more tenuous than for White families (Bowser 2007). Affirmative action as a policy has not had the effects on full racial incorporation that those Black activists supporting FEP had in mind.

In addition, the language of non-discrimination most commonly used in the 1940s by Black activists was used in FDR's executive order and every subsequent federal order of affirmative action since. This non-discrimination language used by Black activists was not asking for special preference, but for protection of their rights from the government. Affirmative action based in racial preferences most commonly thought of today is controversial precisely because it includes racial preferences. But special preferences were not what was desired by Black activists in the 1940s. Full racial incorporation was desired. And conservative actors could not get behind a policy that would incorporate African Americans into society in the same ways they themselves were. In other words, full racial incorporation is scorned even more than racial preferences by conservative political actors.

Despite advances and setbacks, African Americans as a group were fundamentally different as a result of World War II. Esteemed Black sociologist E. Franklin Frazier posited that World War II marked the point where, "The Negro was no longer willing to accept discrimination in employment and in housing without protest" (Frazier 1957:682). Blacks saw that not even fighting for the United States in a foreign war would justify their full incorporation. True democracy would have to be fought for domestically. World War II was an important catalyst for engaging the imagination of the everyday African American person across the nation to broader visions of freedom and self-determination. Thus, in the ensuing two decades on from FDR's executive order for affirmative action the Civil Rights Movement ushered in a shift in federal legislation related to employment discrimination, the likes of which had not been seen since Reconstruction. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 cemented non-discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

After civil rights reforms of the 1960s, the explicit, systematic and institutional racism of the pre-Civil Rights Movement was becoming faux pas and a new covert or "dog whistle," racism was becoming the norm. It was in this context that the word discrimination changed definitions away from something that happens to Blacks to which a corrective remedy must be applied, and toward a definition of discrimination that was covertly changed to mean reverse discrimination against Whites. As the affirmative action era morphed into the diversity era in the 1970s the language of "against discrimination by race" that was written in the context of African Americans experiencing racism turns discrimination into something used in the court of law by Whites to claim reverse discrimination.

White plaintiffs such as Bakke claimed he was being discriminated against by race. The definition of discrimination changes from discrimination *against* African Americans to

discrimination between Whites and Blacks (in its literal sense of one thing being selected over another). More will be said about the *Bakke* case in the following section on the diversity era.

The question still remains, how did affirmative action make its way to higher education when it started in the realm of employment? And how did diversity become the primary justification for affirmative action in higher education? The story of race-conscious affirmative action moving to higher education has not been researched extensively (there is a forthcoming book from Stulberg and Chen about this history), but there are some key things that are known about the trajectory of the diversity rationale that are particularly relevant to the story of racial incorporation and the presence of diversity-work.

#### *Diversity (1960-Present)*

While the word diversity is commonplace in the American lexicon today, it was not always that way. Prior to the 1960s diversity was commonly seen in discussions of investment portfolios (e.g. “As an investor in the stock market you want a diverse portfolio to mitigate risk”) (Edelman, Fuller, and Mara-Drita 2001). But a new way of talking about race was emerging. Diversity began to take on meaning regarding groups of people, particularly African Americans, with regards to racial integration (Edelman et al 2001). Ellen Berry in her book *The Enigma of Diversity* writes that, “Although the keyword diversity emerged in the late 1960s, it was neither a cornerstone of civil rights reforms nor a principle of decisions [in cases about affirmative action in employment]. Its earliest supporters were White college administrators and community activists trying to encourage Black integration into exclusively White universities and neighborhoods” (Berrey 2015:30). Further, scholar Jerome Karabel in his book *The Chosen* notes that the leaders of universities pressed for the use of a diversity justification for affirmative

action in order to discourage legal opposition from conservative groups and alumni and to keep their admissions process out of view of the federal government (Karabel 2005).

Stulberg and Chen (2014) also find a pattern of the language of diversity in higher education, but they note an earlier genesis of the term diversity being used. Other sociologists and political scientists generally view universities adoption of such policies as a response to the “riots” in Watts and other northern cities and protests by students on campus as the impetus for the adoption (Anderson 2004; Bowen and Bok 1998; Douglass 2007; Duffy and Goldberg 1998; Orlans 1992; Skrentny 2002; Wilkinson 1979). But Stulberg and Chen present newer research that centers the impact of the Southern Civil Rights Movement as the more important factor in Northern universities adopting race-conscious affirmative action (Stulberg and Chen 2014). In addition, Stulberg and Chen also find there were two waves of adoption of affirmative action by universities in the North. The first wave came between 1960-1965 and was influenced by the Civil Rights Movement and promoted by liberal college administrators’ beliefs. Some universities in the first wave were Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, UCLA and Michigan. The second wave of implementation was from 1965-1969 in response to the Watts Riots and student protests (Stulberg and Chen 2014). Some universities in the second wave were Yale, Princeton, UC Berkeley, Northwestern and Williams College.

The distinction between the first and second wave is important for the story of racial incorporation, because when observing the why and how question of the adoption of racial incorporation strategies in each era, a strategy can either be demanded and promoted by those on the side of racial justice or those against. What Stulberg and Chen show is that race-conscious affirmative action in the context of higher education was not necessarily a policy that was

directly advocated by the Civil Rights Movement, but that the moral ideas of the Civil Rights Movement did influence liberal college administrators who served as early adopters of affirmative action. In addition, the adoption of affirmative action was, no doubt, influenced by affirmative action policies that had been applied to government business contractors in the two decades prior.

By the mid 1970s, the Civil Rights Movement was fading into the rear-view mirror for most Americans and the results of legal and social battles fought were coming to fruition. By the 1990s organizations appear to have incorporated the idea of diversity: “a 1991 survey of 406 organizations showed that 63% of those organizations provided diversity training for managers; 39% provided diversity training for employees; 50% provided a statement on diversity from top management; and 31% had a diversity task force” (Edelman et al. 2001:1590, quoting Winterle 1992). It was in this context that a case about affirmative action involving a White student rejected from the University of California Davis Medical School entered the national spotlight. This case would come to cement diversity’s place in the legal and common lexicon in the United States.

### *Bakke*

The case *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) was a case in which a White man had applied twice for admission to University of California Davis Medical School (UC Davis) and was rejected both times. He claimed that his admissions spot was taken by minority applicants. UC Davis reserved sixteen places in its incoming class for minorities to remedy and redress decades-long exclusions of racial minorities from the medical profession.

Bakke and his representation claimed that he was excluded from admission to UC Davis solely because of his race. He claimed that the UC Davis Medical School admissions procedure violated the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Therefore, Bakke brought the case under reasons of the "why question": Bakke was saying giving preference to racial minorities through an admissions program was fundamentally violating his rights.

What is interesting to note here is that both the Fourteenth Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were passed as a direct result of activism on the part of African Americans and are seen as pivotal moments in legislative history for social justice concerning African Americans. Now, in this case we see Bakke using the language of this amendment and act in the opposite way it was intended. In other words, against the "spirit of the law." One possible reason for this unorthodox usage of civil rights legislation for what amounts to a claim of "reverse discrimination," is presented here. As mentioned above in the discussion about Fair Employment Practices and affirmative action, those activists advocating for FEP were not advocating for racial preferences, but rather *enforceable* non-discrimination measures by a government agency that had power to enforce those measures. What affirmative action proposed was also non-discrimination, but *without any enforceable* measures to protect African Americans and other racial groups historically discriminated against. The group Bakke is a part of, White males, has never been systematically racially discriminated against in the United States. Therefore, claiming violation of rights under two civil rights laws is a claim the Supreme Court justices could have seen through for what it was: an affront to the work of the Civil Rights Movement.

UC Davis Medical School stated four goals that motivated their admissions procedure:

1) reducing the deficit in racial minority doctors created through the discrimination in the medical field, 2) remedying societal discrimination, 3) improving health care services for underserved communities and 4) “obtaining the educational benefits that flow from an ethnically diverse student body,” (Berrey 2015:69). Therefore, in terms of either the “why question” or the “how question” of UC Davis’s use of race-conscious affirmative action, all four reasons presented are an answer to the “why question.” In terms of racial incorporation, the first three reasons support full self-directed racial incorporation that will encourage social justice, remedy past discrimination of minority groups and will contribute resources directly to those minority groups most affected by racial discrimination. The final diversity rationale, the educational benefits that flow from diversity, is different than the first three. The diversity rationale is outward facing, meaning it contributes directly to UC Davis and the education of other non-racial minority students.

In legal terms, the first three reasons presented by UC Davis are about protecting the Fourteenth Amendment rights of racial minorities and they were also in line with the spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The fourth reason, the diversity rationale, was new as a legal rationale. And the diversity rationale, rather than the first three, was favored by Justice Lewis Powell as the most legitimate one and constitutional under the Equal Protection Clause. The diversity rationale condoned by Justice Powell would become *the only* acceptable way to do civil rights. His choice would change the nature of racial incorporation in higher education for the next fifty years. While some saw Powell as saving affirmative action (Jeffries 2003), I am arguing Powell transformed affirmative action into something we now call “diversity”; policies that all at once demanded something of those individuals affirmative action was meant to help and policies that

lacked even more quantifiable enforcement than the original affirmative action universities were trying to use to increase their numbers of students of color.

Something else Justice Powell did in his opinion in Bakke was to apply the test of strict scrutiny to affirmative action for the first time (Powell 1977). The application of strict scrutiny to a law is the toughest test to pass (as opposed to intermediate scrutiny). It means the law in question must further a “compelling governmental interest and must have narrowly tailored the law to achieve that interest” (Cornell Law School). Prior to Bakke, strict scrutiny had commonly been applied to laws that were suspected to be discriminatory against African Americans. Bakke was the first time strict scrutiny was being applied in terms of “reverse discrimination.” No organization would want to put themselves in danger of a lawsuit and proving strict scrutiny of one’s affirmative action policies. And with Justice Powell’s demand to prove strict scrutiny, the court positioned itself as at odds to any form of racial incorporation that did not include explicit benefits of “equal protection to all,” even though the spirit of affirmative action and the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment were for the remedy of discriminatory practices against people of color; particularly African Americans. The court, whether realizing it or not, by ignoring the spirit of the law of race conscious affirmative action and the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment made the Supreme Court a pawn of the conservative movement.

So, while some could say Powell saved affirmative action through the use of diversity, when applying the test of full racial incorporation another story emerges entirely. Powell’s application of strict scrutiny to UC Davis’s affirmative action policy established a precedent of strict scrutiny of laws either established by governments or interpreted by organizations as a way to bring African Americans into the broader society. Ultimately, I would argue, the introduction of the application of strict scrutiny did more harm than good in terms of establishing equal

protection and maintaining social influence for African Americans. Laws concerning race, meant to increase African American's full racial incorporation, are now viewed with such suspicion that it is difficult to consider race in any law or policy. That began with Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke*. Additionally, in one stroke of the pen Powell reoriented the focus on justice for African Americans to the need for African Americans to be beneficial to governmental and organizational interests; not to the self-determination of African Americans to build a life they desired.

### *Gratz*

In 1995, two White residents of Michigan applied for admission to the University of Michigan. They were not competitive enough for admission and were rejected. The two students sued the University because the university used a race conscious admissions protocol in which they granted twenty points to students of an underrepresented minority group. The case *Gratz v. Bollinger* made it to the Supreme Court and was decided in favor of the plaintiff in 2003. The Rehnquist court upheld the individual consideration of race in admissions precedent of *Bakke*, but struck down what they called a quota system being used by the University of Michigan undergraduate admissions office. Again, like in *Bakke*, the violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was cited as evidence of the policy's unconstitutionality. The Rehnquist court, following the precedent set in *Bakke*, also applied the test of strict scrutiny and found Michigan's policy was not sufficiently narrowly tailored to meet the strict scrutiny standard.

Indeed, in the majority opinion of *Gratz* the Court said:

“It is by now well established that ‘all racial classifications reviewable under the Equal Protection Clause must be strictly scrutinized.’ *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña* ...

This ‘standard of review ... is not dependent on the race of those burdened or benefited by a particular classification.’ ... Thus, ‘any person, of whatever race has the right to demand that any governmental actor subject to the Constitution justify any racial classification subjecting that person to unequal treatment under the strictest of judicial scrutiny.’

(*Adarand* 2003:270, referenced in Moore and Bell 2007).

However, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg wrote a dissenting opinion to the majority, saying that there was no evidence Michigan tried to limit any racial group from admissions and therefore it did not violate the Equal Protection Clause (*Gratz* 2003). Justice Breyer, while ultimately joining the concurring opinion did make the point that there are differences in terms of the Equal Protection Clause between policies of inclusion and exclusion; the former being in line with the spirit of the Clause. Therefore, what Ginsberg, and less so Breyer, did was attempt to reclaim the spirit and intention of the Equal Protection Clause, so as to limit its use by those claiming reverse discrimination (i.e. exclusion). Unfortunately, this point made by Ginsberg and Breyer has not been pushed forward in the holdings of subsequent affirmative action cases.

