Sponsoring Committee: Professor Robert T. Teranishi, Chairperson
Professor Colleen L. Larson
Professor Lisa A. Suzuki

A UNIQUE RACIAL EXPERIENCE:

EXAMINING ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER

COLLEGE STUDENTS AND CAMPUS CLIMATE

Daniel K. Choi

Program in Higher and Postsecondary Education
Department of Administration, Leadership, and Technology

UMI Number: 3439412

UMI®

Dissertation Publishing

ProQuest®

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank my grandmother and mother who instilled in me the value of education. Although they are not with me today, I know their strength and support was cast on me from heaven. Also, thank you to my sister, Diana, who dealt with me this far in life. Thanks for putting up with my antics and points of view. Being the older brother doesn't necessarily mean that I am wiser as I have learned so much from you and your strength as an individual.

As a student, there have been many people who have made a significant impact in the way I view the world and learning. My academic achievements would not have been possible without the support of all the professors from my past, including all those who teach within the Asian American Studies department at U.C. Irvine. Also, thank you Professor Alexander Jun, who taught me the art of qualitative research while I was completing my Masters degree at USC. Your interest in my academics and push to embrace research methods has allowed me to come this far.

More recently, thank you Professor Robert Teranishi. I really appreciate our conversations about life, school, research, and current events. Your mentoring, support, and presence during my doctoral experience is greatly appreciated. I know our discussions, in particular to race and higher education

will continue and I am looking forward to furthering these conversations. Professor Colleen Larson, thank you for being a brilliant methodologist and educator. You have truly engaged and challenged me to further appreciate and value the beauty and technique of interpretive inquiry. Your teaching style and mentorship has taught me what excellence in instruction and scholarship should look like. Thank you for your warmth and critical feedback to make me the best I can be. Last but certainly not least, Professor Lisa Suzuki. Thank you for your approachability and constant reassurance. Your valuable feedback and ethic of care toward my educational process kept me energized and enthusiastic. Also, your perspectives and ideas incrementally helped me further my study.

Without saying, my friends and family were critical to my growth and the completion of this degree. I would like to acknowledge my friends for helping me process and manage the many emotions I exuded through this journey. Also, thank you to my colleagues in NYU's Department of Residential Life. In particular, Matt Patashnick, Katie Bisang, Audrey Kajumbula, Nekesa Straker, Omar Miranda, Cecilia Suarez, Katrina & Nathan Lee, Ty Crisman and Marissiko Wheaton. Your constant support for me to finish was the fuel I used to press forward. Also, to my professional mentor, Tom Ellett, thank you for your sage advice, as always. My experience within the department has been invaluable and I thank all those who have championed me to complete the doctorate. Additionally, to all the student leaders who have made an impression on me. Each student I have had the privilege to work with deserves gratitude from me for they have

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> Race has become metaphorical – a way of referring to and disguising
> forces, events, classes, and expressions of social decay and economic
> division far more threatening to the body politic than biological "race"
> ever was. It seems that it has a utility far beyond economy, beyond the
> sequestering of classes from one another, and has assumed a metaphorical
> life so completely embedded in daily discourse that it is perhaps more
> necessary and more on display than ever before. (Morrison, 1992, p. 63)

As Toni Morrison states, race is always present in our daily lives and has

transformed into a series of symbols and images that are embedded in

contemporary society. Higher education, which is seen as a microcosm of society,

also wrestles with conceptualizations of race. From the day-to-day interactions

among students, faculty, and administrators (Kohatsu & Sedlacek, 1990; Liang &

Sedlacek, 2003) to federal policies regarding college access (Hurtado, Inkelas,

Briggs, & Rhee, 1997), the discussion of race is important and continues to matter

in our educational landscape. Contemporary higher education research continues

to analyze race as a critical factor that impacts students' educational experiences

and outcomes (Saenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007). Research on various racial groups

in postsecondary education addresses an array of cognitive and affective

outcomes and group differences in educational attainment (Durán, 1983;

Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Sedlacek, 1987). Scholars have found that issues

1

related to race have impacted college student satisfaction, academic achievement, mental wellness, interpersonal relationships, and identity development (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998; Inkelas, 2003; Milem & Hakuta, 2000; Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002; Liang, Li, & Kim, 2004; Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Also, research has revealed how individuals and groups can, and do, experience the same institution in dramatically different ways on the basis of race (Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003).

Multiple studies have shown that Black students report lower levels of satisfaction with racial climates and perceive differential treatment on the basis of race more frequently than their peers (Ancis, Sedlacek, and Mohr, 2000; Cabrera and Nora, 1994; Hurtado, 1992; Suarez-Balcazar Portillo, & Andrews-Guillen, 2003). Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) reveal how subtle insults, known as racial microaggressions, influenced how African American students perceived their experience on a college campus. Specific to Latino students, Hurtado and Ponjuan (2005) explore students' perceptions of the campus climate that impact educational outcomes such as their analytical skills and abilities. Parallel to race, campus climate research has also narrowed investigations by further interrogating the complexities of multiple identities with race and a central focus.

Climate studies have integrated experiences dealing with the intersections of race with class, gender, and sexuality (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Research continues to make a clear case that various racial groups experience the collegiate

climate differently. However, we hear fewer stories on how race is negotiated and experienced by Asian American and Pacific Islander[1] (AAPI) students.

While AAPI students make up the largest proportion of minority students on many campuses they are often overlooked in support services, resources, and academic research in relation to their minority counterparts (Inkelas, 1998). Mass media and dominant discourse related to education have constructed perspectives about AAPI students by valorizing them as stellar students to "cut throat nerds" taking over schools. The supposed academic achievement of Asian American and Pacific Islanders is represented as a beacon to highlight the prototypical American success story, a group to be admired and emulated by others (Ng, Lee, & Pak, 2007). At the same time media outlets and privileged groups within society produce a heightened sense of fear, particularly in schools, where the Asian "horde" will take over the classrooms to raise test scores and ruin the grading curve, resulting in a new form of "White flight" (Hwang, 2005). As race continues to be a critical area of discussion and reality for our society, what direct affect do these images have on AAPI college students and their experience in postsecondary institutions? This question has yet to be fully explored in higher education inquiry.

---

[1] The term Asian American and Pacific Islander refers to persons having origins in Asia or Pacific Islands. The term subsumes a large amount of diversity in culture, history, immigration status, languages spoken, religion, and other factors. There may be vast differences among AAPI communities depending on geographical locations, paths of immigration, and levels of acculturation. For the purpose of this paper this term will be used to understand the dynamic of race and provide a broader scope of how this categorization impacts college students.

The absence of and challenge for AAPIs in higher education research, policy, and student services can be traced to two major problems. The first issue is that higher education research has not come to consensus about Asian American and Pacific Islander students as a unique group in need of attention. Studies focusing on AAPI students fall flat when attempting to provide information specific to this community (To, 2008). There is a lack of agreement where AAPI students are positioned in relation to other racial groups. A primary reason for this is the fact that studies focusing on race, alongside societal misperceptions, use AAPI students as a comparison group.

Harper and Hurtado's (2007) audit of research studies on student experience with race post -1992 revealed out of thirty five articles, none were specifically focused on AAPI students. The examination of the research revealed AAPI students were used as a comparison group rather than illuminating the group's specific needs and challenges. Results from studies conveyed AAPI students' experience being more like White students while having similar or more challenges than their Black and Latino peers in terms of overall satisfaction, campus involvement, and positive wellness outcomes. When information is only used to measure against other groups the value in further understanding AAPI student experience diminishes and seems invisible.

The second issue, which is closely connected to the lack of evidence related to AAPIs and race, is the Black-White binary. AAPI college student research lacks a substantive interrogation identifying how race impacts their

experiences due to the conceptualization that race should be studied along a Black-White continuum of experience. Many studies subscribe to normative ways of thinking about race, with race conceptualized as a Black-White issue. This binary model holds that one group, Blacks, constitute the prototypical minority group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The term "race" or "people of color" is quintessentially African American or Black and other racial group issues are not clearly recognized unless their experience and treatment can be correlated to that of Blacks. Many scholars of race reproduce this paradigm as though only the Black and the White races matter for purposes of discussing race and social policy (Perea, 2000). Other groups' experiences, such as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, then become undifferentiated or invisible. This problematic conceptual obstacle simplifies perspectives on race as a linear movement between Black and White.

The way researchers in higher education have framed the dynamic of race and college students does not allow policymakers, educators, administrators, and media to jettison the Black-White conceptualization of race. In order to further our understanding of the college student experience, scholars must problematize the theoretical underpinnings of race-related studies in collegiate environments and integrate the uniqueness of Asian American and Pacific Islander students.

Higher education literature can overcome these obstacles by making cases regarding why AAPI students may not fit traditional theoretical models of college student development (Kodama, et al., 2002). However, the majority of studies still

lack deep insight into AAPI students' encounters with institutions. Understanding the developmental processes is only one step into gaining further insight into the full experience of AAPI students. Expanding campus climate research is imperative to higher education institutions because of the impact of their findings on educational outcomes for students. Further research also provides institutional implications for changing policy and practice to be more inclusive.

There is a dire need for more research due to the paucity of studies related to AAPI college students. Poon (2008) concluded after examining the representation of Asian Americans in seven higher education journals across a ten year period from 1996 to 2006 that only thirteen out of 2,660 published articles specifically addressed Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders. In addition, two of the seven journals did not have any articles related to AAPIs and one, The Journal of College Student Development, housed ten of the thirteen articles found.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to capture the racialized experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander college students and their perceptions of campus climate. It aims to identify, through the voices of AAPI students, how stereotypes are imposed on and internalized by AAPI students. The study will also seek to understand AAPI students' racial consciousness and how the awareness of their experiences with race impacts their development. Further, it will help explain how

AAPI student perspectives and experiences influence their involvement, connectivity, and willingness to engage with an institution.

The primary research questions guiding this study include:

1. How do Asian American and Pacific Islander college students describe race as a part of the college experience?

2. How do they describe racialized experiences and explain the sources of these interactions?

3. How do they understand and respond to experiences dealing with racial stereotypes?

4. How do students manage racialized experiences?

The rationale for conducting this research is to explore how these students understand and articulate their interactions on campus with various constituents (faculty, administrators, and students) when encountering race-related situations. It deconstructs how AAPI students are situated in research and provides better understanding of this population without the juxtaposition of other groups.

The study aims to highlight the specific needs, challenges, experiences, and processes particular to this racial group. The information gathered will aid in better understanding the AAPI student experience and race. It will take a step further into explaining racialized experiences and the extent to which they impact various elements of student life such as campus climate, satisfaction, involvement, and mental wellness. Understanding how students perceive their place within a college or university through the lens of race serves to further

illustrate the uniqueness of the AAPI experience. Findings from this study will contribute to the body of research that focuses on race and higher education and will provide a glimpse of how these students interpret their own college experience.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for three reasons. First, it will contribute to literature that focuses on how students experience race in higher education. Researchers have expressed concern for the paucity of research focusing on Asian American and Pacific Islander students despite of the continuing growth of the Asian American college student population. In addition, this racial group's interactions and perspectives may illuminate how scholars and administrators within higher education understand this racial group:

> Campus climate research enable campuses to better understand institutions and their impact on students, student responses to climate issues, and relationships that develop among diverse students and faculty. While many institutions are still contending with issues of diversifying their campus enrollments, more campuses need information to help them address the psychological and behavioral dimensions of the climate. (Hurtado, et al., 1998, p. 296)

> Second, this study will contribute to the understanding of race in

8

conjunction with student satisfaction and wellness. Because the specific racialized experiences of AAPIs have been connected to overall college experience and identity development (Inkelas, 2003; Kodama, et al., 2002; Liang & Sedlacek, 2003), it is important to better understand this phenomenon.

Lastly, this study will contribute to continuing conversations about race in higher education. As our college campuses continue to grow more diverse it is imperative to understand the complex impact of race on the experiences of students. This study is specifically addressed to higher education scholars and practitioners both. Museus and Chang (2009) suggest that is an ethical and social obligation of higher education scholars to generate more evidence-based knowledge that is needed to further understand the needs of the AAPI student population. While the information from this research will assist in comprehending the AAPI student experience it will consequently assist practitioners in understanding the uniqueness of this student population so they may effectively serve their needs for overall college success (Museus & Chang, 2009). This study will speak to constituents invested in all areas of higher education from student life, college admissions, financial aid, to curriculum discussions. It aims to speak to a broad audience within higher education invested in the enhancement of all students by further shifting the ways in which we understand race and the student experience.

CHAPTER II

THE RELATED LITERATURE

The following literature review addresses: 1) how Asian American and

Pacific Islanders are racialized in society and education, 2) campus climate

studies in higher education, 3) climate studies that address AAPI students, and, 4)

the need for a stronger conceptual perspective to further the research. Each

section will identify gaps in the literature and how the reviewed research enables

this study to move forward in better understanding the AAPI college student

experience.

Societal Stereotypes and the Racialization of AAPIs

Racialization involves the construction of a specific image based on a set

of assumptions or stereotypes according to a certain race (Lee, 2006). Racial

groups come to be designated as different, and on that basis they are subjected to

different and unequal treatment. Despite the rich and widely diverse history of the

AAPI experience, AAPIs are reduced to two perspectives: the Model Minority

Myth (Lee, 1996; Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995; Suzuki, 1994, 2002; The new whiz,

1987), and the Perfidious Foreigner Syndrome (Lowe, 1994; Suzuki, 2002).