### *Grutter*

Decided along with the *Gratz* case, the case *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) was upheld by the Supreme Court and, again, upheld *Bakke* as a precedent. The Supreme Court affirmed the University of Michigan Law School’s admissions policy under the test of strict scrutiny because it used a holistic review of individual students and considered race as one of many factors of diversity. The Supreme Court held that it “does not prohibit the law school’s narrowly tailored

use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body,” (*Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). The court was reiterating the staying power of the diversity rationale post-Bakke. Therefore, between 1978 and 2003 an entire academic literature developed on the “benefits of diversity.” This “benefits of diversity” literature would be relied on heavily to support the argument of diversity as a compelling governmental interest in *Gratz* and *Grutter* (Allen, 2005; Bowen & Bok, 1998; Grieger & Tolliver, 2001; Gurin, 1999; Hurtado, 2005; Hurtado, et al. 1998; Chang, et al. 2003). That literature posits that diversity on college campuses provides 1) greater learning, 2) increased interpersonal competencies, 3) greater self-confidence among students, 4) fewer irrational prejudices, 5) greater gains in critical thinking, and 6) greater involvement in civic and community service (Worthington, et al. 2008; Antonio, 2001; Blimling, 2001; Chang, 1996; Gurin, 1999; Hurtado, 2001; Smith & Associates, 1997).

The apparent benefits posed to flow from diversity sound favorable on their face, but a survey of the “benefits of diversity” literature reveals a lack of emphasis on the benefits provided to underrepresented minorities. There is a sense that for racial minorities, saving affirmative action, no matter by what rationale, provided “the” benefit to racial minorities: access to predominantly White spaces of higher education. The “benefits of diversity” literature was largely about the benefits that White students would receive by way of being on campus with racial minorities. That somehow, by way of proximity or interaction, White students would learn from the experience of students of color. Yet, little is said about how the benefits will be provided or what the cost will be for the students of color, primarily African Americans, who provide said benefits. This issue of who provides the benefits of diversity will be addressed in chapter four of this study.

*Fisher*

In 2008, a White student Abigail Fisher was rejected from the University of Texas Austin (UT Austin). Eleven years earlier the Texas legislature passed a law that the top ten percent of graduating seniors in Texas gained automatic admission. Fisher was not in the top ten percent. The rest of the incoming class at UT Austin was decided using a holistic view of individual applications, race being one of the factors considered. UT Austin had implemented the ten percent law expressly to increase diversity at its flagship university after the Fifth Circuit's decision in *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996) banned the use of race-conscious admissions (Chapa and Horn 2007).

Fisher sued UT Austin and the district court, and the Fifth Circuit Court of the US Court of appeals decided in favor of UT Austin. Fisher appealed to the Supreme Court and in 2013. The question at hand was does the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment permit the consideration of race in undergraduate admissions decisions? While the Court ruled 7-1 in favor of Fisher in the case *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2013), (Ginsberg being the only dissenting opinion) the majority said race was permissible as a factor in admissions as long as it passed the standard of strict scrutiny. Incidentally, the Court said the lower court did not apply the test of strict scrutiny so ultimately the case was remanded or "punted back" to the lower court. However, the majority opinion of the Court did say in order for the UT Austin admissions policy to pass strict scrutiny UT Austin had to prove there was no other race-neutral alternative that would supply the compelling interest of diversity. Once the lower court applied strict scrutiny, they ruled in favor of UT Austin, Fisher appealed to the Supreme Court again (the new case is now called Fisher II) and the Court ruled in favor of UT Austin 4-3.

The Supreme Court concluded UT Austin had narrowly tailored their admissions policy to the compelling state interest of diversity “as a concrete and precise goal that is neither a quota of minority students nor an amorphous idea of diversity” (Fisher II, 2016). The Court also determined UT Austin had presented a thoughtful examination of alternative race-neutral policies. Dissenting justices (John Roberts, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito) made arguments that the Equal Protection Clause prohibits the use of race in college admissions and that race-neutral policies that take into account life experience could serve as proxies for issues of racial diversity. Data presented in the previous sections on the sociology of discrimination and racism provides evidence that these dissenting arguments do not hold water. Firstly, the spirit of the Fourteenth Amendment was toward inclusion of disenfranchised racial minorities. And over the course of the 1940s to the 1970s the definition of discrimination morphed from a tacit understanding of the discrimination applying to racial minorities to the term being usurped by conservatives claiming discrimination against Whites. Secondly, with regard to Justice Alito claiming race-neutral policies can increase racial diversity, sociologists have demonstrated that race is not an epiphenomenon of class or gender. Race in and of itself is socially constructed and has consequences that can be tied back to race alone (Bonilla-Silva 1997).

To take a step back from the facts of the case and look at this through the lens of full racial incorporation, the Court didn’t have to make an opinion on the Fisher case at all since it ultimately remanded the case back to the lower court. But, the fact that they did form an opinion is significant. In some ways, the majority opinion did “save” affirmative action through diversity to see another day. However, what the majority opinion did was renew its commitment to applying strict scrutiny to cases involving race-based inclusion practices. As was stated in the Bakke section of this chapter, before Bakke strict scrutiny was applied to cases where there was

suspicion to believe there was discrimination happening against historically discriminated groups (Berrey 2015). The fact that the Fisher Court remanded the case back to the lower court on the grounds of that appeals court not applying the test of strict scrutiny lets us know that the test is now absolutely necessary when race is involved; even if it is for a policy promoting inclusion. The other thing the majority opinion did was make it even more difficult for universities to make the argument that they needed to include race-consciousness as part of their admissions policy.

In essence, a university now has to prove it has exhausted all other options for achieving diversity that are race-neutral. This is an impossibly high standard that was even rejected in the *Grutter* case (*Grutter*, 2003). This standard is so high that universities may turn to race-neutral policies in order to not have their policies tested by the strict scrutiny standard if taken to court. The court pushing universities to either 1) have race-neutral policies or 2) prove they have exhausted all race-neutral options to achieve racial diversity backs the university into a corner. And education scholars Garces and Jayakumar have shown that race neutral policies do not increase, indeed decrease, racial diversity and are insufficient alternatives to increase racial diversity (Garces and Jayakumar 2014). In addition, when the ability to address race in admissions is prohibited, it stifles administrators from addressing race and racism on campus; resulting in "colormute language" that prevents discussion about how opportunities are not equitable. This colormute language allows racial biases to go on unchecked (Jayakumar, Garces, and Park 2018). And researchers have also shown that the best way to increase overall race and class incorporation is to have incorporation programs that focus on race and class (Reardon, et al. 2017; Espinosa, Orfield and Gaertner 2015).

And, as I will show in chapter four, the buck does not stop with the university or a policy on paper. The brunt of the Supreme Court's ever narrowing allowance of race-conscious policies

puts the burden on individuals of color, African Americans in particular, to supply the educational benefits of racial diversity without any acknowledgement of how the effects of racism limits numbers of students admitted and negatively affects their time on campus.

In terms of full racial incorporation, the effect of the majority opinion of the *Fisher* case makes it clear that creating equal protection for African Americans will be harder moving forward. Such narrow means of considering such an important social construct such as race means it will be harder to get African Americans the support they need to be equal citizens in this country. The majority opinion also makes it harder for African American students to be self-determining because their role as “providers of the educational benefits of diversity” is codified in the law. As stated above in the section on diversity as a commodity, diversity has economic returns. But the economic returns are primarily contained within non-underrepresented minorities. For African Americans, economic autonomy in the diversity era is limited by how much diversity they can provide for others; not in pursuing economic autonomy for him- or herself. They are not viewed first and foremost as students, but as bearers of racial diversity that can be proven in a court of law. This social position on a campus does not grant them equal social influence compared to other White students who are not tasked with providing a particular type of racial diversity.

### *Harvard*

In 2015, the group Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) brought a case against Harvard University claiming its consideration of race in its undergraduate admissions policy violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They (SFFA) want to see race-conscious admissions replaced by class-conscious admissions. The SFFA was no stranger to bringing cases to the Supreme Court about race (SFFA was the sponsoring foundation for *Fisher I* and *Fisher II*).

What makes the case against Harvard unique is that instead of fronting an individual White student claiming reverse discrimination, this time SFFA brought a case against the use of race in the name of Asian Americans; a racial minority in the general population, yet a majority in elite universities like Harvard. In 2015, Asian Americans made up 20% of the student population at Harvard, compared to a 6% population nationwide (*Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard 2019*: 126). Asian Americans, while a commonly used racial category, do not constitute a group that necessarily acts in concert on political matters or experiences race in the same way. Asian American is a category that includes American citizens in various ethnic groups. Those underrepresented in higher education are groups such as South East Asians, Vietnamese and Hmong Americans. Asian ethnic groups which are either at a similar percentage of their general population in the US or are “over represented” in higher education are groups such as Chinese, Korean and Japanese Americans (Suzuki 2002).

This case, decided after the precedent set in Fisher, meant that there was a high standard of proving one had exhausted all race-neutral alternatives to achieve racial diversity. Harvard had a policy that considered race, along with other factors such as a student’s background and character in what they called a “personal rating.” SFFA claimed Harvard was discriminating against Asian American students because their scores for personal ratings were lower than White students. Yet, SFFA did not have a particular student who claimed they were rejected from Harvard by the spot going to a White student (i.e. discriminated against based on race).

Harvard’s stated goals of diversity were “enhance[ing] the education of students of all races and background [to] prepare them to assume leadership roles in the increasingly pluralistic society into which they will graduate,” achieving the “benefits that flow from [its students] exposure to people of different background, races, and life experiences ” by teaching them to

“engage across differences through immersion in a diverse community, and broaden[ing] the perspectives of teachers, and thus tend[ing] to expand the reach of the curriculum and the range of scholarly interests of faculty” (*Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* 2019:106-107).

For this legal fight SFFA is placing Asian Americans in the plaintiff role claiming they are being rejected over Whites with similar academic credentials. SFFA posits this is because Asian Americans score lower on the personal score; being characterized by stereotypes of being “quiet/shy,” “science/math oriented,” “self-contained,” and “soft spoken” (Harvard case referencing OCR report from 1990). In another section of the report, SFFA says that Harvard has a category of “standard strong” that describes students who meet the Harvard academic standards but are not seen as “sufficiently distinguished within Harvard’s exceptional applicant pool” [Oct 25 Tr. 133:20– 134:1]. Not one applicant labeled as “standard strong” was admitted ultimately. But what is interesting is that of the 255 applicants categorized this way 126 were White, 114 were Asian American, 12 were Hispanic, and 3 were African American applicants.

In my reading of the ruling, the descending numbers of applicants across the racial categories shows which students are seen as most racially interesting or “diverse” and therefore most likely to experience demands to provide diversity-work and to do that work. In other words, Asian Americans, as categorized by the stereotypes listed above, will not provide the type of diversity to campus that universities want. The numbers reflect that the “benefits that flow from diversity” are not found in Asian American students. And that is not a judgement against Harvard. I am sure admissions decisions at most highly selective schools look very similar. This is a judgement about the way the “benefits of [racial] diversity” argument has shaped how racial minorities are viewed in terms of the value they can add to the education of White students, public relations of a university, and moral legitimacy of the university.

In my interpretation of how Harvard and other universities generally talk about diversity, they want students who will be outgoing, ready to talk about what makes them unique as an individual and ready to share about their racial background. These are the “benefits that flow from diversity,” in a way that can be seen and felt and experienced by Whites. And Asian Americans are not seen as able to provide that. In terms of my work, Asian Americans do not experience the demand to be “diversity-workers” in the same way that African Americans do.

The “diversity benefits all” ideology has shaped the higher education space for everyone. White students believe they are “due diversity” in exchange for the presence of racial minorities on campus. African Americans experience the demand to do diversity-work, and overrepresented Asian Americans (who are stereotyped as “self-contained”) are viewed as not “diverse enough” to really count as supplying diversity. For the sake of argument, we could assume university administrators are in education because they want to see students of all racial backgrounds excel. But, the “diversity benefits all” ideology as the only way civil rights is done makes it nearly impossible for well-intentioned admissions officers to account for racial background without either being sued for reverse discrimination or demanding diversity-work from underrepresented students. We need a better solution for full racial incorporation that recognizes the need for race-conscious admissions as a way for individuals to pursue the life they want to live.

In sum, affirmative action was a pragmatic policy supported by conservative political actors at its inception. However, affirmative action was taken up by philanthropic foundations who had observed the effects of affirmative action in government contracting and saw it as a way to increase numbers of underrepresented minorities in higher education. Affirmative action as justified by diversity entered university spaces through White administrators as a way to increase numbers of African Americans in college in the 1960s. The justification of “diversity benefits

all” that began with the minority opinion of Justice Powell in the 1978 *Bakke* decision echoes through to today. The diversity ideology is the latest outgrowth of a conservative affirmative action policy started in the 1940s that is in no way based in remedying racism or supporting full racial incorporation for African Americans. An alternative racial incorporation strategy is needed that centers a remedy for racism and guarantees full racial incorporation: full rights of citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence.

### **A Deeper Look at The Implications of Diversity as The Contemporary Racial Incorporation Strategy**

It is a tacit understanding of our current era that diversity in colloquial speech is often used as a euphemism for “race” when saying “race” would be uncomfortable. So, even though when someone says “diversity” they are primarily talking about race, using the term diversity operates as a race-neutral term that can toggle between race-conscious and race-neutral at will depending on the circumstance.

Like other scholars, I argue that the diversity project emerged as a race-neutral racial project to save the controversial race-conscious affirmative action. Even in states where race-conscious admissions policies (affirmative action) are allowed by law, universities are more likely to rely on the race-neutral diversity ideology to bring about racial incorporation or to define their admissions policies. This allows those universities to toggle back and forth between the race-conscious and race-neutral definitions of diversity depending on the circumstance. This also allows universities to shield themselves from lawsuits from conservative organizations while still working to increase the number of underrepresented students.

The problem with this situation is that 1) we know that race-neutral diversity programs result in fewer underrepresented minority students attending universities (Garces and Jayakumar 2014) and, as this chapter documents, 2) universities that espouse diversity (race-conscious or race-neutral) impose diversity-work on students who phenotypically appear to be racially diverse.

The ideology of diversity permeates all parts of life, not just education. In a sense, the diversity ideology covers the original sin of racial hierarchy by placing certain groups at the bottom of the hierarchy while implying that their stories and bodies exist for the benefit and enjoyment of those at the top of the racial hierarchy. Those along the hierarchy differ based on the history of the nation-state, but every nation-state has a group of individuals who were formerly enslaved, colonized or otherwise degraded. The material presented here suggests that, rather than ridding the state and organizations of diversity programs, we must end diversity ideology and replace it with true racial incorporation. We must end demanding that racially underrepresented individuals provide a direct benefit for everyone on campus and instead ask them what their goals and values are for their education and support those.

Ultimately, diversity ideology makes discussions of race and racism to be partially hidden. In hiding what is actually occurring around issues of race and racism, it perpetuates a racial hierarchy and creates diversity-work for African American students. Diversity can theoretically contain all sorts of identities such as playing the tuba, being left-handed and being a connoisseur of anime. These identities are curious, but they are not linked to a history of oppression and exclusion. Ensuring that those identities have a place in a matriculating class alongside individuals systematically denied access to universities does not create equality. These dimensions of diversity are not equivalent. Most admissions officers would probably agree with

that statement. But opinions diverge on whether special consideration should be given to those groups systematically denied access. Why is there such consensus on one point, but not the opposite point? And why, for instance, would Harvard be accused of reducing marks in admissions for Asian students because they were seen as “less interesting” or “less well rounded?” My research suggests that this odd move is a product of diversity being simultaneously about—and not about race. Administrators are saying that these students were not offering the *kind* of diversity they want. Universities want the type of diversity that looks good in pamphlets, that can be pointed to as “doing the right thing” in regard to increasing numbers of “the truly disadvantaged” (Wilson 1987). Universities want all their students to be able to benefit from “real diversity”- the pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps, you-must-feel-out-of-place-here kind that everyone can see. Taken together, I posit that Harvard wanted to reduce the number of Asian students because they do not fit the “diversity project” as a continuation of the racial hierarchy racial project. They limited diversity to darker skinned individuals, with roots in the iconic ghetto, who have an exceptional story of overcoming the odds that they will share with whoever demands to hear it at a moment’s notice.

The education literature has shown the ineffectiveness of race-neutral affirmative action policies in increasing the number of students of color on college campuses. This chapter adds to those findings as analysis of what the diversity project requires of students of color, especially African American students. Addressing race in admissions is important, but we need to look beyond the admissions process to daily life on campus after students are admitted and the kinds of daily practice diversity ideology requires. This analysis reveals the crucial need to move away from a diversity ideology and a move toward an equity model that is race-conscious and

addresses racism and that does not require students of color to supply diversity-work as part of the deal for their existence.

What type of racial project is an affirmative action policy that is not race-conscious (i.e. race-neutral), but espouses to support diversity? Do race-neutral policies have an effect on the number of students of color, especially African Americans, who matriculate at primarily White institutions? What are the effects on student interaction and experience when race-neutral diversity policies are in place? These are the questions that this chapter aims to answer, drawing on critical race theory, the education literature on affirmative action and the legal literature on how liberal and conservative lawsuits have shaped the legal landscape surrounding affirmative action and diversity. To date, these literatures have focused on documenting race-conscious affirmative action and diversity policies, but now the literature must turn toward understanding the complexity of interactions between those policies and the benefits and challenges faced by students in those diverse spaces.

For the purposes of understanding how the “benefits of diversity” rhetoric became common in higher education, one must look to the courts and examine the “how questions” and the “why questions” presented by the plaintiff, defendant and the justices in crucial cases.

### **What Changed When Courts Pointed to Diversity Instead of Affirmative Action?**

Court cases matter in universities’ admissions practices. Although the holding of an individual case may not change every admissions office practice, universities look to the courts for guidance on how to stay compliant and avoid legal challenges.

The affirmative action framework afforded a certain type of protection for the status of under-represented groups in the university environment. The policy was motivated to address historical injustice and discrimination. The burden of correcting that injustice laid primarily with the institutions (in this analysis - universities), tasked with providing opportunity to African Americans who had been unfairly discriminated against and excluded.

Universities and organizations take notes on how to implement equal protection policies based on how the Supreme Court engages language around civil rights and legal compliance. When the court put forth diversity as the way to do civil rights, this alerted organizations that they do not actually need to ensure an increase in numbers of underrepresented people of color, or to directly address the legacy of racism in their civil rights policy. Rather, the mere inclusion of a small number of students from under-represented backgrounds serves as evidence (whether true or not) that the university fully serves underrepresented groups. In addition, the reasoning that everyone must benefit from the diversity others bring only serves to place an unbearable burden on persons of color to perform diversity-work.

### Chapter 3: Diversity-Work in Action – An Ethnographic Study of A University

#### Introduction

Diversity is a shapeshifting entity. Studies have characterized diversity as a discourse (Berrey 2015; Bell and Hartmann 2007; Burke 2011) and an ideology (Mayorga-Gallo 2019). And scholars have also identified diversity as lacking the social justice focus it claims to provide (Harris, Barone and Davis 2015). This chapter, drawing on previous work by the author presents diversity as a practice and as a strategy for racial incorporation of African Americans. As a racial incorporation strategy, it has effects on the lives of those seen as racially diverse. Through a four-year ethnographic study, this chapter will examine what I term *diversity-work*: the everyday work demanded to be provided by people of color to not only *be* diversity or diverse symbolically, but to enact the “benefits of diversity” through their bodies and efforts. Unlike other studies of diversity that have primarily examined the White response to diversity (Warikoo 2016; Twine 2004), the work of people of color hired to work in the diversity domain of universities (Ahmed 2012, Hochschild 1979) or people of color who explicitly take on the work of justice in the social justice activist role (Lerma et al. 2020; Thomas 2020) this chapter focuses on two distinct research aims.

First, it seeks to characterize diversity as a general form of racial incorporation that affects those categorized as African American. This includes not only those African Americans hired in “diversity and inclusion offices,” but the everyday student who has come to a university for a typical student experience. And second, this chapter puts forward a novel term, *diversity-work*, that unlike other depictions of the same name, reveals what it looks and feels like to do *diversity-work* from the perspective of those non-hired activists and non-activist students demanded to engage in it. Employing a theoretical, historical, and social interactionist lens, I add

to the previous work of scholars of diversity to present an idea that reaches beyond the walls of the ivory tower to help give clarity on racial interaction today.

First, I will define new concepts: racial incorporation, diversity-work and freeriding majority. Next will be a review of the literature, followed by a review of the observational ethnographic and in-depth interview methods used, a presentation of excerpts from the fieldnotes and interviews and finally, a discussion of what this new approach to understanding diversity means moving forward.

### **Defining Racial Incorporation**

The concept of racial incorporation is a novel concept developed through the current research project. Racial incorporation is the policy methods and the ideological justifications for the inclusion or exclusion of African Americans in the larger American society. Looking at policies through the frame of racial incorporation is a way to understand the many ways, over time, African Americans have entered mainstream society.

*Racial incorporation is an analytical frame by which different policies and eras can be assessed for how much they allow for the full citizenship, self-determination, economic autonomy and social influence of African Americans.* There can be a change in racial incorporation strategies, whether realized in the moment they happen or not, that are paradigm shifts for how African Americans are incorporated into American society. That shift can lead towards equality or away from equality, but briefly defined, the justifications for the shift would come to explain how and why African Americans deserved a place at the table. This is racial incorporation. Racial incorporation, unlike a broad term like integration that is both a political category and something that affects every day cross racial interactions, can be applied to past and future eras to understand how a given political policy affected or will affect the everyday lives of African

Americans. This concept was conceptualized by assessing crucial Supreme Court rulings and federal mandates that served to define the racial incorporation status of African Americans. From historical eras of slavery to Reconstruction to Jim Crow, to integration, affirmative action and most recently, diversity, there have been phases of progress followed by phases of backlash. In chapters two and three, I used the concept racial incorporation to argue that diversity is an era of racial incorporation; different enough from what came before (affirmative action) that it constitutes a new racial incorporation era. And in this chapter, I use the concept of racial incorporation to examine the lived experience of African American students in two university diversity programs in the diversity era.

Scholars have studied diversity by interviewing student activists, university administrators of diversity programs and policies, interviewing White students or doing content analysis of campus literature on diversity. But there has not been a study that comes from the perspective of those “hidden in plain view”; students of color who have entered universities in the diversity era under the “benefits of diversity” narrative.

Therefore, I argue that the way you study diversity matters. I am studying it through using the ethnographic method, with undergraduate students at a university; universities having been the site of court battles over affirmative action. And the students in the study are from diversity programs; diversity programs being the sites on campus where the meaning of diversity meets real life.

### **Defining Diversity-Work and the Freeriding Majority**

I define diversity-work as the physical, mental and emotional work required of persons of color, particularly African Americans, to provide the “benefits of diversity” to a White space; a

place where Whiteness is centered. It is the act of being called upon to share one's experience with others not like you in a formal or informal way under the auspices of building a more "diverse and welcoming" environment. In the "diversity benefits all" narrative popular in higher education, *who* is responsible for sharing or *how* that ubiquitous diversity sharing occurs is largely left unspecified; the result of which is diversity-work.

The concept I present in this chapter, diversity-work, is the work done by non-hired students to educate and enhance the college-going experience of White students. While the concept can be extended beyond higher education, I want to make clear that diversity-work as I conceptualize it will appear hyphenated, so as to distinguish it from Ahmed's concept or other uses of the words "diversity" and "work" that can often be seen together referring to anything done in relation to the wide-ranging definitions of diversity.

Diversity-work encompasses the actions, thoughts, feelings and physical manifestations African Americans experience as a result of "being diversity." It is important to note that diversity-work as I am defining it applies to those persons of color not hired to diversity offices or the like. Those referred to in the concept diversity-work are everyday individuals who are African American: students in a diversity scholarship program and students in no diversity program who entered the university without a diversity scholarship. Diversity-work warrants its own concept because the ideology of diversity has its own particular history. Concepts such as emotional labor (Hochschild 1979), racial equity labor (Lerma et al. 2020) and race work (Steinbugler 2012) are adjacent to diversity-work, yet none explore the unique history and implications of the diversity ideology. Each of those concepts and the way diversity-work fills a gap in the literature will be explained in detail in the next section.

In each era of racial incorporation there have been actions either perpetuated by the State, groups of citizens or individual actors that have let African Americans know they are second class citizens in the United States (Anderson 2011). Taken together, these are known as “put you in your place actions.” Briefly stated, during the slavery era enslaved African Americans were property owned by Whites and any forms of resistance were met with physical violence. During the Reconstruction era there was also physical violence and intimidation as well as the beginning of the use of the n-word to denigrate African Americans looking to make a better life for themselves. The Jim Crow era is known for uncountable lynchings, state-sanctioned institutional discrimination and the constant mental whirl caused by what DuBois called double-consciousness. The integration era was a time when, at the demand of the Civil Rights Movement, institutions were mandated to allow African Americans in, but many did so begrudgingly. African Americans were intimidated and threatened when trying to take advantage of their hard-earned rights. The affirmative action era was a time when the presence of African Americans was becoming more commonplace due to affirmative action policies aimed at remedying past discrimination, but the social distance between African Americans and Whites was vast.

Ray (2019) theorizes that organizations, such as universities and businesses, play an important role in legitimizing racial ideas and practices; becoming racialized organizations. He says, “...racialized organizations are meso-level racial structures central to contestation over racial meaning, the social construction of race, and stability and change in the racial order” (Ray 2019:46). This matters because the diversity ideology has its roots in legal proceedings regulating race in higher education spaces.

Scholars Darcy, Edwards and Davis (2018) analyze the university as a racialized space where conceptions of race compete with each other. Speaking of the Black Lives Matter protests, they say, “Black student, faculty, and staff experiences that have ignited these protests reflect higher education’s investment in maintaining an institutional and social relationship of ownership with people of color and Black people in particular” (Darcy et al 2018:177).