Additionally, AAPIs are subjected to collateral stereotypes and assumptions such

as Cultural Homogeneity (Espiritu, 1997; Lee, 1996; Balón, Duffy, & Toya, 1996) and dominant gender stereotypes that further challenge their image in this country (Espiritu, 1992; Hune, 1997). The following discussion highlights these racialized images that permeate our society and clarify how the AAPI student experience is starkly different from other racial groups.

In order to gain an understanding of racialized conceptions dealing with AAPIs, it is necessary to clarify what these stereotypes illustrate. Also, a review of the historical development of these stereotypical images while pointing out their key assumptions and the problems that arise with these notions are imperative to move toward a stronger understanding the unique needs of this population. Researchers must understand the complexity of race when looking at these images separately, for they are interconnected. Using these perspectives narrowly limits the understanding of AAPI college students.

<u>The Model Minority Myth</u>

A popular belief, known as "the model minority myth" is one form of racialization. This stereotype assumes AAPIs were once disadvantaged but overcame adversity as a result of a strong work ethic and value for upward mobility (Lee, 1996; Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995; Suzuki, 1994, 2002; The new whiz, 1987). Due to increased participation and enrollment in colleges, the model minority image translates into AAPIs as the exemplar minority free of challenges and no longer in need of services, policies, and support systems (Inkelas, 1998;

11

Suzuki, 2002). AAPIs are often dismissed as a group in need of support or examination because of distorted and exaggerated images of economic and academic success (Chou & Feagin, 2008). Additionally, Asian American and Pacific Islanders are often seen as the successful racial group and as "honorary Whites" (Tuan, 1998; Wong & Halgin, 2006).

Public perceptions of AAPIs as "whiz kids" and academic "success stories" have been the prevailing images of this population for nearly four decades (Lee, 1996; Suzuki, 1989, 1994). These images have been marked by uncontested statistics that illustrate the overall overrepresentation of AAPIs in higher education and aggregate test scores that show AAPIs outpacing Whites and other minority groups (Suzuki, 1994). Consequently, AAPIs, as a group, have been labeled the "model minority," for perceived success and overachievement, and culturally based fortitude and self-sufficiency (Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995; Suzuki, 1994, 2002). However, these model minority descriptions fail to acknowledge increasing incidents of racial violence, systemic workplace discrimination, and anti-Asian prejudice in college settings (Hune, 2002; Mooko, 1995). This static, monolithic view compromises any likelihood for change in perception regarding the diverse needs and challenges within the AAPI population. At the same time, this one-dimensional portrayal ignores any within-group differences that might have implications for practice or policy development.

In the racial history of the United States, one that has centered on the oppressive treatment of Native Americans and later African Americans (Omi & Winant, 1994; Wu, 2002), the Model Minority Myth was developed out of the comparisons between "contentious, disobedient minority groups," in particular African Americans, and the so called "model" Asian American and Pacific Islanders, who have only recently established their collective consciousness for activism (Espiritu, 1992; Wu, 2002). To pit AAPIs against other people of color has been a prime feature of the Model Minority Myth, leading to the idea that AAPIs are a more desirable minority than other groups while creating the perception that AAPIs share more similarities with White/s than with African Americans and Latinas/os (Kim, 1999; Wu, 2002).

On college campuses, the Model Minority Myth has prompted AAPIs to be a group that has no social, cultural, or material needs and therefore, causes them to be invisible in the conversation regarding diversity (Hune & Chan, 1997; Kohatsu & Sedlacek, 1990; Suzuki, 1994, 2002). Unsurprisingly, AAPIs endure significant cultural, psychological, and personal consequences because of the Model Minority Myth (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Lee, 1996). These perceptions have contributed to complex cultural and political dynamics that have steered the public debate over admissions quotas (Nakanishi, 1989, 1995; Wang, 1993), and challenges to a thickening glass ceiling workplace phenomenon (Kim, 1999; Suzuki, 2002). Because of the influence of the Model Minority Myth, institutions

may overlook the importance of recognizing this group as oppressed, marginalized, or important in any form of institutional climate.

Opponents of the model minority stereotype argue that certain AAPI communities face significant barriers when it comes to higher education. While aggregated numbers may reveal that AAPIs (over the age of 25) have more bachelor's degrees than the total population, the figures are well below the national average of 27.7% for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (13.8%), Cambodians (11.4%), Laotians (9.4%), and Vietnamese (20.2%). Additionally, in that same age category of 25 years or older, only 71.3% of AAPIs (of all ethnic backgrounds) graduated from high school, which is well below the 80.7% of the national population (U.S. Census, 2000). Researchers claim that aggregate statistics only portrays a small, incomplete facet of the lived realities of this group (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Lee, 1996).

While AAPI students do relatively well in terms of higher education degree attainment, studies have proven there is also a number of AAPIs who are not accessing the educational pipeline (Nakanishi, 1995). Within group differences, such as ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status and generational status, shows that disaggregated data reflects a more revealing picture of the AAPI experience and that they are not the ideal mold for success or free from educational challenges.

Subscribing to the Model Minority Myth only justifies the unique discrimination faced by Asian Americans. It works as a double-edged sword in

14

the fight against oppression on one side by denying the existence of current discriminatory practices, and on the other legitimizing the oppression of other racial groups and poor Whites. It is a racialized construct that is used to valorize Asian Americans and pit them against other groups, primarily African Americans (Kim, 1999). As the most dominant stereotype in American society (Chou & Feagin, 2008), it is clear that this image has made a significant impact on the experiences of the AAPI student community.

<center>Perfidious/Perpetual Foreigner Syndrome</center>

The routine portrayal of Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the media has resulted in the common view that, despite citizenship in the United States, AAPIs are "foreigners" who are "deceitful" and "disloyal" (Espiritu, 1997; Kim, 1999; Suzuki, 1994, 2002; Wu, 2002). Legal scholar Frank Wu (2002) reveals that one component of the Asian American experience is that they have been primarily racialized as foreigners and aliens. Historical examples of this racialization revolve around legislation that excluded Asian immigrants as well as the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 (Chan, 1991). The depictions of Asians as non-White and perfidious foreigners were ways to further racialize AAPIs to subjugate them in the United States. Okihiro (1994) states that racism or the idea of the [perfidious foreigner] is irrational and it is constructed with a purpose… to sustain the social order.

<center>15</center>

This depiction creates the sentiment that AAPIs are not to be trusted

and/or do not belong within the landscape of this country. Suzuki (1994)

describes the perfidious foreigner (also known as the perpetual foreigner) image

as one in which Asian American and Pacific Islanders are viewed as deceitful,

underhanded, and dishonest. In reports about Asian American and Pacific

Islanders in higher education (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Sue, 1994), these stereotypes

work together to negatively affect students. Lacking in language proficiency and

suspicion of cheating coupled with other experiences of high academic

expectations by professors and peers, created a stressful environment for Asian

American and Pacific Islander students (Cress & Ikeda, 2003).

The perfidious/perpetual foreigner syndrome allows for AAPI students to

be viewed with skepticism and mistrust or as having self-serving agendas. When

this image enters into the perspectives on a college campus, AAPI students are

seen as hordes overtaking classrooms, cheaters, cut-throat academic enemies, and

competition in the classroom. The implications of this image also imply that

AAPIs are not concerned with broader social goals as in social justice (Suzuki,

2002).

Cultural Homogeneity: They All Look the Same

The "Model Minority Myth" and "Perfidious Foreigner Syndrome" also

contribute to another public perception: that all AAPIs look alike and this likeness

is a form of cultural homogeneity. Contrary to the myth of cultural homogeneity,

16

however, AAPIs are an extremely diverse population, with differences that lie
across numerous dimensions including ethnicity, cultural values, generational
status, social class, religion, gender, occupational decisions, and other social
identities (Balón et al., 1996; Chan, 1991; Hune & Chan, 1997; Nakanishi &
Nishida, 1995, Suzuki, 2002). Nevertheless, in research and practice, AAPIs
historically have been viewed as maintaining a singular cultural perspective and,
subsequently, have been studied as a group with one monolithic standpoint on
issues (Ancis et al., 2000; Inkelas, 2000). Consequently, AAPIs may be
considered in limited dimensions when it comes to academic majors, campus
involvement, leadership, and other co-curricular activities (Balón et al., 1996; Liu
& Sedlacek, 1999). The complications of this idea are that it does not adequately
explain differences; it does not explain how policies and decisions are made nor
address the assumptions upon which they are based. Understanding racialization
and stereotypes have been helpful in understanding AAPI students. However, the
way in which we examine AAPI students needs to be changed.

For decades, researchers have provided interdisciplinary perspectives to
confront the misperceptions of success and also reveal the roots of anti-Asian
sentiment. Scholars in the fields of history (Takaki, 1998), English (Lowe, 2000),
anthropology (Manalansan, 2000, 2003), sociology (Kibria, 2002; C. Kim, 1999;
Min, 1996; Tuan, 1998), ethnic and gender studies (Espiritu, 1997; Lee, 1999),
and law (Ancheta, 2000; Wu, 1995) have critically examined the complexities of
AAPI experiences to challenge the ways that the public has imagined them (Ng et

al., 2007). Specifically for education, scholars have clarified these assumptions by presenting empirical evidence to show the complexities of the AAPI student community (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education, 2008).

Established studies provide descriptive statistics or solely focus on explanations related to cultural aspects of AAPIs and education. The studies serve as tools to elaborate on cultural distinctions between ethnic groups, societal stereotypes, and other intergroup characteristics to further understand AAPI students. There is a lack of attention regarding experiences directly related to race that is experienced by AAPIs (Chun & Sue, 1998, Liang et al., 2004). Recent studies have shown that AAPI students suffer from and are more susceptible to psychological vulnerabilities than their peers from other racial backgrounds (Massey, Charles, Lundy, & Fischer, 2002). Psychological issues researched include racism-related stress, feeling unwelcome on campus, insufficient sense of belonging, apathy in campus involvement, increased substance abuse, severe depression, and suicidal tendencies (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Gould, 1988; Liang et al., 2004; Chou & Feagin, 2008). None of the previous studies, while informative, go deeper into illustrating the racialized experiences of AAPI students. Using the information currently established as a foundation, this study further investigates how racialized conceptions of AAPI students directly impact the student experience. The literature creates groundwork to further reveal and fill the gap in literature on how this plays out in the lives of these students.

The next section will assist in building a new lens and provide further evidence on how race is an everyday lived experience for AAPI students via campus climate. After a review of how the racialized perspectives can be coupled to create a more cogent lens to analyze AAPI college students, the literature will go forward and introduce a more complex conceptual framework that furthers the understanding of race for AAPI college students.

Campus Climate Studies in Higher Education

Campus climate studies focus on the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define an institution and its members (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999; Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Understanding campus climate and diversity is imperative to higher education institutions because of the impact it has on the educational outcomes for students. Positive campus climates assist in cross-racial interaction among students, engagement in complex thinking, and overall enriching educational experience (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). Milem and Hakuta (2000) also reveal that diversity in institutions creates a workforce with greater levels of cross-cultural competence and higher levels of creativity and innovation as well as a more educated citizenry. Colleges and universities engaged in institutional climate research found that student perceptions of diversity and a welcoming environment are related to overall satisfaction with their institution and that perceptions differ by racial group (Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998).

Campus racial climate has been a focus of attention utlizing theories of race and racism to understand student experiences within the college environment. In order to assess campus racial climate, researchers have established an organizing framework that focuses on four main areas of understanding diversity and postsecondary institutions (Hurtado, et al., 1998). Although traditional conceptualizations of climate focus on psychological dimensions of the student experience, Hurtado et al. (1998) adds a historical legacy of exclusion at an institution, its structural diversity, and the behaviors on a campus that include the relations that occur inside and outside a classroom.

Collectively identified as the institutional context, these four components are impacted by changes in the government and policy and the sociohistorical changes in our society. This framework enables researchers interested in climate studies to identify and capture that various aspects of diversity that permeate through a campus. Once thought to be too complex to comprehend by higher education scholars, the theoretical structure Hurtado et al. (1998) outlines provides a conceptual handle for understanding diversity and student experiences.

Colleges and universities primarily engage in climate research to assess what can be done to improve the student experience. Numerous studies investigating effect of the college environment on student success find that the institutional climate and culture contribute to student satisfaction and success. While a negative or "chilly" climate negatively impacts retention rates (Hurtado & Carter, 1994), grades (Fuertes & Sedlacek, 1995), and graduation rates

(Hurtado et al., 1999), a positive climate leads to meaningful educational experiences and higher levels of student involvement (Astin, 1993).

<u>Campus Climate and Asian American and Pacific Islander Students</u>

While campus climate and student involvement studies address the experiences of women, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, the most prevalent research focuses on understanding racial and ethnic minority students. Research and institutional priority on racial and ethnic diversity is not surprising as American college students continue to grow in number and diversity with regard to race and ethnicity. Of more than sixteen million individuals enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities, one third are racial or ethnic minorities (Eckel & King, 2004). A heterogeneous student population, coupled with emerging evidence supporting the educational benefits of diversity, has resulted in the promotion of diversity efforts at postsecondary institutions in the United States. Given the significance of the many outcomes, it is crucial to further investigate the forces affecting institutional climates toward diversity and students' experiences dealing with race (Inkelas, 2003).