Ideas have abounded about African Americans “taking the spot” of Whites in college admissions and employment. Again, African Americans and Whites were in physical proximity, some as peers in schools and jobs, yet microaggressions were common. Now, in the diversity era, everyone from grandmothers to universities to Fortune 500 companies say they support diversity (Bell and Hartmann 2007). But the diversity they support is a vague idea of difference, and mostly a level of difference that allows for the racial status quo to remain. In the era of diversity, Whites who espouse diversity interact with African Americans from a place of being on the moral high ground, supporting the idea of diversity that is tangentially associated with race, but not the difficult realities of racism. It is the idea that because the majority of people in the United States say they support diversity that cross racial interactions are free from trouble. But it is the very act of Whites not being aware of the unresolved question of full racial incorporation for African Americans that makes them perpetuate the assignment of diversity-work to African Americans.

To give a clearer idea of what diversity-work is, below is a compendium of examples of the burden of diversity-work excerpted from the fieldwork:

- *Being asked to serve on a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. (An imposing request)*
- *Serving on a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. (A drain on time and energy)*

- *The consequences of saying “no” to requested or demanded diversity service for an African American student. (The mental calculus of risking being seen as not supporting the diversity ideology, not being a team player)*
- *Photos being taken of students of color without permission at campus events and being prominently displayed in admissions and recruitment materials; often disproportionate to the campus population. (Images of diverse bodies displaying the accessibility of diverse students on campus)*
- *A single student or small number of students of color in a majority White classroom setting being put on the spot to answer questions about their personal experience with race and racism for the benefit of the whole class. (Direct imposition to share potentially difficult personal stories or teach students and/or faculty about race)*
- *Informal student interactions in which White students place the onus of explanation on Black students, ex: What’s the deal with Black hair? What’s it like to be from the ‘ghetto’? How do you as a Black person feel about (any given issue)? (Direct request to educate peers / counter potentially racist or ignorant inferences, mental calculus of determining whether the questioner will hold this information with respect, mental calculus of considering, “If I answer this one question, will they ask me ten more uninformed questions?” etc.)*
- *The feeling of always being “on guard” in situations where a student has frequently experienced or observed demands of diversity work. (The mental anxiety of anticipating being put on the spot)*
- *Interactions in which underrepresented students are presumed to have been under-qualified based on merit, but rather admitted for purposes of diversity/inclusion and are looked to in order to justify their presence. (Diversity ideology perpetuates inferences about racial hierarchy, the burden is placed on the individual to prove otherwise)*
- *Interactions in which an overtly racist or discriminatory view is expressed and the majority group looks to a minority student to explain why the view should be challenged. (White students are allowed to be passive observers of a situation while gaining knowledge, and Black students are put on the spot to provide knowledge and explanation)*
- *Black students being tasked to comfort White students who are just beginning to learn about the hurt of racism. (Those who experience racism on a daily basis being tasked with comforting those who have just started to learn about it)*
- *Black students being expected to give affirmation, praise, for individual and university efforts towards inclusion. (Mental and emotional labor of managing the expectation that one supports particular diversity policies and/or the general diversity ideology. Mental calculus around weighing the potential effects if one provides criticism of programs or policies)*

- *Members of student organizations who volunteer their time and effort to lead programming for Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage, Native American, etc. (Outward-facing explicit work towards educating others about racial differences within the sanctioned and officially-approved channels for doing so)*

Something these examples have in common is the expected adherence of African Americans to the “benefits of diversity” narrative that is part of the diversity ideology. Not only are African American students expected to say “yes” to diversity-work in the name of progress, but they are also expected to manage the emotions of Whites as they perform that diversity-work. There is external-facing work (which is easier to identify) and internal mental calculus (which can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression).

Appearing simultaneously with diversity-work is what I’ve termed the “freeriding majority problem.” Freeriders, a term from economics, refers to a small group who benefits from resources, goods, or services without paying for the cost of the benefit (Olson 1965/2009). Freeriders are able to reap the same benefits as those who contributed to the group because the majority of the group has “bought into” the requirements. In the case at hand, I am positing that African American students are providing diversity-work to the entire campus, so that the university forms a “freeriding majority” benefiting from the diversity that Black students provide. In contrast to some of the burdens of diversity-work listed above, Warikoo identifies the benefits that White students perceive, including gaining the ability to claim in resumes and job applications that they have experience working with “diverse populations.” This provides a competitive advantage in gaining employment (Warikoo 2016).

More will be said about how diversity-work functions in the results section of the dissertation, but first I will review the literature that addresses diversity as a discourse, an ideology, and a practice. While the sociological literature has examined diversity as a discourse

and an ideology there is a gap in the literature concerning diversity as a practice. Particularly focusing on the lived experience of those providing diversity and how to measure the practical work of those providing diversity.

### **Literature Review: Studies of Diversity as Discourse, Ideology and Practice**

#### *General overview of scholarship related to diversity-work*

Scholar bell hooks, in her 1992 book *Black Looks*, first identified the American idea of diversity as being centered in Whiteness and White supremacy (hooks 1992/2014). hooks wrote *Black Looks* in the time between *Bakke* and *Gratz/Grutter*; a time when discussion of diversity as an alternative to affirmative action was making its way through the nation's universities and dining room table conversations.

Diversity can be understood “as a way of imagining that those who are divided can work together; as a way of assuming that ‘to get along’ is to right a wrong” (Ahmed 2012:164). Americans like to believe in a post-racial America where the need for race-conscious policies is a thing of the past. White Americans want to believe, “we’re all friends here,” and fittingly, a 2003 nation-wide survey found the majority of respondents said they valued diversity in their friendships (Hartmann and Gerteis 2005). Worthington also finds that White students rate racial and ethnic campus climate more positively than do students of color (Worthington et al. 2008). This is the diversity era.

Pierce (1974) completed research studies on the presence of microaggressions, the “subtle, cumulative mini-assault is the substance of today’s racism.” The idea of microaggressions has moved from the academic world into the common parlance of Americans. Subsequent studies have validated the presence and impact of microaggressions and have found that, “racial microaggressions can range from racial slights, recurrent indignities and irritations,

unfair treatments, stigmatization, hyper-surveillance, low expectations, and personal threats or attacks on one's well-being" (Smith, Mustaffa, Jones, Curry, Allen 2016:1192 referencing Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams 1999; Essed 1991; Sue 2010; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder 2008; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson 1997).

The combination of Whites overwhelmingly believing in a post-racial world, their desire to be friends with racially diverse people and the continued presence of microaggressions is bound to have an effect on the lives of those persons of color who know the realities of racism and discrimination. But there are also those Whites who see themselves as believers in social justice and who desire to be around people of color as well (Mayorga-Gallo 2019). African Americans are more than a little weary to engage with Whites in Whites spaces. Scholar Elijah Anderson says, "When encountering a White person in this setting, they [African Americans] tend to assume that person is likely to be racially insensitive, if not openly prejudiced, and before giving the person full trust, they hesitate" (Anderson, 2018).

Additionally, the concept of racial battle fatigue, put forward by Dr. William Smith, speaks to the result of microaggressions against Blacks in White spaces. Smith and colleagues, through interview studies with Black faculty and students who were primarily Black men, has defined racial battle fatigue as "the cumulative psychosocial-physiological impact of racial micro and macroaggressions on racially marginalized targets" (Smith et al 2016:1192). They also found that "students reported psychological stress responses symptomatic of racial battle fatigue (e.g. frustration, shock, anger, disappointment, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear)" (Smith et al. 2016:1189). They also found that racial battle fatigue "is experienced at both individual and group levels simply by being a part of a racially oppressed group" (Smith et al 2016:1192). I see diversity-work as a "moderating variable" that has not yet been accounted

for in understanding the extent of racial battle fatigue. This is most definitely worthy of further study.

Another question in the debate around how African Americans survive in racist environments centers around whether individuals pursue self-interest or act according to their collective interest – what Michael Dawson calls “linked fate.” He defines linked fate as, “the degree to which African Americans believe that their own self-interests are linked to the interests of the race” (Dawson 1994:77). He goes on to say that, “the historical experiences of African Americans have resulted in a situation in which group interests have served as a useful proxy for self-interest” (Dawson 1994:77). This concept of linked fate is important in the story of diversity-work because it helps to understand why individual African Americans agree to do the diversity-work demanded of them, even when it is against their own self-interest. African Americans have an understanding that what happens to them is linked to the collective and vice versa. Therefore, even if the diversity narrative creates more individual labor for them, it maintains their ability to access White spaces as well as that of the Black collective. But all of this calculus comes at a cost.

There is dissonance happening in the diversity era between the expectation of Blacks by Whites to trust them and the founded hesitancy of Blacks. How do African Americans react to these expectations put upon them in White spaces that contain resources they want and need? It is in the confluence of White post-racial vision, the reality of continuing racism in America and an African American student’s desire to go to college that this current study takes place.

In the wake of controversies around race-based affirmative action, diversity has become the alternate way to do civil rights in America (Edelman et al. 2001). Instead of affirmative action policies and programs that aimed to increase the numbers of underrepresented students of

color in universities, they have been replaced with largely race-neutral diversity programs. Whereas affirmative action clearly designated racial groups as the beneficiary of admissions policies that took into account the discriminatory history of a student designated racial background, diversity policies have been geared at race as one of many identities of a student that can be chosen by the university to benefit its student body (Okechukwu 2019). In the wake of attacks on race-based affirmative action, diversity programs have emerged in the last twenty years that are officially based outside of race specifically. These diversity programs are built around special abilities and ways students “can potentially contribute to the campus learning environment, which is often specific to the institutional mission or culture of each university” (Okechukwu 2019:185). The Urban Voice diversity program featured in this study is a prime example of this.

The following literature review will examine concepts and ideas that have begun to get at this dissonance but have not fully conceptualize this phenomenon in the way that I do here.

One concept that is in the lineage of diversity-work is Arlie Hochschild’s idea, emotional labor. Introduced in her 1979 book *The Managed Heart*, emotional labor is “the work, for which you’re paid, which centrally involves trying to feel the right feeling for the job...The point is that while you may also be doing physical labor and mental labor, you are crucially being hired and monitored for your capacity to manage and produce a feeling” (Beck 2018, quoting Hochschild). Scholars have written about the emotional labor involved in both education and the business world (Bell 2014; Evans 2013; Guy, Newman, and Mastracci 2008; Harlow 2003; Kang 2003; Lively 2000; Moore 2008; Pierce 2003, 2012; Wingfield 2010). While the students in this study are not employees of the university, and therefore are not doing bona fide emotional labor

according to Hochschild's definition, they are most definitely doing emotional labor in the broader sense.

Hochschild also posits (1979) that middle-class families prepare their children for emotional labor more than working-class families. This finding is consistent with the findings of this current study. It is likely that the differences in resulting feelings of having to control one's emotions associated with doing diversity-work are bifurcated along class lines. Students in the President's Fellows come from primarily middle-class families and seem to adjust to the demands for diversity-work more than the majority of students in the Urban Voice Program who come from majority working-class families. Of course, there are some working-class students in the President's Fellows Program and middle-class students in the Urban Voice Program, but it is not the norm.

Sara Ahmed, a gender studies scholar, writes about the "work of diversity" that hired staff and practitioners of diversity policies engage in (Ahmed 2012). "Diversity work is occupational: the aim of embedding diversity and equality requires occupying committees that structure the flow of matter in organizations..." (Ahmed 2012:123). One of Ahmed's primary claims is that the work by practitioners is often hindered by the presence of a diversity document such as a diversity policy or plan that serves the purpose of establishing compliance with equal opportunity mandates. She says, "Many practitioners expressed a sense of exhaustion with writing documents, a sense that 'writing documents' is the only work they have time to do. As one interviewee describes, 'You end up doing the document rather than doing the doing.'" (Ahmed 2012:52).

In the sociology of race and ethnicity literature, questions of whether diversity is a discourse (a communicative framework) or an ideology (a more all-encompassing set of ideas, words, and practices) is debated. There are also authors who contribute studies on diversity in practice. None, however, have brought all three approaches (diversity as discourse, diversity as ideology, and diversity in practice) together.

### **Diversity as discourse**

Scholars Bell and Hartmann (2007) interpret diversity through a discourse analysis frame. They see the move to using diversity as the way to talk about race, as part of a larger racial project aimed at finding a way to talk about difference that is replete of discussion of social inequality. A non-controversial “happy talk” is possible when talking about race through the construct of diversity. But such “happy talk” allows “the discourse of diversity [to] rest on a white normative perspective” (2007: 907). In addition, they say the diversity discourse, “exoticizes, criticizes, trivializes, and compartmentalizes the cultural objects of people of color as contributions to a presumably neutral ‘us’ (Bell and Hartmann, 2007).