Although campus climate studies have continued to provide important information to determine what can be done to improve the college experience for all students, much of the research that examines students' perceptions of the university climate only focuses on the experiences of Whites and African Americans (Ancis, et al., 2000; Loo & Rolison, 1986). This supports the argument

that race is studied as a binary dynamic that limits itself to Black and White. Researchers further confirm that AAPI students may be overlooked in the literature regarding diversity in higher education because of the Black-White conceptualizations of race (Osajima, 1995) or the assumption that these student are not in need of services (Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002). When the views of AAPIs are discussed, it is often in comparison to findings that emphasize other racial and ethnic groups (Osajima, 1991; Yonezawa & Antonio, 1996). Since climate studies propose to better understand the unique experiences of the many communities within American postsecondary institutions, further studies should be conducted to solely highlight and incorporate Asian American and Pacific Islander students. Increased attention to AAPI student experiences will enhance and confirm that diversity is a true priority for U.S. colleges and universities. In addition, as the number of AAPI college students continues to sharply increase this creates the opportunity for further investigation regarding their collegiate experiences (Inkelas, 2003).

A study, performed at the University of Michigan, reported that AAPI students gained less academic skills and abilities than assumed (Rohrlick, Alvarado, Zaruba, and Kallio, 1998). The information presented in the study exposed the problems inherent in the model minority image and how that impacts AAPI students' perceptions of campus climate. Rohrlick et al., extend academic success beyond the general variables such as enrollment, retention, grades, and graduation rates. The development of writing and communication skills, gains in

critical thinking, and experiences with faculty were incorporated to provide a broader look at the academic experience. When centering on the broader definition of academic success, AAPI students have a different and less favorable experience than expected. However, this study did not extrapolate the feelings students had related to being AAPI. Rather, they focused on what these students experienced and the academic stressors they may be experiencing. The study did not specifically address the issues of race and the model minority image, just the pressures they felt academically as day-to-day students. Their findings support the invasiveness of the stereotype rather than making a case or implications for the student.

A salient study by Cress and Ikeda (2003) address the psychological well being of AAPI students and how perceptions of a negative campus climate were predicative of students' depression levels. Using data (N=508) from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at UCLA, the researchers used student surveys to explore the relationship between perceptions of campus climate and levels of depression.

This study found that AAPI students are more likely than other students from different racial backgrounds to experience feelings of depression and to perceive negative campus climates (Cress & Ikeda, 2003). The campus climate variables used were four statements that were treated as a single aggregate variable. The statements were: 1) I have been singled out in class or treated differently than other students because of my gender, race, or ethnicity; 2) many

students on campus are prejudiced against women or racial and ethnic minorities; 3) instructors treat students the same regardless of the students' gender, race, or ethnicity; and 4) I have observed discriminatory words, behaviors, or gestures directed toward students who are women, ethnic or racial minorities, gays or lesbians, or people with disabilities.

Although the strongest predictor of depression for Asian American and Pacific Islander students was freshman reports of feeling depressed, when the researchers controlled for these proclivities, campus climate was still a significant predictor of depression. Further extending their analysis, Cress and Ikeda (2003) report that low levels of student social activities and academic engagement (such as student-faculty interaction) was positively related to depression. Additionally, students who majored in English appeared to be more at risk for becoming depressed and experience a hostile campus racial climate. The authors account for this by stating that a result of this phenomenon is due to a lack of peer and faculty role models participating in this specific discipline.

Reasons for all of the findings relate to the lack of AAPI presence within the social and academic environment that includes academic literature, classmates, faculty role models, and cultural conflicts in choice of major (Cress & Ikeda, 2003). Although the research leads to a significant issue for AAPI students when examining campus racial climate, there is a gap. The centrality of this research was depression among AAPI students with a broad definition of campus climate as a single variable. The findings reveal there are challenges and a unique

experience for AAPI students but is limited in further explaining the experiences or examples of the perceptions that amount to the feeling of a negative campus climate.

Rohrlick et al. (1998) and Cress and Ikeda's (2003) research connect general negative campus climate perceptions to student involvement. Both studies find AAPI students are derailed from total campus involvement. These studies provide evidence that AAPI students have a different experience and less favorable assessment of their undergraduate experience. Examining academic and social factors of success among AAPI reflect their unique experiences in relation to their peers. In particular, both studies examined AAPI students in comparison to their White peers, which also suggest that there is a different experience that further illustrates the need to rethink the Black-White paradigm in understating race and college student experiences.

For the most part, college campuses remain predominantly White in their participation, organizational structures, and climate (Hurtado et al., 1998, 1999; Rendón & Hope, 1996). Consequently, college campuses may internalize and recycle these monolithic images of AAPI students into the culture of higher education. Research seems to confirm this dynamic. For example, Liang and Sedlacek (2003) found that 70 higher education administrators at a campus of significant numbers of AAPI college students have stereotypical perceptions of AAPIs, identifying them as more technologically oriented and less physically threatening than other races.

In another study using a national sample of college students, Hurtado, Dey, and Trevino (1994) concluded that thirty percent of AAPI students experienced racial discrimination. This finding was validated when Tan (1994) investigated the unique experiences and factors associated with AAPI students' academic performance at a large predominantly White university in the Southwest and found that AAPI college students were experiencing the same levels of racist encounters as their African American counterparts. Both groups also had difficulty coping with these negative experiences.

Similarly, Woo (1997) explored the AAPI experience at the University of California, Berkeley and concluded that AAPI students often experience subtle racism in academic and social settings, including being stereotyped or ignored by both students and faculty. Likewise, AAPI students who felt faculty were racist in and out of the classroom were likely to be dissatisfied with their institution (Helm, et al., 1998). Williams' (2002) study on ethnic identity and campus climate revealed significant differences between AAPI students and their African American peers. Although AAPI students held a positive view of the interpersonal and institutional climate compared to other groups, their experiences were not connected to academic outcomes (specifically grade point average) in contrast to African American students. However, within the AAPI student collective, his research suggests that discrimination and racial hostility are real for the AAPI students who have stronger levels of identity formation. In this study, it is clear

that developmental areas such as self efficacy and sense of belonging have a direct connection to students experience with campus climate.

In sum, perceptions of a negative campus climate adversely affect AAPI students' racial attitudes (Cabrera & Nora, 1994; Inkelas, 2003), increase the level of racism related stress (Liang, Li, & Kim, 2004; Williams, 2002), and increase AAPI student concern with safety (Ancis, et al., 2000, Helm et al., 1998).

The main weakness in these studies deal with their limitations pertaining to how specific racialized experiences impacted their perspectives as well as the methodological scope. Campus climate research focused on quantitative methods and did not specifically address the assumptions of the model minority myth, perpetual foreigner, cultural homogeneity, and gender stereotypes. Although the more recent studies had discussions related to issues of race they still were unable to capture the uniqueness of how experiences with race caused these perceptions to come about. Cases have been made that experiences with racialization can and will have a negative impact on a student's college experience and development. However, studies have not illuminated the unique encounters of AAPI students and race. Without being specific as to what interactions or specific experiences they have had, it is difficult to fully understand how these societal perceptions occur in the lives of these students. Also, the research is limited in identifying outcomes associated with positive perceptions of campus climate. It would be insightful to gain information on how these students stay afloat amidst the challenges imposed on them by negative experiences.

A new avenue of research pertaining to AAPI college students needs to be examined. Further investigation related to campus climate, the salience of race, and campus involvement warrant further consideration. Prompted by calls for postsecondary education to become representative of the demographics composition of the United States and the benefits of diverse environments (Hurtado et al., 1998), scholars have been successful on building a body of knowledge to better understand the experiences of students of color. However, most studies are still limited and conflicting when dealing with the association between race and satisfaction with college. Several studies have found significant race differences in satisfaction (Ancis, et al., 2000; Helm & Sedlacek, 1998; Rohrlick, et al., 1998) but others have not (Knox, Lindsay, & Kolb, 1992; Umbach & Porter, 2002). In addition to highlighting the unique experiences of AAPI students with campus climate and issues of race, this paper will provide further evidence on the importance of connecting the multiple factors of racialization and how that impacts perceived campus climate.

AAPIs are considered the "missing" minority in the collegiate racial discourse (Inkelas, 2003). Despite the lack of research and attention to AAPI college students, there is evidence of discrimination that affects their experiences and outcomes in college. Pertaining to issues revolving around race, researchers have found that AAPI students were less likely to be satisfied with their overall collegiate experience in comparison to their peers from other racial groups. AAPI students were less likely to perceive themselves as leaders, get involved with

28

mainstream campus organizations, experienced higher levels of depression, did not feel a strong sense of belonging to the institutions, and withdrew from the general campus community (Liu & Sedlacek, 1996; Rohrlick, et al., 1998; Cress & Ikeda, 2003).

Evidence suggests there is a challenge for AAPI students dealing with race. The problem is that studies have not overcome the ways in which we examine race and interconnect the specific challenges of the Black-White binary as well as the unique connections that deal with AAPI stereotypes that result in unfavorable experiences of these students.

Literature Synthesis

This review of literature creates a case that reveals that Asian American and Pacific Islander college students encounter racialized experiences that impacts their development, engagement, perceptions of the campus climate, and outcomes. Using the literature provided, an argument can be made that race is salient for AAPI students. However, there are a number of gaps in the literature including the general lack of research regarding campus climate and the number of qualitative studies to further explain how these stereotypes are experienced. Lastly, there was only one study that addressed issues faced by students of color to explain the relationship between campus climate and holistic development of students.

The current body of literature also lacks of a strong conceptual understanding of how AAPI students encountered race. Although many researchers use the model minority myth, perpetual foreigner syndrome, and cultural homogeneity to support their research, none have directly used these concepts together to create a cogent, complete theoretical lens to further explicate the dynamics of race and AAPI students. These concepts are used to loosely when discussing issues of race. Consequently, there is no research that explicitly defines these notions as vehicles for how race can impact a student's experience.

Due to the dearth of research and literature on AAPI students in higher education and their continual rise in numbers, it is important to make them the focus of further studies. It is also imperative to look at how these students experience these assumptions to gauge the experience of race as well as how that impacts their unique development and involvement on campus. What effects does this have on their overall experience? How are these experiences connected to outcomes, in particular multicultural competency, choices in academic track, and psychological perceptions of self? These are a few questions that should be addressed to uncover what the existing literature has not yet done and further the dynamics of race, AAPI college students, and campus climate.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Studies dealing with campus racial climate have been important in understanding college student experiences situated in higher education research. This study broadly defines campus racial climate as the general racial environment of a college campus including residence halls and the classroom. Understanding and analyzing the collegiate racial climate is an important part of examining college access, persistence, satisfaction, and development of Asian American and Pacific Islander students. When a collegiate racial climate is positive, it includes the incorporation and visibility of students, faculty, and administrators of color, reflection of the historical and contemporary experiences of people of color in the curriculum, support for the recruitment, retention, and graduation of students of color are in place, and a transparent mission statement that reinforces it's commitment to pluralism (Hurtado, 1992; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, and Allen, 1999; and Solarzano, Ceja, and Yosso, 2000).

The requirements for a positive campus racial climate provide the initial steps into the interrogation of institutionalized racism within higher education institutions. The larger theoretical model for assessing climate deals with

understanding the institutional context. Specifically, Hurtado, et al., (1998, p. 282) states:

> The institutional context contains four dimensions resulting from educational programs and practices. They include 1) an institution's historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of various racial/ethnic groups, 2) its structural diversity in terms of numerical representation of various racial/ethnic groups, 3) the psychological climate of perceptions and attitudes between and among groups, and 4) the behavioral climate dimension, characterized by intergroup relations on campus. This is conceived as the institutional climate as a product of these various elements.

In order to capture a deeper understanding of AAPI student experiences the conceptual base for this study will go deeper into two specific components of the campus racial climate model, the behavioral and psychological dimensions of climate.

Hurtado et al. (1998) state the behavioral dimension of an institutional climate consists of 1) reporting of general social interactions, 2) interaction between and among different racial groups, and 3) the nature of intergroup relations on campus. We know that student involvement has proven to play an integral role in retention as well as cognitive and affective learning outcomes (Astin, 1988, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1993).

The elements of understanding the psychological dimensions of campus

racial climate include 1) an individual's views of group relations, 2) institutional

responses to diversity, 3) perceptions of discrimination or racial conflict, and 4)

attitudes toward those from other racial backgrounds than one's own (Hurtado, et

al., 1998).

Racial Microaggressions and Racism

Originally researched by psychologist Chester Pierce (1974), racial

microaggressions are subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual) directed

toward people of color, often automatically or unconsciously (Pierce, 1995;

Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). In today's society, racism has become

embedded in society in less noticeable, subtle, and covert ways. Delgado and

Stefancic (1992) describe subtle racism as code-words and nuances such as body

language, averted gazes, exasperated looks, terms such as "you people," and other

racially charged meanings. These deeply imbedded forms of racism reflect what

Pierce calls racial microaggressions (Solórzano et al., 2000).

Racial microaggressions have penetrated into systematic and policy

debates in education. One of the subtle ways racial microaggressions exist is in

the form of code-words and has continued to permeate in today's society. Words

such as quotas, preferences, affirmative action, and reverse discrimination can be

related to the current lexicon in education, race, and student experience. Language

and racism are critical in understanding how covert oppression is embedded in our

systems and practices and helps identify ways in which racial microaggressions play out. Everyday words, interactions, and social exchange in the form of racial microaggressions can have considerable effects on college students of color. The end result of compiled microaggressions leads to flattened confidence, depressed sense of self, guilt, and isolation (Solarzano, 1998; Teranishi, 2002).

When discussing racial microaggressions, the focus of previous research has revolved around Black or Latino students (Solarzano, et al., 2000, Yosso, 2005). To further elaborate on the experiences of all students of color, I will examine how this form of racism is faced by AAPI students. Racial microaggressions directed toward AAPI students likely differ from other students of color due to distinctive stereotypes specific to this group. These stereotypes, discussed earlier within the related literature, show the unique types of racism experienced by AAPI students.

Campus Climate and Racial Microaggressions: A Framework

The claims provided by theoretical perspectives on racial microaggressions allows for a robust framework to be used for the study of Asian American and Pacific Islander college students and campus climate. Using a combined lens dealing with the examination of the subtle, everyday experiences of race and a framework that provides further evidence on the field of racial positions will help elaborate on how distinctive the AAPI student experience can be. It further illuminates the unique perspectives and lives of this racial group.

Since climate research speaks to the historical, structural, psychological, and behavioral elements of an institution, this study directly contributes to the body of literature already established. The elements of racial microaggressions will further strengthen and highlight the characteristic experiences of AAPI students while specifically targeting the broad based expectations of campus climate framework related to institutional context.

From the review of literature it is known that AAPI students do experience negative or hostile campus climates through race. The evidence eludes to students having a separate experience in need of further consideration and examination. Low levels of satisfaction, disconnectedness to the campus community, impeded academic and social development, and impact on psychological wellness are shown to be major factors when understanding AAPI college students. The one gap this conceptual framework will fill is the explanation on how these outcomes occur.

Previous literature loosely examines campus climate for AAPI students and many studies were tangential findings which were a part of larger studies where other students of color took precedence in the findings and implications. The proposed framework allows for the fulfillment of the limitations in the previous literature in three ways. First, by focusing on AAPI students, the study will not deter from this specific group's experiences with race and climate. Next, taking from what we know from the previous research, the framework will extrapolate the behavioral and psychological dimensions of the traditional campus

climate model. These specific areas of climate are where the literature identifies

AAPI students having the most challenging experiences with race. Lastly,

identifying racial microaggressions to further identify the larger categories of the

climate model will provide a robust framework to reveal the missing detail in

better elaborating on how AAPI students experience race on college campuses

and why it leads to the findings previously reviewed.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This section will summarize the methodology employed in this study to address the research questions presented. The sections that follow include: 1) the research approach and methodological stance; 2) the proposed data collection method and analysis; 3) the format of data presentation; and 4) the researcher's stance.

Research Approach

This study will seeks to understand how AAPI college students experience race on a college campus. In order to capture the lived realities of these students a qualitative method of inquiry was used. This interpretive approach yielded essential qualitative data that illuminates the knowledge, experiences, and words of participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2005; Patton, 2002). While quantitative research seeks to analyze the relationships among variables and uses measurements and scales, qualitative research explores individuals' lived experiences and emphasizes the ways in which people make meaning of the world (Creswell, 1998; Denzin, et al., 2003; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995).

Employers of qualitative methods focus on the particular through an inductive data gathering process (Creswell, 1998). This means that researchers are not interested in testing hypotheses but instead collect data to build theories, concepts, or themes (Merriam, 2002b). When qualitative methods are used, a smaller sample size is useful in understanding the details and nuances of a phenomenon if described richly (Patton, 2002). The use of qualitative methods in this study means that I sought new and emergent patterns from the data (Merriam, 2002b; Patton, 2002).

Qualitative research also stresses the subjective element of the social world by pursuing issues of marginalized people (Creswell, 1998) and through an exploration of societal structures and phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) for the purpose of making the world visible through interpretation (Denzin, et al., 2003). A distinctive feature of qualitative methods is the presentation of data in participants' own words. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) emphasize that, for people of color, storytelling is an important way for people to make sense of the world and enables others to understand the world as they experience it. I present narrative accounts from participants and is expected to interpret these stories in order to offer a picture of the phenomenon under study (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Specifically, this study extracted narrative by employing a case study method to identify how students experienced the system of a college institution in relation to race. For AAPI students, this storytelling was unique because it translated as reflective accounts and memories that were not as much stories as

they were venting sessions that allowed them to release past experiences they were never able to share with others in this fashion. Stories within their own right, they also transcended beyond storytelling and became interpersonal narratives that enabled students to further process and better understand their experiences and how these histories shape who they are and how they see the world.

The Case Study

Case study research calls for selecting a few examples of the phenomenon to be studied and then intensively investigating the characteristics of those cases (Yin, 2003). By closely examining cases, and comparing and contrasting them, the researcher will learn about significant features of race and racism and how it varies under different circumstances. Yin (2003) maintains that case study research is particularly well suited to investigating complex social phenomena.

Context is a vital reason for the selection of a case study method (Merriam, 2002a; Ragin & Becker, 1992; Yin, 2003). If a researcher believes a particular context is unique or will illuminate issues important for an audience to know, then a case study is an appropriate methodological choice (Stake, 1995). Case studies are useful when a bounded system is present where a researcher defines the unit(s) of analysis and the context(s) under investigation (Merriam, 1988, 1998). According to Merriam (1988), a case study differs from other methodologies in that researchers seek to answer "how" and "why" questions and are not interested in the control element important in experimental designs. Case

studies strive for holistic interpretations of a phenomenon through intensive examination and are grounded in the data collected and analyzed (Merriam, 1988).

Case study methods enabled me to focus on individual behaviors and practices as well as the broad, overarching structures that influenced participants' perceptions of their experiences (Yin, 2003). By treating students as individual cases, I garnered similar and divergent descriptions of the ways in with they encountered issues of race and racism. The addition of a critical race lens allowed me to explore race relations within a campus and how AAPI students' perceive the college campus climate and the impact this perception has on their engagement. This critical race lens also provided spaces for the exploration of participants' racialized narratives.

As Merriam (2002b) noted, "Critical educational research … queries the context where learning takes place, including the larger systems of society, the culture and institutions that shape educational practice, the structural and historical conditions framing practice" (pp. 9-10). This research design captured important issues in the environment that illuminates how race is discussed among college students, as well as provided pedagogical approaches that place the deconstruction, examination, and discussion of racial realities at the forefront of the research process (Solórzano et al., 2000). For this study we examine two types of cases, the larger case, which is the institution is and then each student is also presented as a case, placing their experiences at the forefront of this study.

Methodological Stance: Critical Race Theory and Interpretive Interactionism

  Critical race theory (CRT) and interpretive interactionism created a robust research methodology that enables the researcher to thoroughly interrogate issues revolving around race and allow for rich storytelling that reveal the lives of these students. Although interpretive interactionism signifies an attempt to join traditional symbolic interactionist thought with critical forms of inquiry (Denzin, 2001), it is imperative for the elements of both methodological traditions be revealed. The transparency in the methodological stance revealed how this study further closes the gap in race related research in higher education while providing a clear explanation regarding the lens used to examine this phenomenon. Additionally, I reconcile the use of an interpretive and critical theory framework due to my ontological perspective that social reality is constructed through institutionalized systems, structures, and policies. Educational systems and practices are created to serve all constituents equally. However, when examining institution through the lens of race, students encounter the collegiate environment with a variety of unique experiences. As Denzin (2001) states, the way institutions view the populations they are created to serve can result in varied, and limited, experiences. Critical race theory and interpretive interactionism will provide the lens for understanding how students make sense of the college racial climate and the policies and practices designed to create these differing lived realities.

  The methodological assumptions of critical race theory is directly associated with the conceptual framework dealing with the racialization and

stereotypes that plague API students. Critical race theory draws upon the everyday experiences with perspective, viewpoint, and the power of stories and persuasion to come to a better understanding of how Americans see race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Additionally, CRT is appropriate for this study because it examines the role of ideas, thoughts, and unconscious discrimination.

Initially applied to legal studies, CRT has made a revolutionary change in the development of research in the area of education. CRT offers insights, methods, and pedagogies that guide our efforts to identify, analyze, and transform the structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom (Solórzano & Yosso, 2000; Tierney, 1993).

CRT is used to help understand the educational experiences of Asian American students by centering the dialogue on the issue of race as the core of the discussion (Delgado, 1995; Teranishi, 2002; Teranishi, 2008). CRT also challenges the dominant discourse on race in education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice have been used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, et al., 2000; Teranishi, 2000). A key example of the subordination of race in educational research is the paucity and lack of investigation pertaining Asian American students. CRT adds to the growing number of studies that reveal that minority student experiences are markedly different for Asian Americans (Gomez & Teranishi, 2001; Hurtado, Inkelas, Briggs, & Rhee, 1997).

The central purpose of critical race theory research focuses on the illuminating: (1) the centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality of subordination, (2) the challenge to dominant ideology, (3) the commitment to social justice through research, (4) the centrality of experiential and transformative knowledge, and (5) the transdisciplinary perspective to identify overlapping themes of gender, class, and other themes of oppression (Solórzano, 1998, Solórzano & Yosso, 2000).

Additionally, this study used interpretive interactionism to guide the research methods. Interpretive interactionism "attempts to make the problematic lived experiences of ordinary people available to the reader" (Denzin, 2001, p. *xi*). This stance speaks to the interrelationship between private lives and public responses to personal troubles, such as racism (Denzin, 2001). Denzin (1992) designed interpretive interactionism to be a research process that would develop understanding of the lives of ordinary people, particularly during critical incidents or turning points.

Interpretive interactionism directs the researcher's attention to focus on (1) the interactional processes and the meanings people make of them. (2) the turning point moments where the underlying social patterns are most likely to become obvious, and (3) the private troubles of individuals and how these are related to the broader social structures and processes (Denzin, 1992).

Since issues of racialization affect students of color, using this critical qualitative approach promotes the types of dialogue that are necessary for

uncovering these experiences. Interpretive interactionism focuses on locating the epiphany, where personal troubles become public issues (Denzin, 2001). Researchers using this method are able to illuminate the moments of crisis that occur in people's lives and create transformational experiences, ultimately connecting these moments to larger social issues. Bringing attention to how students' experiences and perceptions interact with educational institutions is an important part of understanding how race impacts the realities of students.

This study followed the six step process of interpretive interactionism outlined by Denzin (2001) in order to conceptualize, research, and evaluate the lived experiences of the students being studied. The steps are: 1) framing the research question; 2) deconstruction; 3) capturing; 4) bracketing; 5) construction; and 6) contextualization. This next section will detail each of the steps in relation to this study and how it was employed.

Framing the Research Question

Interpretive interactionism requires researchers to ask questions related to how and not why a phenomenon occurs for those studied. The subjects in the study will elaborate and further define how issues revolving around race can impact the educational experience. Because CRT involves the centrality of race, the research questions designed to guide the study focused on the experiences related to racialized dynamics within a student's life. The questions for this study are connected to how students describe race in relation to their college

experiences and the ways in which race is constructed on their campus. Additionally, this inquiry probes how these students respond to their perceptions within the institution which ultimately shapes their overall experience in college.

Deconstruction

This step required a critical analysis of how the phenomenon, racialized experiences, has been studied, presented, and analyzed in existing literature (Denzin, 2001). The previous literature review fulfills this stage of inquiry. By examining related literature on the perspectives of race, campus climate, and Asian American college students, I was able to provide a critique on the gaps that existing literature maintains. Additionally, the literature review allowed for a case to be made about the linearity of racial discussions in higher education research between Black and White. This critical overview of the research provided the groundwork from which to construct new awareness of how students encounter race and shape their educational experiences.

Capturing

This step requires the researcher to locate and situate what is to be studied in the natural world (Denzin, 2001). Multiple cases and personal accounts of the phenomenon should be sought after so that the researcher can compare and contrast the lived experiences of the subjects being studied. The capturing phase required the researcher to reveal the participant and site selection process, data

collection procedure, and how information was analyzed. After the review of all the components dealing with interpretive interactionism, a subsequent section detailing the participant recruitment and site selection will be provided.

Participant Recruitment and Site Selection

Qualitative studies use purposeful sampling methods rather than statistical sampling (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998). Based on the assumption that the researcher would obtain firsthand experiences (Creswell, 1998), I used purposeful sampling by recruiting students who identify as AAPI. This study solicits six (6) full-time students who identify as Asian American and Pacific Islander. In order to provide a picture of the various experiences within the AAPI student community, the researcher sought a diverse array of students under the umbrella term.