The work of legal scholar Ellen Berrey finds similar outcomes in the discourse of diversity. In her seminal book *The Enigma of Diversity*, Berry did an ethnographic study of a university, a neighborhood and a business to see how they went about engaging with diversity. She found that diversity is largely a symbol in political rhetoric. For leaders to say they support diversity is to designate the meaning of diversity in terms of integration in ways that work to their advantage (Berrey 2015). Said concisely, “It [diversity] is a mechanism of containing and co-opting racial justice, as it largely leaves untouched persistent racial inequalities and the gulf

between rich and poor. This is the taming of the civil rights movement's provocative demands for integration, equality, and full citizenship" (Berrey 2015:9). But, Berrey does not see diversity as acting as an ideology because diversity can support both progressive and conservative ideologies. That is the power of diversity for Berrey: it can become whatever the user designates it to be. Because the definition of diversity is so fluid it can support both racist and anti-racist projects.

While I agree that diversity acts as a symbol in political and legal rhetoric, I think its primary impact has moved from the realm of discourse to the realm of ideology as diversity now acts as an organizing mental framework that has reached the level of commonsense in the United States. And that ideology has had far-reaching impact in practice. The following scholars view diversity as an ideology.

### **Diversity as an ideology**

This project uses *Stuart Hall's* definition of ideology: "The mental frameworks – the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation – which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, figure out and render intelligible the way society works" (Quoted in Storey 2018). An ideology is that which organizes thoughts and categories (and the individuals represented by those thoughts and categories) so as to limit cognitive dissonance. Ideology helps individuals in a society move in lockstep by creating agreed upon categories that move over complicated gears with ease. Without ideology each decision would slow down interactions and eventually cause a jam in the machinery of society. This is the way I conceptualize the ideology of diversity. The diversity ideology creates a system by which those seen as different are tasked with sharing that "difference" with others, so that all may benefit. In the case of diversity in the United States, diversity as a concept has

been closely tied to the history of African Americans and their right to full racial incorporation in the face of white supremacy. Therefore, we could reimagine the diversity ideology as being a system by which African Americans are tasked with sharing their “difference” with Whites, so that Whites may benefit. In this reimagined definition of the diversity ideology, it is obvious how the concept of diversity-work flows directly from it.

Scholars Wendy Moore and Joyce Bell draw on the writings of Gramsci (2005 [1971]) and Crenshaw (1988) on hegemony to assert that discourse surrounding diversity sets up a frame or ideology that centers Whiteness and ultimately stalls real racial reform (Moore and Bell 2011). Whereas Gramsci argues that hegemony happens through a process of consent and coercion, Crenshaw says that the dominant racial frame in the US acts mainly by coercion; that African Americans in the United States cannot truly consent. Moore and Bell also make clear that the diversity ideology, “bounded within a stifling hegemonic white racial frame,” makes it difficult for students of color to openly voice their concerns about diversity (Moore and Bell 2011:611). This “white racial frame” as Feagin calls it (2006) also has “coerced people of color in those [White] spaces into performing the intense, in depth, and unrewarded labor of defending their right to inhabit that space” (Moore and Bell 2011:612).

Another scholar who centers understanding diversity as an ideology is Sarah Mayorga-Gallo. She also sees the diversity ideology as an analytic framework that centers Whiteness. Mayorga-Gallo’s analysis is particularly helpful in thinking about how Whiteness is perpetuated systemically through institutions and by social-justice oriented individuals. She says, the “diversity ideology as an analytic framework provides conceptual tools to help us understand white individuals who are conscious of racial inequality and desire to be close to people of color, yet still reproduce whiteness as structure” (Mayorga-Gallo 2019:1789). In my own study, which

takes place in a self-identified progressive Westrock, students at the university still reported the immense weight of being “on” to share their experience of race with Whites who declared themselves anti-racist. That Whites wanted to be around them, to be close to them.

Understanding the diversity ideology as a frame through which social interaction happens helps illuminate some of the seemingly contradictory experiences between people who say they are anti-racist yet act in accordance with Whiteness.

Natasha Warikoo enters the critical diversity landscape through her incisive book *The Diversity Bargain* (2016). Her research question is when and under what circumstances do White Americans support race-based policies. Doing an ethnography at Harvard, Brown and Oxford (UK) she found that in relation to support of affirmative action, most White students held a “colorblindness frame,” viewing race as insignificant. She found for those White students who held a “diversity frame” they saw race as significant, but did not question the power dynamics around issues of race. This led those students to view diversity as something they were owed in their college going experience. Hence, the “diversity bargain.” The final category of students were those students who had a “power analysis frame.” They also saw race as significant and they questioned the power dynamics at play in issues of race (Warikoo 2016). Black and Latinx students she interviewed primarily subscribed to the power analysis frame and if not, supported affirmative action through the diversity frame. The way their university framed issues of race played a significant role in how the students of all races viewed issues of race. An important finding is that for the students of color who supported affirmative action through the power analysis frame, “they did not view themselves as present on campus to enrich the experience of their White peers” (Warikoo 2016:187). This finding supports what I found in my interviews with Black students. They did not see themselves as needing to provide a benefit to White

students. My study adds to this conversation by illuminating how Black students hold in tension their understanding of why diversity-work is demanded of them and their options for responding.

Scholar James Thomas conducted an interview study with student activists, faculty and staff, “diversity workers,” who “help create, organize and put into practice [a university’s] diversity efforts,” also going to diversity policy meetings over two years of fieldwork (Thomas 2020:14). He found that how diversity is organized and practiced, maintains racial inequality. Thomas’s primary aim was to establish diversity as a concept whose focus is not toward social justice; social justice being the aim of the diversity workers he interviewed. While Thomas’s study is important to the critical diversity literature, his engagement with those already identifying as activists or paid leaders in diversity offices leaves a gap in understanding those students who do not identify as activists and who merely are trying to succeed as students. The current study fills that gap and broadens the circle of those impacted by the diversity ideology.

### **Studies Relevant to Diversity in Practice**

The few studies that exist of diversity in practice show what it is like to interact socially in the diversity era. Wendy Moore and Louwanda Evans combined ethnographic data of students of color at an elite law school and African American pilots and flight attendants find there are “racialized structures, ideologies, and discourses that lead to the everyday micro-aggressions faced by people of color in what Moore (2008) terms ‘white institutional spaces’” (Evans and Moore 2015:440). They also find that the responses of students of color to these microaggressions is constrained because the White institutional space based in “color-blind racism,” “minimizes and denies the relevance of race and racism” (Doane and Bonilla-Silva 2003; Evans and Moore 2015:440). The constrained responses require “emotional labor and

management of emotions from people of color” as well as tactics of “everyday micro-resistances” that enable “people of color to participate in racially oppressive institutions while maintaining and valuing their human dignity” (Moore and Evans 2015:441). Evans’s and Moore’s work is definitely in line with my current study, but what is missing from their analysis is an engagement with the historical and legal context of the “benefits of diversity” narrative and how that context helps to explain the current need to engage in “everyday micro-resistances” against what I call diversity-work. In addition, my current study examines under what circumstance students decide to engage with the diversity narrative, and therefore diversity-work, and when they do not.

The concept of race-work from Steinbugler has resonance with my concept of diversity-work. Steinbugler examines the social worlds of Black and White interracial same-sex and straight couples. She finds partners do “race-work,” defined as “the routine actions and strategies through which individuals maintain close relationships across lines of racial stratification,” (Steinbugler 2012, p. xiii). She references Bonilla Silva’s concept of racial habitus to explain how interracial partners often have differing racial lenses through which they see the world. That difference in racial lenses, or habitus, can cause strain on the Black partner as the White partner learns about racial inequalities. “Intimacy does not erode differences in racial status” (Steinbugler 2012:xxv). She also utilizes Twine’s concept of racial literacy to understand race-work in these relationships. Twine defines racial literacy as a type of anti-racist labor done on the part of Whites in an interracial relationship (his study was with White parents of adopted Black children) to understand their own relationship to race (Twine 2004). I interpret this racial literacy as being a type of anti-racist project in which White people develop a critical analytical lens on issues of race and racism that they themselves cultivate. While I agree with Twine and

Steinbugler that an interracial relationship can be a site of an anti-racist project, and Steinbugler in particular does give voice to the Black partners' "race fatigue," I think both scholars downplay the extent of the labor the Black individual does in the relationship and its connection to the diversity ideology. Diversity-work provides language for explaining the experience of Black individuals in close relationships; friendships, intimate relationships, parental or otherwise.

Randolph (2018) presents an observational and interview study about race with teachers and leaders in public schools. While she states explicitly that she is not focusing on the lived experience of racial and ethnic minority students, she does focus on how teachers perceive the students and their parents based on their racial and ethnic identity. She finds that teachers understand their Black students ("native-born minorities" who are minorities due to slavery and conquest) in relation to their immigrant minority peers ("non-native born minorities"). And this comparison consistently favors the immigrant minorities over the Black students. Teachers reward immigrant minorities with symbolic resources, "beneficial attitudes and behaviors toward students, families, and communities, because of their positive perceptions of their minority status" (Randolph 2013; Randolph 2018). The illumination of this "market for valuing diversity" allows us to see the diversity's workings from the eyes of teachers. But, I think this study also points to there being differences in the lived experience of native-born minorities; even if Randolph's aim was not to focus on lived experience. My study, that directly engages the lived experience of African American students, jumps off directly where Randolph's ends. It would make sense that the Black students who are already seen as having less value on the diversity market would be made to contribute more for their place in that market; what I call diversity-work.

Lerma, Hamilton and Nielsen “coin the term ‘racialized equity labor’ to describe the often-uncompensated efforts of people of color to address systematic racism and racial marginalization within organizations” (Lerma, Hamilton and Nielsen 2020:286). Specifically, they interviewed student activists who felt their work was being appropriated by university administrators who “convert it into a diluted diversity initiative” (Lerma et al 2020:287). Racialized equity labor could be those things that do have a benefit for the Black community in the end. But, because of the diversity ideology, labor done in the name of racial equity is rebranded as diversity-work. The presence of the diversity ideology makes even racialized equity labor to be framed as in service of the diversity ideology.

Racialized equity labor is done by the very people who needed the assistance, but at least at the end of the labor there could be something to look to as a benefit. This is not the case with diversity-work. Diversity-work is done primarily for the benefit of Whites. The Black person may get some benefit in terms of access to a space and/or consciousness raising for the organization the person is in (which could make their lives a bit easier). But, it cannot be said that the Black individual chose to do this diversity-work as a way to uplift the race. It is done because it is demanded. And in that respect, its effects -- emotionally, physiologically and mentally -- are burdensome and unwelcome.

Lerma et al contribute important insight into campus activism done by students of color. However, there is still a significant gap in the literature about students who do not self-identify as “activists” or “leaders” as part of a campus social justice movement. I see Lerma et al’s work as fitting in with the social movements tradition, whereas my current research is more in the tradition of social interactionists. The dissertation asks, “What is the experience of self and other-identified African American students under the diversity ideology?” This is a much more general

question, whose answer reveals that the United States is not a post-racial, “diversity-is-anything-that-makes-you-different” society. Diversity policy is tightly linked to the history of affirmative action and the struggles for racial equality. However, unlike affirmative action that addressed discrimination and racism, diversity on paper does not concern itself with racial justice and African American students are the ones who suffer.

### **More on Methods**

Using an interpretive (Stake 2013) and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 2017) approach, this project interrogates how African American students in two different diversity scholarship programs go about making sense of doing diversity. My primary research question is what is the lived experience of those students providing diversity to majority white campuses through diversity and inclusion programs? I use multi-site design within the racialized organization (university) to gain perspective on how a singular concept like diversity plays out in similar and differing ways in connected, but differing locations. The ethnographic approach allows for an “on-the-ground” view of student experience, not typically utilized, but which provides incredibly rich data. The in-depth interviews allow for the voices of actors not typically heard on issues of the burdens of diversity to be heard. Four years total of ethnographic observations were conducted as well as twenty-three in-depth interviews with students in the programs, university administrators and faculty associated with the programs, and White students who are not in the diversity programs.

The observations with Urban Voice were the basis of my master’s thesis project. And from that project emerged the idea of diversity-work. Therefore, my observations with Urban Voice were much broader in scope; capturing multiple lines of thought. Near the end of my

observations with Urban Voice I began formulating the concept of diversity-work and began paying attention to discussions of diversity. My observations with President's Fellows were more focused on the student's engagement with the diversity ideology.

Generally, in the observations, I paid attention to moments when students in the diversity programs spoke about interactions they had with White students in informal situations on campus, classroom settings and in dorm life. If I was with the students of Urban Voice or President's Fellows outside of group meetings I would observe conversations with White individuals and the body language of the African American students. More importantly, if there were discussions among students of color *about* interactions with White individuals, I took particular note of those. I also watched for instances of diversity program staff making reference to diversity and what the expectations of program staff and students were in terms of the university's mission of diversity and inclusion. I paid particular attention to whether students were asked to embody the benefits of diversity and how the students respond when that happened. If the event was public, an audio recording was done so I could focus more on the events as they unfolded. If the event is not public, small, anonymous jottings were taken in a notepad or on the Notes app on my phone, from which more extensive field notes were written using a word processor once I returned to my office.