Miles and Huberman (1994) provide a strategy within purposeful sampling known as "maximum variation" that becomes useful when representing diverse cases to fully display multiple perspectives. This type of sampling, when discussing ethnicity, is important so there is clear acknowledgement that the many ethnicities within the AAPI category has distinctive experiences. Since this study is to talk about the experiences of AAPI students, it was necessary to be conscious and intentional about this component of selection. It is important to note that there is a tremendous amount of diversity between the many groups categorized as Asian American and Pacific Islander. There is no simple description that can

characterize Asian American and Pacific Islander students or communities as a whole (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education, 2008). However, the research questions of this study sought to understand how the students describe and experience race and the selection within this group will be inclusive of people having origins in East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Hawai'i, Guam, Samoa, and other Pacific Islands.

All participants also classified themselves as Asian American and Pacific Islander. This one common ground in identifying as AAPI will be vital and necessary during the selection process. It was important for the students to be able to identify beyond their own ethnic group and have an understanding and affinity to the term Asian American and Pacific Islander in order to participate in the study. Since the study is about the AAPI student community it is important for students to also be conscious of their racial identity as a collective group with experiences which would aid in their descriptions about being AAPI, rather than just their specific ethnicity, in the campus environment.

The selection method also provided a rich depiction of how various experiences influenced students' perceptions about climate. Participants were selected from a large private research institution located in a large metropolitan city on the East Coast. The population of Asian/Pacific Islander students comprise of 19.2% of the total undergraduate enrollment at the institution.

To narrow the scope of the study, the criteria for students who participated in the study focused on traditional-aged college students ranging from 18-21 years

of age. First year students were excluded due to their limited exposure to the college experience. Students who have had at least one year on the campus will be able to reflect and provide thicker descriptions in relation to their previous experiences. Students sought to participate in the study represented a variety of academic majors so the discussion on race and various academic climates within the institution could be examined.

I also selected participants who identify as second generation Asian American and/or Pacific Islander. For this study, second generation means individuals who consider themselves children of immigrants born in the United States (Park, 2008). This group is particularly significant because in recent years a growing number of them have become traditional college-age and added to the complexities regarding the perspectives of how AAPIs are situated in society. Their involvement in colleges and universities raises important questions regarding race and their own perspectives. Unlike their parents, the second generation has largely been raised in a context where the term Asian, AAPI, and language about their race is normally applied to them (Park, 2008). This shared experience of being collectively identified in everyday discourse and interaction encourages a general understanding of these labels among members of the second generation which will assist in this study. In particular, when discussing current events and contemporary examples of areas related to race, higher education, and society.

Another selection criteria expected was for participants to have had experience in diverse environments such as high school and the neighborhood they were raised. Students who are exposed to diverse environments have greater intellectual self-conceptualizations as well as a better understanding of group differences and will maintain an appreciation for how those differences are valued and important (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). This assisted in getting valuable information on how the respondents see themselves in the context of the college environment while also exposing what impacts this may have had upon entering college. It allowed for the students to also compare how perceive their experience in various diverse environments.

For gender, I looked for students who are male and female with no specific quota other than having both genders represented in the sample. Since race is the focal point of the study, aspects of gender will additionally assist in inference when examining the multiplicity of identities under the tenets of Critical Race Theory. Experience with race took precedence and other identities, such as gender, that intersect with race were addressed accordingly.

Access to students was initiated by multiple recruitment methods. Yin (1998) and Stake (1995) both recommend that the selection offers the opportunity to maximize what can be learned, knowing that time is limited. Hence the cases selected will be purposeful, easily accessible, and willing participants. First, flyers were posted soliciting participants who may be interested in the study with a brief explanation of the study and the researcher's contact information. The flyers were

placed in high traffic areas within residence halls and student affairs offices. Also, a general letter of access was sent to faculty advisors and administrators within the Office of Student Activities who oversee student organizations (Appendix A) to begin the search process and provide information related to the study. Also, an email was sent to various listserves that are on the university's public directory of student clubs and organizations. This email distribution was sent to various AAPI student organizations at the institution to field interest in the study along with an attachment of the flyer that further elaborates details on the study and participation expectations.

From the list of students, fourteen responded to the recruitment materials (flyers and email) for subjects, I sent a response email to the students inquiring about interest in participation for the study (Appendix B). To select the students best suited for this study a Student Information Form (Appendix C) was provided to complete and return to the researcher. Questions consisted of basic demographics information, previous high school name, and generational status.

The survey assisted in narrowing the pool of candidates to best meet the needs of the study. Specifically, the survey results aided in ensuring elements such as generational status, ethnicity, exposure to diverse climates, as well as gender to be accounted for. Beyond the obvious categorical requirements of the study, the requirement for students to have had experience in diverse environments were discovered when they disclosed the information related to

high school attended. I conducted research on the schools identified to see the demographic makeup of the schools with regard to racial diversity.

Since the aforementioned categories have an impact on how race may be experienced and perceived, the selection on participants adhered to the previous justifications provided to identify the best suited candidates for this study. From the fourteen students, six were chosen who best fit the criteria for the study. Also, a table is provided (Appendix F) for readers to use in order to identify students, which include, hometown, major, and year in school. For the students who were not selected, an email correspondence was provided stating they were not chosen for the study but would be contacted in the event their participation would be needed.

Data Collection Procedures

Multiple in depth interviews, direct observations of student environments, and document analysis were used in this study to understand the lived experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander college students who may have faced racial stereotypes in higher education. Kvale (1996) describes an interview as "an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest" (p. 14). Through conversations, researchers develop greater insight into both the interpersonal relationship that grows between the interviewer and interviewee and the knowledge that is transmitted through these verbal exchanges.

Each participant was interviewed at least three times over a course of an academic semester. When information about the study was provided to potential candidates for the study I conveyed that there may be an additional interviews required.   The extra interview was negotiated with the participants as needed. The reason for adding interviews is due to the process of relationship building and for the purposes of validity. In order to clarify their previous responses the additional interviews were found to be helpful in verifying meaning in their responses.

An in depth interview is viewed as an on-going relationship with the interviewer and interviewee. The trust and interest needed for such an interview is imperative when collecting data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Qualitative researchers must initiate a rapport-building process from their first encounter with a participant in order to build a research relationship that will allow the researcher access to that person's story (Dickson-Swift, Kippen, & Liamputtong, 2007; Ceglowski, 2000). The first interview focused on Part I of the Interview Protocol (Appendix D) which began the foundations of the research relationship. It consisted of general questions related to the student sharing about their background, interests, and how they perceived their collegiate experiences.

Beyond rapport, the interviews were initiated with additional purpose. In order to capture valuable themes and concepts a qualitative interview must be flexible, iterative, and continuous in design (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). After the first interview, data was analyzed to see emergent themes that were addressed again at

future scheduled interviews. Researchers in qualitative research listen carefully to hear the underlying building block ideas, or concepts, and the themes as well as to explore these concepts further with interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The additional meetings further supported validity and accuracy in representing the voice of the subjects.

The subsequent interviews allowed time for rapport to build with the researcher as well as to serve as interpersonal scaffolding (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Providing multiple opportunities to engage in conversation enabled the interview connection to deepen and ensure the questioning is appropriate to the level of the relationship. Since the discussion of race is delicate, it was important to build this type of trust, generally during the first interview. The second interview went deeper into the elements of race and campus climate. It addressed the detailed aspects of their racial experience on campus and their perceptions of the climate in connection to their identity as AAPI students. It is also important to note that terms such as model minority myth and racism were excluded from the interview questions so that students could fully explain, without contamination or leading, their experiences dealing with race, including positive and negative interactions.

Since multiple interviews allow investigators to revisit and clarify responses or questions to ensure further trustworthiness of the data gathered the last session was conducted for clarification, additional information, member checking, and to maintain the professional relationship with the students. Due to the sensitivity of the topic under investigation as well as adhering to the

transformative and experiential tenets of CRT, it was imperative to sustain this connection through multiple interviews.

Observations took place in various student-centered environments such as classrooms, club meetings, and residence halls. Observing entails the management of special skills such as systematic noting, recording of events, and issues such as impression management of those being interviewed (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The purpose of observations was to see how they behave and interact with various campus environments. Since the study is also a broader case study of the institution it was important to integrate observational data of the environment. In order to capture more information about how their perceptions are tailored on campus, additional observations by shadowing students and visiting spaces they generally would encounter on a daily basis was necessary. Beyond the physical setting, observations focused on various activities and interactions as well as subtle factors such as nonverbal communication. Sites included a classroom, student organization meeting or event, and residence hall. Permission was requested in advance so that students are willing to allow for observation in these settings. Creswell (1998) states the importance of identifying who or what to observe, when and duration as well as an observation protocol (Appendix E). Sites for observations were discussed in the first interview so that participants had a choice in which environments were examined and provided further narrative on what they are experiencing through the lens of race and their lived realities.

Lastly, there was a review of documents produced by the university. Context surrounding a specific setting come, in part, from documents established by the institution. Researchers supplement observations and interviews by gathering and analyzing documents produced in the course of events or constructed for the research at hand (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Data collected from institutional documents focused on website information, literature provided by student services offices, admissions materials provided to prospective students, and institutional policies related to diversity. These documents were sought and collected through the internet as well as visiting various offices on the campus. An examination of documents provided additional evidence that created a whole picture related to the type of climate that is created for students, in particular to race.

Data Analysis

Once interviews, observations, and document analysis were completed the transcribed data was then coded. Data analysis incorporated coding of transcripts (Denzin, 2001), convergent and divergent thematic analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002), and cross case analysis. All interview recordings were transcribed by me to ensure accuracy and to ensure the maximum level of confidence and connectivity between the student responses and the data analysis.

After transcription, the data was coded by grouping responses into categories that bring together similar ideas, concepts, and/or themes that are

discovered in the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Merriam, 1998).The coding was executed by reviewing transcripts and coding within the margins of the document. Once the transcripts were coded, an additional document was created to list the transcript page number and information coded to sort by relevance and gather quotes, pivotal moments during the interviews, and meaning categorization.

<div align="center">Bracketing</div>

At this point, the researcher's focus turns to examples of the phenomenon. In this study, racialized experiences of AAPI college students are examined. Especially the experiences critically important and impacting to the participant were investigated. Denzin (2001) advises that previous understandings reached through deconstruction of the literature should be suspended as the participants' narratives are inspected and dissected only as examples of their experiences of the phenomenon. The interpretive interactionist then reduces the phenomenon to its essential elements (Denzin, 2001).

Bracketing the phenomena involved several distinct yet interrelated steps: 1) examine key phrases, silences or gaps that highlight and locate critical moments, 2) interpret and make meaning of these moments, and 3) and through triangulation, obtain the subject's interpretations of the phrases. That is, as the investigator, the expectation was to allow for the students' voice to be privileged regarding racialized experiences. The stories they provided were highlighted

beyond the previous related literature in order to see how this phenomenon is unique to their lives. Once these key phrases were revealed the researcher then materializes these elements for the reader.

The specific approach to Denzin's bracketing and interview analysis was meaning categorization. Kvale (1996) explains that meaning categorization is when long statements are reduced to categories indicating the occurrence of a phenomenon. Based on the conceptual framework dealing with campus racial climate and microaggressions, main dimensions related to racialized experiences were created. Main dimensions are themes that are derived from previous theories and research that will scale down large amounts of transcribed data (Kvale, 1996). Once main dimensions are identified, subcategories were created within each of the main dimensions, further elaborating and illuminating the interpretations derived from the interviews.

To ensure the trustworthiness of data and the interpretations of data are complete the researcher initiated the rubric of triangulation (Stake, 1995). Triangulation is the process of utilizing multiple approaches to enhance the soundness of a study (Creswell, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995). Three important ways to perform triangulation is through member checking, peer debriefing, and requesting feedback from potential readers. Member checking involved allowing interviewees to review their stories in their own words in order to ensure the accurate representation of their lived experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman,

1994; Stake, 1995). Specifically, the interviewees checked the transcriptions as well as the themes constructed from their interviews.

Combined with member checks, peer debriefing was also another means to acquire feedback on the developing findings. Asking persons who were both familiar and unfamiliar with the study to comment on the data analysis procedures and findings was one way to clarify ambiguous descriptions and interpretations (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988). The use of different people to review and offer feedback on the development and execution of the study where different researchers comment on the interpretations of the data further contributed to the trustworthiness of this study (Patton, 2002). To ensure the data interpretation and generation of themes related to the conceptual framework are aligned, using peer debriefing furthered the coherence of this study.

<u>Construction</u>

In this stage, the researcher reconstructs the various meanings and places them together to build new ways to understand the phenomenon. The goal is to find the same recurring forms of experience to interpret and make meaning out of the various accounts provided. The researcher will piece together the elements found while bracketing and weave them to form a new understanding of the racialized experiences of AAPI students.

The importance of hearing stories is used in the construction phase. CRT and interpretive interactionism focuses on the narrative and lives of people

through their stories. The study collected the experiences of AAPI college students that relate to and further illuminate their unique racialized experiences. The narratives will assist in building, or constructing, themes that assist in creating additional, and more current, understandings of racialization in relation to AAPI students.

Contextualization

Contextualizing requires the researcher to give meaning to the information gathered by placing them back in the world where the students interacted with the issues of race. Using thick description, the researcher documents the experiences of ordinary people, in this case students, and how it alters and shapes the idea of racialization on a college campus. These detailed experiences will then be woven together with the theoretical framework to make meaning of this phenomenon.