For the in-depth interview portion of the study I conducted semi-structured interviews in the tradition of Spradley. To advertise the opportunity to participants I sent an email solicitation through the program listserv asking for volunteers. I also posted a flyer asking for students of color from the two diversity programs in the study. The interviews focused on the following themes: experience in environments with cross racial interactions before college, how they were recruited to the diversity program, guidance from mentors on how to deal with issues of race on

campus, recalling moments when race came up in classroom discussion or informally in mixed-race settings and the tactics they use in those conversations and after those conversations to deal when issues of race arise and finally students philosophy on diversity (what and who is it for). With the student's consent, the interviews were recorded for later transcription so as to allow me to focus entirely on the interview interaction. The interviews typically lasted an hour and participants were financially compensated for their time.

My interviews with administrators were similar in structure to those with the students. I asked how they had gotten interested in the diversity program, how they were recruited, what were the joys and challenges of their jobs, how they viewed diversity and how they thought the university viewed diversity.

Data collection with both Urban Voice and President's Fellows was an iterative process: as I gathered new information and built relationships, new opportunities for observation and interviews developed. I wrote memos to work out preliminary analysis of what I was seeing in the field and began open coding to begin narrowing down categories of field observations. The field sites are tied together by their common focus as diversity and inclusion, but they are quite different "inter-program" as well as "intra-program." I am not acting under the assumption that every student who comes through each program is the same. They have different pre-college experiences which inform their college experience. Therefore, data from each program will explain case specific differences, while data across programs will help explain theoretical questions about the modern enactment and embodiment of diversity.

As much as possible I "followed the well-worn path" students had set out in how they categorized the aspects of diversity they found important in their everyday lives. This "in

vivo” coding allowed their voices to lead the conversation around lived experience; voices that are too often silenced in conversations about the unseen consequences of diversity.

I also completed twenty hours of supplementary classroom observations in a sociology course discussion section. Classroom observations were added near the end of the ethnography because students I interviewed referred to classroom interactions as some of the most fraught with what I coded as diversity-work. Observations took place in three different discussion sections of a sociology course on race and ethnicity. Two of the discussion sections were led by female Asian graduate students and the last section was led by a male Asian graduate student. Each discussion section had between fifteen and twenty students who were primarily freshmen and sophomores. No section had more than two African American students.

### **A Note About My Positionality**

I am an African American woman in higher education spaces. And as such, I do have an epistemological position closer to my research subjects’ epistemological position; different than a person of another ethnicity or race. I think this helped me to understand the embodied experience of students of color, albeit from a different vantage point as a graduate student; not an undergraduate student. At various points in the research I witnessed White researchers come into the space where I was with the diversity program students and observed tensing in the student’s body language. I am not under the impression that there was not apprehension from the students when I arrived to do fieldwork, but over time that apprehension largely subsided as students began to friend me on Facebook or upon seeing me around campus would stop to chat. One of my best interviews came when I was trying to set up a meeting time and the student said they could not meet until they went to the Social Security Office. So, I picked them up and off we

went to the Social Security Office. We did the interview in the long wait for his number to be called.

In working with Urban Voice, it took real vulnerability on my part to attend the poetry writing workshops. It became apparent after the first visit that there were only two real roles in the writing workshop: facilitator or writer. And very often the facilitator would write and share poetry as well. So, I became a poet. And the students challenged me to dig deeper when I tried to only write about surface level concerns. Even though I do not have much background in the hip hop scene or consider myself a “hip hop head,” I think they could sense I was trying to understand. After one particularly good writing workshop where we split off into pairs to write a joint poem, I saw my writing partner at a coffee shop near campus the following week. I reiterated to her how writing poetry was not my forte. “Leave me to the social science,” I said. But she came back strong. “Oh, no. You’ve got chops. That poem we wrote last week- that was all you. I was like, she’s alright.”

My time doing fieldwork with President’s Fellows was more in line with my previous undergraduate experiences. I was in a research training program at Yale, that while not an admissions program, did have similar academic and social aspects. When I first began to show up at events I could hear whispers of, “Who is that? Is she in our cohort and we never met her?” Very quickly those myths were dispelled. I stood up at each of the four class meetings and introduced myself and my project. I told the students that I was interested in diversity and their experiences and that I share some of their concerns about social justice. The turning point of feeling more included came when I attended a tailgate one November Saturday that was held in the backyard of a student’s rented house, about a mile from the football stadium. It turned out none of the students at the tailgate were going to the football game. But once they knew I was

going and that I had planned on walking to the stadium, they would not let me go alone. A junior guy immediately offered to walk with me saying, “You don’t want to be walking alone while Black with a bunch of drunk White bros on game day.” Indeed, as we were walking a drunk White bro threw an empty beer can down from a balcony, barely missing my head. The President’s Fellow student made sure I was ok and yelled some choice words at the guy on the balcony. I made it to the football game just fine and he headed where he was going. After that incident, when he saw me at class meetings or out on campus he would check-in. I felt more included by the group after that.

### **How I Coded Fieldnotes and Interview Data**

The first step I took in coding the fieldnotes was to read through all the notes as a whole, and I took notes on common themes. By the time of analyzing the fieldnotes I already had the idea of diversity-work, so I paid particular attention to discussion of themes related to that concept. Then I reread my notes in detail, paying attention to those sections that stood out to me on the first pass.

The interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription agency. I followed a similar process as I had done with the fieldnotes, in terms of coding. What emerged were the categories or themes listed in the following results section.

### **Results**

The results of the study point to extensive diversity-work done on the part of African American students in diversity programs. While I did witness or hear of diversity-work done by

other students of color, African American students took the brunt of the burden of providing diversity-work to the campus, in individual and collective ways.

*Two categories of diversity-work: external and internal*

Two types of diversity-work emerged from the fieldwork and interviews: external and internal. External diversity-work is that work imposed by an external stimulus (e.g. a White student asking a question of the student of color about their personal experience with race, either accepting or declining a request to serve on a diversity committee, a White student reaching out and touching an African American student's hair, etc.). These external demands for doing diversity-work are startling and often result in the African American student feeling as if their personal space has been violated. It also results in the feeling that at any moment the demand for diversity-work could come and the African American student will have to deal with it; leaving them flustered and distracted from their path or train of thought prior to the incident.

Internal diversity-work imposes on a student's internal world and can last far beyond the external stimulus. The internal diversity-work can compound over time as a stress response and result in feelings of alienation, depression, anxiety and other physiological symptoms such as increased heart rate, rise in cortisol levels (as medically reported from a sustained stress response) (Williams 2003). For example, if an African American student is asked to serve on a diversity committee and they feel it is not in their personal interest to do so, they may experience a response from the demander of the diversity-work that lets them know they are surprised and disappointed. Part of the demander's surprise and disappointment comes from the fact that they feel as if diversity is something that the African American student *should* support, based on the diversity ideology; support of diversity at its basis is made to be less controversial, yet it is the diversity-work that the African American student is really rejecting.

*Four types of student response to the imposition of diversity-work*

From the research, four types of tactics emerged from students in response to the imposition of diversity-work. The tactics represent not only levels of racial consciousness, but also legal consciousness. Because the diversity ideology as laid out by the Supreme Court is ultimately about benefits to White students, as students began to understand their position in the diversity ideology as African Americans, they began to question how they wanted to interact with it. I would argue that no student, whether they are employing any of these tactics (or some other type not laid out here) must deal with diversity-work. The types of tactics merely represent how they choose to deal with it. Students can also change their tactics over the course of time as they try on different strategies and grow in their knowledge of racial and legal consciousness.

*Type 1 - Avoiding diversity-work:* The tactic of clearly choosing not to engage in diversity-work. This choice could be expressed by simply saying “No” to certain requests or intrusive questions, or could be expressed by a student who, for reasons unknown, rejects identification with race. This student does not engage externally on issues concerning race in the classroom, racial affinity groups, etc. However, there is likely considerable internal diversity-work involved to consistently reject others’ racial categorization of the self.

*Example:* In an observation of an undergraduate sociology course discussion section there was a conversation happening about the validity of using the SAT test for college admissions. There was one young man, I call John, who I would identify as African American and one young woman who self-identified as Afro-Latina in the course of discussion. The conversation circled around the issue of race without landing squarely on it. After about five minutes of race being

“the elephant in the room,” a young White student directed a question directly to John. “John, you’re Black. What do you think?” To this John replied, “I don’t identify as Black. I’m just a person. And you’re basically asking me to tell you my SAT score. I don’t even remember what it was, but if I did I wouldn’t tell you.”

In this example, I think John is actually telling the other student to “step off.” I do not think John does not see himself as Black, (although he may); I think that John had considered his racial identity before that moment and had decided not to identify as Black in an attempt to sidestep the stereotypes and pressures associated with being identified as Black. Based on other parts of the conversation I know he was from Chicago and mainly grew up with White friends. Based on race being a social construct and his physiological features (darker skin, black curly hair) I could guess, like the White young woman, that John could identify as Black. But, he did not. While I cannot know for sure why John does not identify as African American, his response to the young woman’s question points to a desire to be his own person; not to be defined by the expectations or assumptions that come with being identified as African American (e.g. tied to the iconic ghetto as Elijah Anderson says, seen as less intelligent, being labeled as an “angry Black man,” when speaking passionately). In terms of diversity-work, I would say John’s rejection of being identified as African American points to his rejection of the diversity-work demanded of him and his way of dealing with the demand is to dis-identify with the racial label.

*Type 2 - Embracing diversity-work:* The tactic of engaging openly and directly with external diversity-work when demanded. When questions about race come up in classroom discussions this student shares their opinion and wants to “set the record straight” on issues of race. Depending on their personality and depth of acceptance of their role in the diversity ideology,

students employing the *embracing diversity-work* tactic find the external diversity-work to be a type of personal mission to change other's views and educate their White peers. However, as the weight of the demands become more intense and constant, the person who may begin to question the effectiveness of engaging in diversity-work. Students who are *embracing diversity-work* may experience considerable internal diversity-work as one engagement with the external form begets more demands for external diversity-work (such as serving on a diversity committee, answering questions in the classroom and informal settings, being the "Black friend" in a mostly White friend group, etc.).

*Example:* In an observation of a class meeting for President's Fellows, there was a discussion of the then-new national portraits of President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama painted by two Black artists. The class leaders, two White-appearing Latinx young women asked the whole group, "What do you think of some people saying the portraits look too informal? What do you think of that?" I had been in a small group of six with four other African American students and there had been sort of disdainful discussion on the topic. Responses that spoke to the criticisms of informality being yet another instance of covert racism. Their body language said they did not want to use too much energy to engage with the question: lots of sighing, saying "well you know what this is about." But, in the large group a young Black-appearing woman we will call Toni, who was the only African American person in her small group, jumped in to answer the question with both feet. After she answered the first question about the impacts of race on the criticisms lobbed at the paintings, three more questions about the impact of race followed. Again, Toni answered. At each question she looked over at the five of us African American students across the circle; none of us looking to answer. Eyes down or looking away.

Toni became visibly more flustered with each ensuing question. My interpretation was that once you pull on the string of racial injustice, an entire garment starts to unravel, so to speak, and more and more explanations are needed.

*Type 3 – Critical reflection:* This tactic involves carefully choosing when and where to engage in diversity work. This tactic is common among students who have engaged with external diversity-work in the past, however, over time have developed a greater sense of racial and legal consciousness of the diversity ideology. After a while, they choose to disengage from external diversity-work in an attempt to re-center their goals and values as opposed to those of the diversity ideology. The mental calculus of evaluating diversity-work demands, resisting them, and forming an alternative role for themselves outside of diversity-worker causes a high level of internal diversity-work.

*Example:* In an interview with a young woman, a junior at the time, in Urban Voice who identified as Afro-Latina, she told me when she first arrived on campus, she mostly missed her family. “When I got to Westrock I was thinking, damn I really miss my mom, or I really miss my sister’s voice.” But then she said that as time went on she began to “understand Westrock,” and “how White it is.” Around that time, she started to reconsider how much she was performing at events with mostly White audiences.

I haven’t performed for Urban Voice in like a long time. And that’s very intentional. It’s an intentional thing. I have a certain tension with this because I feel like a lot of the art written in [Urban Voice] caters to other people of color students who understand that

experience, but at the level, but then I always think that there's white people, white audience members who are culturally incompetent and just end up kind of stereotyping the people on stage. That's kind of what I've always thought. Um, so I always perceive that these individuals don't know what they heck is going on, but the words sound ok so they're going to clap when it's over. Or they find some sort of amazement sort of like exceptionalism or something that these people are on stage and they're talented and that they're like these poor people of color, oh these poor people. I just think of it on a level of exceptionalism and that's why I just don't uh, that that just the thought of that is why I don't perform. Just the thought of that is why I don't perform. Yeah, that's kind of what I think of it. The most I've done [lately] is like the open mics. The people that come to open mics are mostly students and they're mostly POC [people of color]. They're like whatever whatever, so I feel like safe in that space.