Delimitations of the Study

This study captures the racialized experiences of six AAPI colleges and their perceptions of campus climate. Although I did my best to select the best suited respondents for this study by choosing a group that had variance in academic major, ethic affiliation, and gender, it is difficult to generalize the findings with such a small group of respondents. A delimitation is that the information provided examines a phenomenon, racialization, specific to these

students and does not provide large scale generalizations, which was not the intent of this study.

Holistic by nature, qualitative research is concerned with human beings in all of their complexities not generalizations. Qualitative studies, such as this, will continue to be criticized for lack of objectivity and generalizability. However, the case study method employed in this dissertation has several appealing features. The emphasis on understanding the lived experiences of AAPI students meets the practical needs of decision and policy-makers. The narratives with rich descriptions of actions and quotes from students provide detailed, easily understood information. The realities of these students give additional meaning and value to statistical data from previous surveys or analysis of existing records. Rather than a true limitation, I see it as an additional handle to better understand this student population.

Also, first year students were eliminated from the pool of students who were able to participate in the study. Although college student research incorporates the first year experience, I believe it was necessary to exclude students new to the institution due to a temporal deficit in concepts dealing with a sense of belonging, identity formation, and perceptions about campus. I sought to contribute to higher education literature by utilizing the voices of upperclass students who had a better foundation with regard to perceptions of campus climate and enough time to have had experiences they were able to reflect on.

Geographic location was also a restraint of the study. Due to the institution being situated in a large urban city, the diversity of resources, people, and culture that it provides uniquely design these student experiences. The ways in which the students of this study manage, cope, and respond to racialized experiences may look very different from other AAPI students in traditional college campuses that are predominately White and lack the resources and alternative opportunities that a large urban area generally provides.

Lastly, with regard to methods, the observations and document analysis were not as fruitful as I had preferred. The observations that entailed shadowing students were not as helpful as the field notes I collected during site visits alone. Realizing this challenge early on, I requested that students share with me the various places on campus they would frequent so I could also conduct observations of general student life without their presence. As for documents, the university had limited access to archived information regarding student demographics. Specifically for AAPI, as well as other students of color students, the absence of this information was a finding in and of itself, but also posed a delimitation to this study.

Researchers Stance

Qualitative researchers accept the fact that research is ideologically driven and value-free interpretive research is impossible (Janesick, 2003; Denzin, 2001). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) assert that the combination of beliefs about ontology,

epistemology, and methodology shape how qualitative researchers sees and acts in the world. Additionally, Denzin (2001) states that all researchers are caught in the circle of interpretation and must state their prior interpretations of the phenomena under investigation, otherwise subsequent explanations will remain unclear and misunderstood.

As a second generation Korean American and first generation college student, I attended the University of California, Irvine (UCI). During my time in college I had the opportunity to attend a university that prided itself on being almost 50% Asian in student population. Student life and involvement was unique. Greek life had a critical mass of Asian American and Pacific Islander students, the university orientation staff comprised mostly of AAPI students, student government was run by majority AAPI students. The sea of faces in small to large classrooms was represented by a diverse mixture of Asian ethnic groups. Upon further education and departure from UCI, I realized my experience in college was unique. Coupled with my Asian American Studies education and pursuit of a graduate degree in degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs, I soon realized that race, for AAPI students, played out differently at most institutions. At UCI, I was able to explore my Asian American identity with support from faculty, administrators, and fellow students. The institution sent messages about embracing diversity with having to state it explicitly. Due to the large mass of AAPI students on the campus, the issues related to climate was not as present as they are on other campuses throughout the nation.

When I continued my journey in higher education on other campuses and talked to other faculty, administrators, and students about issues of race and the AAPI experience, it was clear the larger societal issues of race permeated within the walls of many institutions. Regardless of how much systems of higher education purport awareness, multiculturalism, and the embracement of diversity, they will never be void of assumptions, bias, and ignorance. Scisney-Matlock and Matlock (2001) states that higher education is a microcosm of society at large, and many of the significant issues involving social justice, diversity, and merit are at work on the campus. If systems of higher education are known to be smaller versions of society at play, then issues of race are real and tangible for students. I believe that all students go through racialized experiences.

Research dealing with racialized experiences of specific groups of students, in particular Asian American and Pacific Islander, in higher education is imperative for three reasons. First, racism, today, is a covert act transformed throughout time to be ordinary and business as usual (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Discussions of race in higher education have not been critical or substantive enough. Topics of race, especially when dealing with student life, is deflected, avoided, or simply ignored. Beyond classes offered as a subject to study, dialogue about the issues faced by students from various racial backgrounds is limited. This, then, stunts the further understanding and support necessary for the creation of inclusive and participatory university climates. Higher education is struggling with the concept that diversity is not a euphemism

for assimilation, but a challenge to transform an educational system that promotes and values individual group differences (Barcelo, 2007). Second, the voice of Asian American and Pacific Islander students has been void in research. These stories and experiences must be revealed to continue a movement toward understanding all student experiences to further enhance academic and social support systems. Lastly, it aids in dismantling severe and broad brushstroke assumption constituents of higher education may have, in turn, impacting the needs of individual students.

I believe that an analysis of the unique racialized experiences of AAPI college students will help faculty and administrators in understanding how students experience race and the specific needs this student population possesses. Globally, I also feel this study will contribute to critical dialogue about race in higher education while propelling it forward so that all participants in the higher education can manage their own assumptions and practices while serving our students.

CHAPTER V

INTRODUCTION TO THE SITE AND STUDENTS

Metro Park University

Self-proclaimed as the university that is "in and of the city," Metro Park

University (MPU)[2] is unlike other colleges in the United States. The university

has no physical walls or borders to identify a campus. It is situated amidst tall

buildings and surrounded by busy city streets. Classrooms, residence halls, and

administrative buildings are scattered throughout this concrete jungle. Most

school buildings are identified with large flags that sway above revolving glass

doors. With over 50,000 undergraduate and graduate students, it is known as one

of the largest private research universities in the United States.

The interviews for this study required multiple meetings that took place in

student-centered spaces on campus. Places such as the university's student union

and study lounges were optimal locations for private interviews. These

environments enabled students to feel comfortable, relaxed, and conversational.

Coordinating a meeting place with each participant was a revealing exercise in

[2] The following site data for Metro Park University, the schools and departments within MPU, and the city in which this school resides was obtained through institutional websites and factbooks. For reasons of confidentiality and anonymity, these sources do not appear in the list of references.

understanding how students interfaced with the physical campus. Students appeared to be unfamiliar with many campus buildings beyond the student union or the classrooms housing their academic field of study. I chose to intentionally meet within the spaces they are most comfortable with, both academically and socially.

Beyond the residence halls, these academic silos appeared to be places where they would spend most of their collegiate career. When asked what areas on campus were important to them, responses included the dining hall, library, and clean bathrooms. As subsequent meetings took place, we chose the same location and usually the same time. Student schedules appeared to be standardized and when asked how their routines were shaped, many seemed to agree scheduling is one of the hardest aspects of being in college. One common ground these students shared was that attending college in large urban area was one of the most challenging yet exhilarating experiences one can have.

To further capture the ways in which students view the university, it was important to examine the literature accessible to the public. The university website describes the institution and student life as a perfect combination of city and college life. It states:

> [MPU's] campus is literally without walls, drawing its spirit from a global
> city with an entrepreneurial bent, a diversity of human life, and resources
> that include some of the world's most famous cultural institutions and
> most valued professional opportunities. Albeit untraditional, [MPU's]

66

primary campus is located in downtown… and there's no doubt that the neighborhood feels like a college community. Many of [MPU's] academic and administrative buildings and freshman residence halls border [the local park]. The sidewalks are full of students on their way to class, and members of the [MPU] community fill the restaurants, shops, and other businesses. Both on campus and off, the people of [MPU] are directly involved in the day-to-day excitement, culture, and opportunity of the city that serves as a very real extension of [MPU]'s campus and classrooms. This snapshot of the university is one of many varying perspectives.

During interviews students were also asked to describe the university. The information provided by the university was different to the student comments when asked to depict the institution in their words. One student says: "it's like the school is just melted into the city… you don't really know who is a student or a normal city person… that's why it can be easy to get lost in the mix here." Another student replied:

> There's not much of an [MPU] school spirit, like at other schools, I think students come here to be anonymous or because they don't want the typical college experience. There is an element of wanting to be left alone and to do what you want to do. People come here because of the school's academic reputation and the opportunities for their future. I really don't

think that I, or other students and people I know here, come to the school because they want to wear college sweatshirts and go to football games.

Another student stated:

You have to have a thick skin, street smarts, and a strong sense of independence to survive in a school like this. Regardless of the school requirements to be successful at this college, the city can eat you up. They always talk about community and how we have a real campus, but I think that is really what the school wants you to think so that other kids feel safe and comfortable here. The reality is that you make it what you want and they have a lot of stuff for you to get involved in and resources but it's up to you if you want to use them. I guess it's good to know it's there, but kids just want to go to class and take care of things on their own.

Unlike most college campuses, MPU maintains an additional challenge by being an untraditional campus. From the physical space to the demands places on students to survive campus and city environments, the university has a distinct reputation of "not being the best fit for just any student." Those who decide to pursue their college career at MPU find themselves in a world of opportunity with the challenges of navigating the urban environment. For this study, understanding the landscape in which the students experience college is important to understand as they see the city and the university as a combined entity. This translates into how students searched for support, community, and resources for their own development and success. Just as complex as the campus itself, the MPU student

body is also combined with a multitude of characteristics. With race as a focal point of this study, the ways in which the university was viewed by students also impacts their perceptions related to campus climate.

The Students

What is the typical MPU student like? This question was posed to the students of this study in order to capture their descriptions of the student body. This question perplexed all the students of the study. One responded with: "there's no such thing as a typical MPU student." Published school information suggests that MPU students come from all fifty states and 133 foreign countries. Many assume MPU students are generally from upper echelons of society but contrary to popular belief, the student body is composed of all stratifications of socio-economic status. Over 72% of full-time undergraduate students receive some form of financial aid.

More recently, to add to this information, a popular website released an article titled "Top Ten Universities for Student Debt" listing Metro Park University as number one on their list (Gawker, 2010, para. 2). The website states: "Metro Park University is first place with $659 million in total student debt. In fact, MPU 's student debt alone is bigger than the gross domestic product of twelve countries." The basis of this information was cited to be a legitimate citation provided by the U.S. Department of Education in July of 2010.

Beyond the socio-economic make up of the students, the demographic breakdown of the university is as follows:

Black, non-Hispanic	742	3.70%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	48	0.20%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	3945	19.90%
Hispanic	145	7.30%
White, non-Hispanic	9614	49%
Unknown or Other	2741	13.80%
Total	19,842	100%

In 2008, of the almost 20,000 undergraduate students, approximately 2,000 (10%) are identified as international students (MPU, 2008). It is important to note, the request for disaggregated data regarding Asian/Pacific Islander and International students was denied. The university's office that maintains all institutional data was unable to provide statistics displaying disaggregated data to distinguish the number of students who were Asian American and Pacific Islander versus whose who were considered international students from Asia studying at the university. I made sense of this obstacle due to the previous literature and support on the lack of research and awareness related to the AAPI student community. There has not been enough support in higher education institutions to prioritize the disaggregation and differentiation of AAPI students where structural changes have been made to ascertain this type of data.

Though there is a critical mass of Asian students on campus, the lack of disaggregated information leaves many questions unanswered about these students. As the reviewed literature supports, lumping all Asian students clouds

the multitude of diverse needs this large community maintains. Information related to topics such as financial aid, academic support, satisfaction, and campus climate can be further enhanced when institutions separate AAPI students from the collective Asian student group. This study will present these missing voices within the larger student body with regard to campus climate and race.

This chapter provides biographical information about the AAPI students in this study. The introduction sections for each student starts by providing stories dealing with their lived realities of collegiate life, encounters with race and racialized experiences, and being AAPI. These students are: Sonia, Young, Amy, Gary, Cindy, and Charles. Although all students identified as AAPI and the study aims to better understand how race has impacted their experience in college, they also represent the diversity and individuality of the MPU student population. Each student shared stories that reveal how race is real, unique, and has impacted the ways they view the current campus racial climate and their place at the institution. Every respondent's biographical information will be presented within each of the sections dedicated to their introduction in order to provide a whole picture of each student. Before surfacing the themes generated from interviews, their personal history, interactions with others, college, and perspectives about race will give a snapshot of who these students were before coming to college. The students are presented in the chronological order of the first interviews. The first interview was conducted with Sonia and last was Charles.

Introduction to the Case: Sonia

Our initial meeting began at the Starbucks on campus. Waiting, I noticed a young woman walk through the double doors of the coffee shop dressed in a business suit. A grey blazer and skirt with a neatly pressed white, button-down shirt and oversized leather bag with a silver laptop peeking out. Sonia walked directly toward me. "Sorry, I am a little late, I was coming from work. I had to file a few more things before I left. I wanted to make sure I finished everything because I am going home for a bit and won't be back for a week." Continuing with a nervous chuckle she continues by saying, "It's because I'm Asian, I want to make sure I am on top of everything." This comment started our journey together as she joked to break the ice with regard to my study and our new emerging relationship.

Sonia is a 20-year-old Vietnamese American female who was born in Trenton, New Jersey and moved to Bismark, North Dakota when she was 5-years-old. She shared that North Dakota was not the most ideal place for an Asian person to live, however, her family relocated due to a business opportunity her father pursued in cardboard manufacturing. The move was also triggered by her aunt who resided in Bismark. Sonia's mother, being a nurse, was easily able to find work and the choice to relocate was in her words: "probably not a hard decision… good money, family what else can you ask for?"

Sonia is a sophomore studying Psychology at MPU. She has a short haircut, tan complexion, and sparkling round eyes. During our first meeting she

mentioned her eyes in the context of being Asian: "Everyone, even the Asian kids, comment on my eyes… I guess they are big for an Asian person, so that's usually one of the first things people notice about me. I know it's weird, but whatever." This "whatever" sentiment permeated through our first two meetings. Each time a sensitive question related to race and interactions on campus arose she would conclude her remarks with a "whatever" or "it's okay, it is what it is." She has a very matter-of-fact attitude and had direct answers with a sense of sarcasm during all our interviews. For example, when discussing the idea of diversity on campus, she would state: "Yeah, [MPU] is so diverse," and exaggerate the word "so" and roll her eyes.

Coming from a predominantly White neighborhood and high school, Sonia chose MPU, like many of the other participants in this study, because of the reputation it had for maintaining a diverse array of students as well as the lure of big city life. Her pre-college experiences with race revolved around her being "one of the only Asians." She did not have any other Asian friends and all of her friends growing up were White. She did not have many conversations, outside her family members, about being Asian. Sonia saw college as an opportunity to broaden her horizons and look for ways to expand her understanding of people who were both similar and different from her.

When asking about the college choice process, she stated that she was not planning on attending MPU and the decision to apply was rather a quick turn of events:

It was totally last minute. I was planning on taking a year off and deciding what to do while working and save some money. Then, one day Senior year I decided that I wanted to get out of North Dakota. I noticed that everyone in my high school was either going far away, out of North Dakota, or staying around to go to the University of North Dakota and I wasn't planning on going there, anyone can go there… I think you just walk in with a driver's license and register for classes. So, I decided to apply to MPU's early admission program and if I got in, then I would go. I got in and now I am here…Plus, growing up around all White people all the time, I thought this would be a good time to go experience a new place with different types of people.

She later mentioned that if she had not been admitted to MPU she would have probably attended the local community college to transfer somewhere else in order to move out of North Dakota. Her perspective on going to college was tailored by the impression that college was a way to retreat from North Dakota or else you will be "stuck there." The tipping point for her decision was the realization that she no longer wanted to stay in her town and those who did appeared to become complacent in their future goals and find themselves trapped, socially and personally.

Sonia shared, although the question was not asked, that coming to MPU was the right choice. She believes that "it was the best decision she ever made." As our interviews continued, her attitude about the university became more

apparent. She enjoys living in a major urban area and the offerings of city-life

more than her experience within the institution. The school was not the primary

reason for why it was the best choice for her to move out of North Dakota and

come to MPU.

When describing her classes, Sonia first responded with a sigh and shrug.

She looked at the floor and around the room a few times and responded with:

> They're okay… its class. Active minds are everywhere and everyone
>
> wants to talk. I don't really get involved in that. Raising my hand and
>
> being the one that knows the answer all the time… Since I am a
>
> sophomore a lot of my classes have been huge so it's okay not to want to
>
> be like that. There are like 200 people in some of my classes so it feels
>
> like what college is like on TV. I am pretty excited for next year, though. I
>
> think that is when classes are smaller and I am looking to take more
>
> elective-like classes, not classes that I have to take because you need it for
>
> graduation.

Sonia also mentioned the possibility of switching majors from Psychology in the

School of Arts and Sciences to Applied Psychology in the School of Education.

However, she foresees some structural and administrative challenges for the

switch:

> I really want to switch into Applied Psych but it's a totally different
>
> school. Even though [MPU] is one big school, all the departments are
>
> different with smaller schools with their own rules. I think I have to get a

bunch of signatures and take some prerequisite classes. They also make

you take an orientation class too that I don't want to take just because I

wanted to switch into another major so I might just stay in regular

Psychology.

As described by Sonia, MPU consists of smaller academic schools and divisions

that have varying academic expectations and standards for degree completion.

Each school maintains independent policies that students must adhere in order to

transfer and change majors. After presenting a few questions to gauge Sonia's

knowledge of her resources, specifically academic advisement, she responded:

Um… I know I can walk into the Academic Advisement Office but I

heard they aren't that helpful. I mean, I know I am supposed to meet with

an advisor and I did it once but it was like a ten minute appointment…

[The Advisor] looked at some paper and asked me if I took this class, and

that class, and another class, she kind of just went down a list and the

one's I said no to, she said I should register for. It's weird, you have to

meet with "advisors" to get registration clearance but I feel more confused

when I meet with them than talking to someone who is a year ahead of me

to get advice. They are like my real "advisors" because anyone can look at

the class list and see what you need to take to graduate, but I think

advisors are also supposed to give you information about the class and

maybe how the teacher is, what students have experienced before, and

maybe if this will even help me in the future.

While revealing confusion and frustration with academic advisors, Sonia also raised both her hands and gestured quotes in the air when saying "advisors" indicating her impression of their role as academic support was not as substantial as she had hoped.

Sonia has not thought about, or discussed, issues revolving around racial identity as much as the other students in the study. When asked about her perspectives about race and the university climate, long pauses will fill the air to provide time for her to process and reflect. She needed time to think about the topics and responded numerous times with "I need some more time to think about that."

The interviews caused dissonance and as Kvale (1996) suggests, the silence was used to further the interviews with Sonia. After ample time was provided, Sonia would break the silence by providing anecdotes that provided clarity on situations she had previously experienced. This yielded rich information related to her dealings with race. As she reflected on her experiences on campus, she was continuing to better understand her own identity and perspectives about race. She was able to deconstruct her own assumptions through this dissonance. Atkinson et al. (1989) elaborates on the conflict students' experience where previous messages and observations are inconsistent with the view of one's own culture and the dominant culture. This inconsistency leads the individual to question the beliefs they held prior when they conformed to social norms dictated by the majority group.

Introduction to the Case: Young

Young, a Chinese American from Chicago, Illinois, is someone you would consider an all-around college student. He is currently a junior majoring in Business Administration within the Turner School of Business with a concentration in Finance. Involved in a variety of activities on campus, Young maintains the persona of a student who is popular, well-liked, and adds you as a Facebook friend the minute after you meet him. During our initial meeting at the Kimmel Center dining hall he was just as busy answering my questions as he was saying "what's up?" and waving to friends. He would also do the occasional head nod, which is a quick upward pop of the head, indicating a salutation and acknowledgement of the person with whom he makes eye contact with; mostly with other male friends.

With a slim build, spiky haircut, and wardrobe consisting of fraternity tee-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, and jeans, Young also like to collect expensive athletic shoes, specifically a variety of Nike high-top sneakers. His prized possession consists of his Nike High Top Dunks that are neon blue and black. He has pierced ears, one on each earlobe, and has revealed that he is considering getting a tattoo.

Before arriving at MPU, Young's high school experience was starkly different from Sonia's. He shared that he grew up in a diverse neighborhood which also mirrored his high school demographics. He is used to being around people from various backgrounds. He revealed that he always appreciated diversity and race was not a major topic of concern while growing up in Chicago.

He shares that, for him, race has become more salient in college. He says: "Being Asian and racial issues weren't "issues," I think all the kids in my high school saw race as just a part of life and we were more interested in the simple things, like hanging out and talking about video games." As he entered college, the idea of race became personally important for Young. Due to his interest in his own racial identity, Young uses the opportunities that college provides him, including extracurricular activities, to delve deeper into the interactions he has with other AAPI students.

Involved in a variety of activities, Young sees college as a time to learn, focus on the future, and have fun while accomplishing your academic goals. He is vested in creating a large network of friends while in college:

College gives so many options for all kinds of people. There are clubs that cater to a variety of interests and affiliations. When I first got to campus, I remember going to the Club Fair and it was chaos. I know the people I went with were so overwhelmed, but I was super excited. There were so many things that I wanted to do, it was just a matter of finding what I wanted to invest my time in. Obviously, I couldn't do everything, so I took my first semester going to different meetings and learning about what all the clubs did… I ended up choosing a few things that catered to my schedule since I also had to study and I also wanted to get a job to make some money on the side…I finally decided to join [Turner] Cares, which is a community service club for the business students and went to

the KSA (Korean Student Association) meetings. I'm not Korean, but a lot

of kids from different ethnic groups are a part of that club and after a

meeting, I felt like that it was a pretty diverse groups of, well diverse

Asian-wise, people… then afterwards I applied got and hired to be a

Welcome Week leader... I am thinking about applying to be an R.A. too

but I am not sure if I'll have the time.

Young appears to be more involved with school activities in comparison to his

peers on campus. One area of Young's involvement that was salient in his life

was his fraternity. Young is a part of a national Asian American fraternity known

as Lambda Phi Epsilon. Museus (2008) shares that ethnic student organizations

engage minority students' cultural backgrounds and aid them in maintaining

strong ties with their own cultural heritages while facilitating their socialization

into a college campus. For Young, this affiliation was important for him as he

wanted to be immersed in a community that further facilitated his understanding

of his identity as an Asian male on campus. He felt this subgroup provided an

outlet that was unique and provided a support network of people who had

relatable experiences and common ground. Also, it was also revealing to see how

Young's experience as an AAPI student is salient when asked about his choice in

joining KSA. MPU also maintains a Chinese Student Association that he is also

able to participate in but chose the Korean ethnic group organization. His

response was that he felt more comfortable with the core members of the KSA

and felt that he fit in and connected with all Asian ethnic student groups, which

also allowed him more options to engage with others like him beyond just his ethnic heritage.

As for the college choice process, students interviewed in this study generally spoke about choosing the institution for its location in a big city and the amenities and resources accompanying a metropolitan lifestyle. For Young, it was the institution and academic prestige of his major. Being from Chicago, he was not concerned with the lure of the city because he grew up in a similar environment. He expressed this by saying:

> I heard [MPU] was pretty social and academic, so it seemed like the best fit. I applied to other schools but [MPU] seemed to have this magnetic energy, maybe it was also [the city], but I am from Chicago, so I don't think it was as much the city as it was the school and things that I heard about… And being a Business major, going to [Turner] wasn't a bad idea. I'm also not really into the Broadway scene or bars and clubs. I already visited the city a couple times before coming to [MPU] and did all the touristy stuff too, so I think it was because I felt like it was a good fit for me because of my knowledge with the city.

All in all, Young fits in well with the campus community and has embraced the facets of student life. He manages his time with academics and social engagements. It appears that he was always pressed for time. Scheduling meetings with him was very challenging. The one area he had little to speak about was his interactions with faculty and administrators. He says:

I don't really have a relationship with faculty… I think it's because the

business major professors are really either high profile or there are just too

many people that I figure it's better to just focus on getting good grades

then cultivating a relationship with them… Maybe in the future? I know

that I will probably need recommendations for jobs and maybe grad

school so I know I should but I don't really think about it right now.

As for administrators, Young has a loose connection with the coordinator who

oversees his position as a Welcome Week leader but has no direct connection

with anyone else "where they know [his] name." He also mentions his fraternity

has two advisors, one who works for the Office of Student Activities and another

who has yet to be identified due to lack of interest:

I know that we are supposed to have two administrators that work with the

fraternity, there is a [MPU] staff member who oversees all the fraternities

and sororities and I think she is a graduate student and then we get to pick

someone or I guess they volunteer to work with us but we haven't had

someone in that past 2 years or so.

Young has a deep connection with student life due to the relationships with his

peers. Most of his learning, experiences, and memories are associated with his

fellow students. His link to faculty and administrators is weak and views these

positions as "too up there" and "probably so busy that [he does not] want to get in

the way of busy adults." He also mentions that he visits academic advisors when

82

he needs to, primarily to do the formal meeting in order to get clearance to register for classes.

When asking about how he processes information or who he gets mentorship from, he responds:

> I guess in college its always about the upperclassmen… since they go through it before you do you know you can get honest information from people older than you… they give you the best way to navigate the school or what class to take or how to get around issues. I usually just ask my big bro in my fraternity or kids I meet in classes that are juniors and seniors about stuff depending on what it is. I am pretty sure most of the things they have told me worked out.

Kuh (1995) states campus peer groups shape individual and collective life on campus in terms of identity, group membership, acceptable discourse, and desirable behaviors. For Young, these connections and processes that are learned enable him to "navigate" the campus sans formal administrators on campus. Similar to Amy's experiences with academic advisors, he feels that the information and support provided by his peers have helped him without the need for "anyone up there." Young is in an interesting position because his college peers shape his entire college experience, both academic and social. This also includes his perceptions of acceptance and personal connections to the campus. His total life on campus is primarily sustained by his peer relationships.