In this example you can see this student's transition from an *embracing diversity-work* response to a *critical reflection* response as she began to understand her role as a diversity-worker on campus. Her understanding of diversity-work was quite nuanced. She speaks to "tension" and "safety" in describing what it feels like to be performing in mostly White spaces versus performing in spaces with mostly people of color. She also took clear steps in removing herself from spaces that caused external diversity-work and reorienting her artistic performances in spaces that gave back to her goals and values. But making the choice to remove herself from mostly White performance spaces did require internal diversity-work as she has to constantly explain to and deal with the disappointment from other Urban Voice students and sometimes administrators as to why she was not performing as much.

*Type 4 – Politicized resistance:* This tactic involves actively recognizing the importance of anti-racist struggle, and choosing to direct one's efforts towards anti-racism rather than *diversity-work*. I found this tactic in interviews with students who may have engaged in external diversity-work in the past, but have a deep racial and legal consciousness of the diversity-ideology. Therefore, they refuse to engage external diversity-work and will call out those who demand it. This student may be active in anti-racist, Black student led initiatives or social justice initiatives inside and outside of the university structure.

*Example:* Jordan is in Urban Voice and I got to know him through the many hours of rehearsal with the touring ensemble. He identified as Black. When I first encountered him he was a sophomore and I saw him performing at most events I attended. By the time I got to know him better in his junior and senior years he had transitioned away from performing spoken word on campus to primarily recording music; collaborating with other Urban Voice students interested in songwriting and music production.

I would say oftentimes the scholarship programs are...socially aware, I guess, in terms of how our bodies function. So, within these spaces, I guess an activist community, I guess you need to say. I don't really consider myself necessarily an activist, but more an activist mindset...I suppose the brown student that came here without a program, I'm just a student like everybody else. But in my opinion, that's not the case. But a lot of people don't want to even dive into that. They don't want to dive into the controversy of things around here. They just want to make it, and they want to make it here. Go to the parties that they go to, graduate. And it's fine, but it's just different. It's a different agenda than what we have... The [Urban Voice] program doesn't necessarily tell you to write about

that [issues related to race], but I think they look for students who already have that mindset.

In this example Jordan gives a bird's-eye view of where he sees himself and Urban Voice in the structure of the campus. He is hesitant to call himself an activist, but in my ethnographic observations I definitely saw him engage with the Black Lives Matter movement and rallies. Not so much on diversity committees. While he does not make a distinction between Black students who participate in something like Black Lives Matter versus campus diversity initiatives, as an ethnographer triangulating the various interactions in which I saw him participate, I observed that he is not someone who readily does diversity-work. Rather, he picks and chooses what initiatives to be involved in; primarily social justice-focused, not diversity-focused. Jordan also references the fact that while Urban Voice administrators do not direct students to write about issues related to race, they do "look for students who have that mindset." This idea of selecting students who are primed to talk about racial issues came up in my interviews with President's Fellows as well.

### **Themes That Emerged From the Analysis**

Four prominent themes emerged the fieldwork and in-depth interviews: diversity as something African American students were expected to fight for; diversity exists in a hierarchy of institutional goals; visible and invisible forms of diversity; and the administration actively selects for individuals willing and able to do diversity-work.

*Diversity ideology is something African American students are expected to fight for*

In many interviews with students and administrators, there was a reference to a “battle” being fought on campus. The battle language came up in two different ways. One form was the battle for racial equity; how to engage in ways that would create what one student called “the beloved community.” Students who saw themselves as activists were ready to do the work to build into the Black community on campus and fight for racial equity. But the other type of battle language referenced joining a battle for diversity; devoting one’s time to trying to change the hearts and minds of those opposed to what I would call full racial incorporation. It also means devoting time to the university’s diversity plan and policies. It is this latter form of battle that the students I observed and interviewed were more than a little ambivalent about devoting their time.

In an interview with an Urban Voice administrator, they told me about a student who had been admitted to the university and then to Urban Voice. They conveyed how the student was hesitant to come to a place where she knew it was difficult to be a student of color. Here is what they said,

We have a student from Los Angeles, the top poet from there as well, and she emailed me late one night, 10:30 at night, “[UV admin], why would I ever go to a racist university like this? And then she cc’d the head of university communications. She said, what are you [the university administration] doing to address that [the racism at the university]? It was great. You know, I just basically said, if you don’t come they win. You were offered this scholarship, you combat this. Our students are in leadership roles fighting to get to do their art. You can join that battle. Because, no matter where you go it’s going to be the same. It’s all over the country.

The Urban Voice administrator used multiple battle metaphors (e.g. “win,” “combat,” “fighting,” “battle”) to describe what the student may face if she chose to come to the University of Westrock. In the administrator’s mind the experience she would get there would be the same anywhere she went. But the student seemed to be saying that she had no intention of joining in a battle with no clear end and no clear benefit to her. I do not think she was trying to act selfishly but was rather asserting that to come to a place where she already knew she would be called on to do diversity-work was not within her goals for her college going experience. Her goals included being a student just like everyone else and having the university build connections to her, and not just expect her to build them for the university.

*Diversity exists in a hierarchy of institutional goals*

In this example a student from Urban Voice talks about why he thinks Urban Voice students are pushed to speak out about racial issues even though the African American athletes have a bigger platform to reach more people.

I think the university knows that athletes can reach that many people. For some reason they’re [the athletes] discouraged from speaking out [about racial issues], because that affects people who pay big money. As I was saying, so you find out an athlete disagrees with you politically, are you [people with ‘big money’] going to really come out to go see him, or to go support him? Or [they may not] support the whole school letting him speak out on that? So, I feel that’s why they put a muzzle on the athletes, because they depend too much on that money. Whereas, opposed to [Urban Voice,] they don’t depend too heavy on the money that [Urban Voice] brings in for them.

I think that's the big difference between [college athletes and Urban Voice], they can bring all of us in, as many of us as they want.

This student sees money playing a bigger role in decisions about who can and should speak out about issues of race. He thinks that the university could lose a lot of money if they have the athletes talk about race and upset "big money" supporters. He brings up two other good points. One, there's an awareness that there are athletes with a much bigger platform, but they are "muzzled" as he says. Those are not the African American students who do the majority of diversity-work in terms of educating White campus community members. Although, one could argue campus athletes do their own type of diversity-work in the form of being a visible representative of the diversity on campus. He also starts to hint to the point that the university could bring in as many Urban Voice students as it wants to talk about race and there would still be more (diversity) work to do.

*The experience of diversity-work is different for those with visible and invisible forms of diversity*

A theme that emerged from analyzing many, many observations done over the course of three years, was how one embodies a diverse identity matters for how much external diversity-work is demanded of you. For example, African Americans who have markers that are associated with the iconic ghetto are much more likely to experience external diversity-work. Examples are a darker skin complexion, listening to hip hop or rap music or speaking with slang (Anderson 2011). On the other hand, diverse identities such as low-income status are not as readily seen and are therefore not called up as an identity demanding diversity-work (even if a person with that identity is associated with a diversity program). The following example of two African American

male students and one White female Urban Voice students performing at a freshman orientation event illustrates this theme:

African American student 1 (AA1): I'm the friend you sing rap songs with on the bus

African American student 2 (AA2): Do you hear yourself? (*asking the question of the audience*)

AA1: I'm the kid you'll ask for drugs, but I'm not the kid selling them.

AA2: Do you hear yourself?

AA1: Cause I'm not quite...urban?

AA2: Sub-urban?

AA1: Almost, just quite?

AA2: Sub-White?

AA1: Still White enough to wear band tees and read Harry Potter, but urban enough to kick a freestyle.

AA2: When you close your eyes, do you hear yourself? Do you hear your wealth and do you hear your health? We got the same stories, I can see 'em on the shelf. And if I bleed, you bleed, it's just a different self.

AA1: I'm the substitute urban kid. I fill in the absence of Black and Brown children in classrooms.

AA2: Do you hear yourself?

AA1: I'll talk about living conditions in cities I've never lived in. Because I'm sub-urban. Sub-everything. I know as much about the city as my hyphen allows. You know as much about me as you allow. And I don't take the time to know you because you think you know me. Look at that.

AA1, AA2 and White student 1 (W1): We're all acting sub-human. People think they know you. But, they just know themselves. Or do they?

*(enter White female student)*

W1: When you look at me what do you see? They tell me I'm "California cute," Southern Belle looking, sorority prototype because blonds have more fun, so you must want to have some fun, right? No one sees small town working class. Always trying too hard to look like I belong here.

W1, AA1 and AA2: Because I come from dirt, and black oil under wrinkled skin

W1: Dirty fingernails and empty Mountain Dew bottles on the floor of our two-tone Chevy pickup truck

W1, AA1 and AA2: And joblessness in my mother's eyes and free lunch and everyone knows and sometimes

W1: I can't go out with my friends

W1, AA1 and AA2: And sometimes

W1: It's seven dollars and some change.

W1, AA1 and AA2: And sometimes

W1: It's empty cabinets and internet shutdown. And that crying hurts and smiles hurt and trying hurts. And broke hurts. And breaking hurts. And broken always hurts. I'm hoping one day you won't be so heavy.

In this clip from a pre-freshmen orientation event, two African American Urban Voice students talk about how they are the person all their white school mates want to know. The

proverbial “Black Friend.” They also speak about how White students look to them for an “urban experience,” but really, they are from the suburbs and have very little idea what it is like to live the life of the rap songs they listen to.

Then a White female student in Urban Voice enters the scene and talks about her experience with poverty. How other students at the University of Westrock think she’s a “California Valley Girl.” Her experience of poverty, while valid, is not on her skin and her story is not demanded of her in the same way the African American men’s story is. The experience of poverty is an important one, the experience of having a form of diversity unseen is an important one to be explored, but not the type of identity that demands diversity-work from a passer-byer.

*The administration actively selects for individuals who are willing and able to do diversity-work*

I had a conversation with an African American Westrock community leader who volunteers to be on the President’s Fellows selection committee. In the course of our conversation I told them about my project and how I was interested in diversity and how it functions on campus. After about an hour of dialogue about the program history and accomplishments I asked them how they choose students when there are so many wonderful applications. They told me that one of the instructions they were told was to choose students who talk about their racial identity in their application and who they think will be ready to talk about race once they get to campus. In many ways this comment came as no surprise to me since I had been immersed in formulating the idea of diversity-work for four years at that point. But, upon further reflection the fact that a selection criterion for a scholarship for underrepresented racial minorities was being the ability to talk about race and one’s racial experience was the epitome of the diversity ideology. The “diversity benefits all” language of the Supreme Court had made its way to the individual lives of students attempting to get a college education.

African American students in both Urban Voice and President's Fellows spoke about a tacit expectation they felt to speak up about issues of race, but to do it in a way that makes others, White students, comfortable.

In one class meeting with seniors in the President's Fellows the discussion topic was a new policy passed by the Board of Trustees of the university that was aimed at suppressing protests. The class leader read part of the policy out loud, "If person [sic] is considered to be disrupting an event, the event organizer should ask the person to cease. Issuing a warning before action is taken can be a useful, but not required, step to prevent escalation." There was silence in response, as well as looks of confusion. Finally, an African American young man, I call Robert, spoke up. "So, they [the administration] wants us to speak up about our experience. But not so much that it causes a 'disturbance.' But it's possible that anything we say can be thought of as a disturbance. Something doesn't add up here. What are we supposed to do?"

I see this "disruptions policy" as reflecting the ideology of diversity. The presence of under-represented students on campus is intended to assuage potential white guilt, but if under-represented students go too far in initiating conversations about claims of justice (or especially take actions relating to claims of justice, such as protesting) then these actions are policed. The students burdened by diversity-work are torn – they are supposed to be here on campus to provide diverse perspectives coming from their experiences, but if their diverse perspectives are seen as threatening to the majority power structure then the University may ask for or enforce a method of mitigating the challenge to the power structure. The moment their diverse perspectives constitute real change, they are told to keep quiet because it poses risks to the power structure maintained by the diversity ideology.

## Discussion

Through this ethnographic study I examined two questions: 1) How does the diversity ideology impact the goal for full inclusion of African Americans in US society, and 2) What is the experience of everyday students of color, especially African American students, in providing diversity? In answering these questions, I introduce a new theoretical understanding of diversity: diversity as the current means of racial incorporation for African Americans and the basis by which cross racial interactions take place.

The use of diversity in higher education arose in the 1960s from progressive White college administrators who attempted to find a middle ground between the justice demands of Civil Rights activists and desires of White moderates. As affirmative action began being contested in the courts, the use of diversity as the justification for African American's presence in universities made its way to the Supreme Court; most notably in *University of California v. Bakke*. These types of cases continue to be contested today. The "diversity benefits all" literature has permeated higher education in the US, and has spread around the world (Jones Haug, Schroer, Birolini 2020). Further, the diversity ideology has gained traction in business, K-12 schools, churches, and many other organizations. Diversity is commonly understood as the successor to affirmative action.

I outline a long-standing struggle for what I term "racial incorporation," the full inclusion of African Americans in US society. I trace progress and backlash through key legal and political compromises in the struggle for racial incorporation. I highlight the "diversity benefits all" ideology as the latest era of racial incorporation. The diversity ideology was promoted to appease conservative attacks on affirmative action, and this ideology centered the benefits of diversity to

White students. I trace the diversity ideology through Supreme Court decisions around higher education admissions into specific diversity programs at a Midwestern University.

In conducting a four-year ethnography with two very different diversity programs, I found that students of color, and especially African American students, experience a burden of being expected to provide diversity - what I term diversity-work. I observed this burden across campus settings, in classrooms, group meetings, parties and athletic events, etc. The expectation that students of color would provide diversity permeated the experience at this university.

A number of scholars have produced work that examines the role of diversity in higher education. Others have interviewed and studied administrators, academic staff, alumni leaders, and even White students. Critically, no one has conducted an in-depth ethnographic study with students of color in diversity programs to hear from them about their experience around issues of race and diversity. I fill an important gap in the literature to uncover the burden of diversity-work as typical for African American students - even students who are not volunteering as leaders or activists with cultural or social justice organizations.

I find that students experience both external demands for diversity-work (e.g. educating peers from their own experience of race, being expected to serve on diversity committees while White students are not) and internal demands of diversity-work (e.g. doing a constant calculus of how to pursue their own goals and values in the face of potential demands for external diversity-work, and experiencing mental, emotional and physical consequences of having to do the constant calculus). I further examine students' responses to the burden of diversity-work by categorizing four types of responses.

The *avoiding diversity-work* type of response comes from students who choose to reject the imposition of diversity-work by rejecting identification with race. This student does not engage externally on issues concerning race in the classroom or with racial affinity groups. The *embracing diversity-work* tactic comes from students who engage openly and directly with external diversity-work when demanded. When questions about race come up in classroom discussions this student shares their opinion and wants to “set the record straight” on issues of race. The *critical reflection* type of response comes from students who engaged with external diversity-work in the past, however, over time these students have developed a greater sense of racial and legal consciousness of the diversity ideology. Now they choose to disengage from external diversity-work in an attempt to re-center their goals and values as opposed to those of the diversity ideology. The *politicized resistance* tactic comes from students who may have engaged in external diversity-work in the past, but now have a deep racial and legal consciousness of the diversity-ideology. Therefore, they refuse to engage external diversity-work and will call out those who demand it. They may be more involved with social justice and anti-racist efforts.

My research distinguishes diversity-work from other concepts of similar names (i.e. Ahmed) or the job function work performed by hired diversity administrators, and opens a new path for research about the broad reach of the diversity ideology into everyday life. Coming to this conclusion was not simple. Once I realized that I was touching on something with general application I began to wonder *where* I should be doing observations to *see* diversity-work. Figuring out where to see this work being done was a conundrum. I did not want to only go to diversity events or only talk to official diversity staff. Rather, I staked out a spot in the everyday lives of students in diversity and inclusion programs; informal spaces like dinners and tailgates,

program meetings and workshops, traveled with them, attended graduations and basically went anywhere the students were with other people of color *and* interacting with whites. This took a lot of “shoe leather” fieldwork (Anderson 2012). I did not know if this work would pay off, but I kept at the participant observation, relying on an inkling inside that I was seeing something important even if I did not know exactly what it would coalesce into.

My work raises critical questions that should be expanded and further studied in sociology, critical legal studies, higher education policy, organization and management, and African American studies. My work provides crucial depth in the ongoing sociological debate around diversity. Is diversity an ideology or a discourse? Or is its power in how it is practiced? I present evidence that examines diversity as an ideology, a discourse and in practice through examining diversity at multiple levels of analysis.

At the macro level, diversity is articulated in challenges to affirmative action through US Supreme Court decisions, at the meso level diversity has largely permeated the American psyche and has entered our common-sense mental framework of national ideals. Also, at the meso level, universities have taken this common-sense ideal and guidance from the Supreme Court to develop diversity programs and policies that are the primary strategy of racial incorporation in the present era. And, finally, the micro level, the level of interaction that matters most to the everyday lives of people, I have shown how diversity shows up in cross-racial interactions. The lives of African Americans are organized by the “diversity benefits all” ideology.

## Conclusion

The ideology of diversity that creates a system in which African Americans must labor to benefit Whites is not justice nor equal protection. Diversity, as the predominant way to enact civil rights in the present era, is both a representation of the durability of racism and a trojan horse in the fight for real freedom; bringing what looks like progress while providing a framework to perpetuate the racial hierarchy.

The Supreme Court, by condoning and promoting the diversity ideology, allows Whites to pat themselves on the back for what they see as “engaging people of color on issues of race” when they are actually demanding diversity-work of Blacks. When the Supreme Court pronounces that the 14th Amendment equal protection clause -- a clause enacted to protect African Americans post-Civil War -- can be used in cases of “reverse discrimination,” people take note. They know that the Supreme Court is on the side of White supremacy.

Diversity is manifested through discourse, ideology and the practice of diversity practitioners, but one of its clearest expressions is through demands for diversity-work of African Americans striving to better their lives in spaces dominated by Whites. There is an ethos in the United States, undergirded by the “diversity benefits all” narrative that Blacks are present in White spaces to assuage White guilt around race and provide something of value to White lives. It is decidedly not to remind Whites that African Americans have the right to a life just as independent and full as their own; which could mean refusing the diversity-work demanded.

I believe that the burden of diversity-work is understood by African Americans as part of day-to-day reality but has not been articulated and studied in an academic context. The response from communities of color in support of the Black Lives Matter movement is, I think, a

reflection of their racial and legal consciousness. African Americans have been living under the diversity ideology since 1978 (*Bakke*) at least and since that time have been not only dealing with systematic racism, but also educating Whites on issues of race, all the while having to behave in ways that placate Whites. So, the brutal killing of George Floyd in May of 2020 and the countless murders of other African Americans, women and men, at the hands of police—sanctioned legal actors— has been the kindling to light a movement against unequal treatment.

The diversity ideology takes the place of the remedial ideology of affirmative action. While affirmative action was never allowed to bloom into its full potential before conservative backlash, it did have the underlying structure to be self-determining in theory, if not always in practice. But an ideology that squarely puts one racial group at the privileged beck and call of another is a dangerous thing. Unlike affirmative action, diversity is based on a justification for the inclusion of Black people that no longer serves as a remedy for racial discrimination and inequality. The diversity ideology states that the intention of diversity is to put those who are deemed diverse (read: racially diverse) to the service of all (read: Whites). It sets up an expectation that Whites can demand knowledge, respect, assurance of their anti-racist status and attention of Blacks. If Blacks do not comply with their demands, there can be consequences. Demands for diversity-work can be subtle but can have big impacts. When African Americans refuse to engage in diversity-work, especially the kind that establishes Whites as the ones who can rightfully demand Blacks attention, this gets interpreted as opposition. At the least, contesting the diversity ideology could rearrange your whole day and at most it could get the police called and leave you killed.

Wise elders in the Black community take it upon themselves to educate and warn Black young adults about how to get by in White spaces. Part of that education is sharing from the

collective consciousness, traditions and wisdom things that can provide motivation when “the going gets tough.” The education also includes sharing the horrors endured by the ancestors through slavery and Jim Crow and admonishment that those stories are to be kept close to the chest. But the demand for diversity-work is a demand to stir-up those sacred stories and produce them for others' consumption. Being required to do diversity-work is an insult to Black collective wisdom.

This study has examined the diversity ideology in action at a university, a place DuBois identifies with the “talented tenth.” I have shown that African American students in the university in this study are required to perform high levels of diversity-work. Just think of how Whites could interact with African Americans who are not shielded by the gleam of the Ivory Tower. African Americans they could deem as inferior to their social status as college-going people. African Americans do not have any obligation to engage you on issues of race as they go about their daily lives. And they certainly do not owe Whites anything as payment for their presence.

In the diversity era, Whites are operating under the idea that their presence is neutral; that “everyone is friends here.” Whites do not see their white skin as a threat. But, Blacks know all too well what can happen if someone White calls to them and they refuse to answer back when called (Andone 2018), or if one does not readily take on the role of the “Black friend” (Brown 2020) or does not readily present as a Black person who can benefit the campus with their personal experience of hardship and struggle, but not discuss anti-racism (Thornhill 2019) or is the Black person who just refuses to give a half-hearted smile in response to a racist joke (Butcher 2020; Phillips, Dumas and Rothbard 2018). They could be the subject of vigilante justice, shut off from resources and connections forged in college, refused admission into a

university, or deemed a “mad Black woman” or “hostile Black man who “just does not fit into the company culture.” Refusing to do diversity-work has real social, emotional, physical and financial consequences.

I am not implying that the diversity ideology is responsible for all negative cross-racial social interactions. For certain, there are elements of past ideologies and policies at play as well as competing ideologies of the present era (i.e. overt racism, direct ideas about the subservient position of Blacks, colorblindness, etc.). But I make a strong case that the cross-racial interactions we see today are highly influenced by the diversity ideology.

Instead of the diversity ideology garnering admiration, good public relations, or leading people to think, “well, at least there’s still something left of affirmative action,” we should be outraged at the way the diversity ideology reaches back to the ideology of a socially understood uglier time of Jim Crow. African Americans are just wishing for equity and a shot at the American Dream; to live a life of their own choosing.

There needs to be a breaking down of the racial hierarchy in the United States and this means addressing the racist history of this country head-on. We have activists like Bree Newsome (Joiner 2018), Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi (Black Lives Matter 2020) and Michelle Alexander (Alexander 2020) to thank for their work to speed this process.

But we need more than to break down the racial hierarchy. We need to build up something better in its place. A new strategy of racial incorporation that is full and robust--that creates space for African Americans to dream of limitless life possibilities instead of using their lives to cope with or evade the demand for diversity-work, racism and discrimination. To start, we need a truth and reconciliation commission, similar to that established in South Africa after

Apartheid, to address the ways, past, that have created racist structures and the ways, present, that those structures and ideologies live on today.

The conclusions of my research support strategies of racial incorporation that consider race in admissions. In other words, I support affirmative action that is a remedy for past and present discrimination. This research project does not support a narrative that requires diversity-work from African Americans in the form of their body, mind, personal stories and attention to issues of educating White Americans about racism.

Making African American students and other students of color take on the work of social reform when others in the legal realm are too cowardly to name racism for what it is, is morally wrong. But this very thing is done on a daily basis in universities, places of employment, houses of worship and every day in the public square. Even more Black students should be admitted to universities, but not under a diversity ideology that demands diversity-work from them. Admit more Black students with true commitment through word and deed to their thriving and advancement. African American students only want to be a student just the same as other students: given the opportunity to pursue their interests and values and to experience higher education backed by the same commitments to flourishing and learning that White students are given.

### **Future Research**

I hope to launch a larger societal examination of the question of diversity - specifically who provides diversity, how is it demanded, and how do we recognize and eliminate the imposition of diversity-work?

Because I posit that diversity ideology has such a prominent place in shaping the lives of African Americans, much more work needs to be done on the impacts to health and wellness associated with the burden of diversity-work. This is another important avenue of further study.

Any study has its limitations either from the field itself or limitations of the researcher. This study was no different. My research was conducted at a flagship public Midwestern university in a predominantly White state. I believe that the diversity ideology as it relates to higher education admissions is widely held across the US. But it would be important to select other comparison sites to seek to observe diversity-work. Doing a study of similar length to the fieldwork I did with Urban Voice would be ideal to have an immersive comparison.

I am interested in exploring how the shift from affirmative action to diversity has impacted Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Especially at HBCUs which still serve predominantly Black student bodies, how is diversity conceptualized in admissions, campus policies, and student experiences? What is the role of White students in a minority position at HBCUs? How do Black students perceive demands for diversity-work in these spaces?

My distinction between the external and internal types of diversity-work and the four types of student responses is based on my observations. This framework could possibly be expanded with additional studies. The differing response to demands for diversity-work have implications for mental health, and I hope to see further studies in psychology and public health addressing this issue.

## Appendix

**Figure 1. Characteristics of Two Programs**

	Urban Voice	President's Fellows
<b>Date established</b>	2007	1984
<b>Average # of students in one cohort (# on campus each year)</b>	~15 (~60)	~60 (~250)
<b>Criteria selected upon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Three Pillars: Academics, Arts, Activism”</li> <li>- Talent in hip-hop arts (spoken word, DJing, breakdancing, graphic arts).</li> <li>- No race or ethnic requirement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Scholars are chosen for their demonstrated academic success in high school, the impact of their leadership skills, commitment to volunteer service, and potential to excel in the university’s rigorous educational environment.”</li> <li>- “academically talented, underrepresented ethnic minorities- African, Hispanic, Native and Southeast Asian Americans- and socioeconomically disadvantaged undergraduates.</li> </ul>
<b>Does the website mention race or ethnicity?</b>	No	Yes; “underrepresented ethnic minorities”
<b>Does the website mention affirmative action?</b>	No	No
<b>Included in the scholarship</b>	Tuition	Tuition and book stipend
<b># of self-identified African American students in one cohort</b>	~75%	~20%

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