<center>Introduction to the Case: Amy</center>

Amy is soft spoken and easy going. With shoulder length black hair, she loves wearing "funky socks" but limits her attire to comfortable t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, and cargo pants. Born and raised in a neighborhood within Metro Park, she comes from a small high school with approximately forty percent Asian American students. A Nursing major, her decision to attend the university was not her own. She chose Metro Park University because of its geographical location and to meet her parental requests. She reveals this by saying:

> My parents wanted me to come here, well to a certain extent. They actually wanted me to go Columbia, the Ivy League school. I didn't want to go there, but they made me apply for early decision and I was really mad at them. But, thankfully, I got rejected so I didn't have to go, so, I'm here instead, it's actually more of a safety school because I wanted to get out of the city. But now that I am here it's not bad, I'm not upset that I'm here, but yeah I didn't want to come here originally, at all… For me, I lived here my whole life but I never did the touristy thing, so I saw it as an opportunity to also explore the city a little bit.

A Nursing major, Amy juggles a rigorous academic curriculum composed of eighteen credits and twenty hours of clinical rotations at a hospital in Brooklyn. Due to her academic time commitments her extracurricular and social activities are limited. However, she does make time to attend the Korean Drumming Club meetings and events. Beyond this "guilty pleasure," her connection to the

institution is limited. She was very laid back and is self proclaimed to be "passive and chill."

Prior to college, Amy's experiences and perspectives on race revolved around a color-blind ideology. Growing up in Metro Park, she believed that race should not be an issue that people "harp over" and all individuals should be treated the same. She did share, however, that she grew up in a monolithic environment consisting mostly of all Chinese people with a small contingent of Koreans. However, she viewed herself as a citizen of Metro Park that subscribes to the values of diversity awareness and "tolerance." As she described these characteristics, she conveyed that these descriptions were rooted in how and why people choose to move to Metro Park as well as how the city is seen in media and American culture. As she entered college, her assumption was the university would parallel her constructions of the city culture.

Amy had limited expectations placed on Metro Park University and campus racial climate as she entered as a first year student. She assumed that "it would be like the city, in terms of people and diversity." Her impression was the institution, due to its geographic location, would resemble the demographics of the city. Amy expressed the salience of race as she started her academic career at Metro Park University. She states:

> Um, it's like, normal, I guess. Well, I guess I usually don't think about it
> very much. But as an Asian Am person at [MPU], I do now, I think about
> it a lot more… I know that I am more aware of my race in college than I

was in high school. I have never been to such a White school in my life

before. I am more aware of being a minority. But people aren't really

overt about being racist. Obviously not like hate crimes or none of that. I

just feel like I am different at [MPU], like in class or when I am standing

in line for something… it's just a feeling that I can tell that is different

from high school.

She recognizes the attempt for the students, predominantly White, to embrace

diversity. However, she feels that this concerted effort becomes too contrived,

revealing their hypersensitivity to race. The reactions and response from her peers

toward the value for diverse environments became excessive to the point where

awareness and appreciation for difference was negated for her. Amy further

elaborates:

I feel like [Metro Park] White people and non-Asian people are different

from middle-America, like All-American people that come to [MPU], you

know what I mean? You know, in [Metro Park] City, I had friends of all

races, it wasn't a big deal at all, and it was really fine. I mean I am aware

there is racism that exists in [Metro Park], obviously like all other places,

but it was totally fine, you could be totally fine with anyone, and they're

used to Asian people, of course there are cultural differences and they

won't know all the foods I eat or whatever, but it just felt like when it

came to [MPU], all the freshman were like, "Wow, [MPU] is sooooo

diverse, COOL! There are all these minorities here, WOW!" It wasn't in a

bad way, but it was like still, you don't have to be so conscious of it… it

just made me feel that I was different and made me realize that my race

was so visible to everyone… It makes interaction so awkward, I mean, I

think it's important to talk about race and ethnicity, but it's too big of a

deal, it's just weird, like a big freak show… and it ultimately becomes this

mocking, excuse, type attitude. After a while, the idea of being too

politically correct evolves from the same kids. I can see a change from

freshman year to now, where the same people tell others to get over

situations that may deal with race, sexuality, or disability and stuff… Then

it becomes even more racist than before because not only am I aware of

being Asian, but now it's like they dismiss it.

Although discussions about racial and ethnic issues have a positive effect on

students' cognition (Kuh, 1995), we see for Amy this awareness and evolution of

her peer's perspectives related to diversity causes her be conscious of her race and

receives messages as racist. This further supports how race is salient for her and

how it impacts her relationship with others and the institution. Also, Amy firmly

believes in a color-blind ideology that is tied with her views on growing up in

Metro Park.

Although racial microaggressions are defined as negative insults imposed

by an agent group towards minorities, Amy's story sheds light on how, in general,

the concept of diversity and hypersensitivity can have a backlash for students of

color. As a response, Amy continually refers to her perceptions and feelings as

"weird." Asking her for clarification, she states that "weird" meant "uncomfortable, strange, pissed, sad, a whole bunch of emotions, but it's definitely not anything to jump for joy about." For Amy, the consciousness of race becomes heightened and apparent in the campus climate.

<center>Introduction to the Case: Gary</center>

Gary's "California-urban-punk style" was accompanied by an unkempt haircut and tortoise shell eyeglasses. His fingernails were painted black but chipped, indicating that it was done some time ago. A tall young man, Gary was vibrant, analytical, and outspoken. During the interview he was able to capture his persona in one sentence by saying, "I'm usually wearing some vintage band T-shirt and people hear me talking about whatever new social theory I am reading."

Originally from San Jose, California, Gary identified as Asian American. He further clarified by saying that he is half Japanese and half Chinese. Being from Northern California, Gary grew up in an ethnic enclave of Asian people. He shared that his high school was predominately Asian and White. Similar to the other students in this study, being Asian and issues of race were not as salient for him in high school. It was not until college being AAPI was significant. Race was particularly a prominent issue for Gary within his academic life within the institution.

As a second year student at MPU, Gary is enrolled in the Silver School of Independent Study. Although he was very interested in social theories and identity

politics, he has not been able to commit to a specific area of concentration. The Individualized Study program enables students to combine multiple academic interests and create their own interdisciplinary major as they progress in their academic career. After customizing a focus of study, or concentration, students declare the major according to their senior thesis. Gary was keen on the ability to have academic freedom in this undergraduate program that emphasized a non-traditional model for higher education. He further elaborates:

> I really like [Silver]. Everyone has such disparate tastes, one kid wants to talk about astrology and then someone else wants to talk about, like, abstract art, and then someone else wants to talk about social theory. You can go in so many directions that one day I can be interested in one thing and then another day I can go into something totally different.

Besides the flexibility in major, Gary chose to attend MPU because of the university's geographic location and addition personal interests.

> I felt like there were a lot of schools that fit my criteria for what I wanted to study, less in the dead White men mold of studying… And I felt like there are definitely a lot of small liberal arts schools that you can get that kind of education, but you don't have any context to put it in because you're basically living with other privileged kids, and especially when you are in this little bubble… you might have all this background in theory, but as I said no context. Living [here], you're obviously mixing with all kinds of people, recent immigrants, people who have been here for generations

and obviously ethnic diversity, sexual diversity what have you. Also, I am

a musician and there's really no better place to be than [Metro Park], you

see a lot of jazz, underground hip-hop, and ethnic beats.

Gary had many concerns moving from the West to East Coast. However, he felt

compelled to make the move because of his impressions of MPU as a progressive

institution with an academic philosophy that pushed beyond both status quo and

the "White man's mold" of education. Additionally, he felt the city was a

breeding ground for him to pursue his extracurricular and personal interest in

music.

As for his campus community, Gary envisioned Metro Park University to

be diverse campus with substantial amounts of diversity. He was ready to begin

the new chapter in his life "with all sorts of people with a whole bunch of

different backgrounds and interests." However, when describing his first year on

campus he expressed disappointment in what he expected versus what he

encountered.

On campus and within the dorm isn't the same as the diversity in [Metro

Park] itself. As I recall, there was one African American student on my

floor, then myself and I believe three other Asian students out of a floor of

maybe 30 kids… it doesn't quite reflect the demographics of the

city…[Metro Park University] certainly has a reputation for being, you

know they advertise their diversity; basically, we have all these people

from all these different backgrounds…[but] there's a little bit of a

disconnect between [the university] and the city itself… with the ethnic

breakdown I feel like there is definitely diversity to a degree, but the

numbers don't quite reflect what you would see as truly diverse. There are

not too many students with any sort of Arab or Native American

backgrounds that I can think of. There's not as many African American

students as I would have expected just based on brochures, or what have

you, when I came here.

Campus climate studies suggest that students' perceptions and experiences are

impacted by structural diversity. The lack of minority students is a direct message

regarding how hospitable a campus are disseminated. According to Hurtado et al.

(1999), no matter how outstanding an academic institution, ethnic minority

students can feel alienated if their ethnic representation on campus is small. Gary

encounters this on a larger scale as he experiences a "disconnect" with the

marketing materials presented to him prior to setting foot on the institution. With

the assumptions found in racial microaggressions, this is also interpreted as a

subtle message to students that diversity is merely a façade. Gary's attitude

further supported this notion:

Yeah there might be a lot of Asian kids here, and you see the other

students of color, but compared to all the White kids, I mean, I am not sure

if [MPU] really is committed to diversity, well in terms of race and stuff. I

think that it is also a hard way to tell unless you look at hard [statistics]

91

and numbers because the school is in the mix of everyone else in [Metro

Park]… but yeah, they sell diversity to kids but I think it's for PR.

Although Gary did not explicitly refer to a lack of Asian American or Pacific

Islander students, another major reason for his decision to attend the institution

was for its diverse student body. Gary expresses that his identity extends beyond

just being Asian American. His perspective was that he is a student of color.

Gary's concern for the lack of diversity on campus deals with the

underrepresentation of non-White students. He recognizes the pockets of minority

students within the institution, but his comments regarding disproportionate

numbers lead him to believe that the university does not maintain the dedication

to diversity it portrayed and was known to maintain.

Introduction to the Case: Cindy

Cindy is a 19- year-old Korean American sophomore student majoring in

Biology. She exudes an effervescent personality and it very easy to talk to. She

has long, wavy black hair that was always styled and manicured each time we

met. She classifies herself as "a jeans and converse type of girl." She confirms

this by having a very casual style filled with cardigans, tank tops, and various

types of sneaker shoes.

Academically, Cindy is also on the Pre-Health track which is a

supplemental set of courses for students interested in pursuing medical school. At

MPU, students who are interested in careers connected to the health industry may

take a sequence of classes that align with requirements for admission to a graduate program. Most, if not all, students who are on the Pre-Health track are planning to apply to medical school. Students must complete a sequence of courses and the program is an additional concentration of study, not a major. For Cindy, following the university's recommendations and academic structure, majoring in Biology and taking Pre-Health courses, enables her to pursue her medical aspirations.

When asked about why she chose MPU, she replied:

It was a good school, it had a name, and my parents knew about it. It was important for me to choose a school that my parents knew… For me personally, I thought it would be cool to experience [Metro Park] and since college was a time to explore, I thought this was a good choice.

Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, Cindy felt the biggest change from high school to college was the academic rigor of college, weather conditions of the city, and cost of living. She would like to live off campus her Senior year but will probably stay in housing due to expensive rent rates in Metro Park.

Cindy attended a high school that consisted of predominately Black and White students. Recalling her experience she says:

High school was super interesting because there was a good mix of Black and White students and you can spot out all the Asians. Over there we were truly the minority, in numbers. The funny thing was when people talked about minorities it was always about the Black kids. It's funny

because I am learning more about it and we talk about how words like

minority are constructed to be synonymous with being Black or

underserved people. But I guess it kind of makes sense because I think

about my AP classes and it was all White and Asians and the Black kids

were in the regular classes. Even though there were almost even amounts

of Black and White kids there was definitely a divide when you look at

who was taking what classes and who was focused on going to a good

college.

For Cindy, going to school and growing up in Georgia, race was already a

significant aspect of her life. She further shares that issues with race always

something she was aware of but never thought about being Asian American and

race. To her, it was always a Black and White issue. It was not until she arrived at

MPU that being Asian was important. She believes the critical mass of Asian

students enabled her to further analyze her identity and the complexities of race.

She shares:

Being Asian to me wasn't that serious until I got to [MPU] and thought

about how diverse Asians are. Just within the Asian umbrella there are so

many different types of people. Being Korean was important for me at

home and I didn't know many other Asians in Georgia... maybe a few

Chinese girls but that's pretty much it. So coming here, I got to interact

with all types of Asians and other races.

Cindy's college experience with race was also about discovering the diversity within the Asian identity. Curious and further interested in educating herself about being Asian, Cindy enrolled in an Asian American Studies course to fulfill an elective requirement. Out of all the participants in the study, she was one of the few who had taken an Asian American Studies course. She felt she received cursory knowledge of the basic history of AAPIs in the United States but did not receive a comprehensive understanding of current issues. She enjoyed the course but reiterated that: "it was more like a history course and the class filled in what was missing in what I learned in high school AP History class." Suyemoto, Kim, Tanabe, Tawa, and Day (2009) support that AAPI students participate in Asian American Studies courses to further their knowledge about their heritage, develop community within the institution, and impact their views about others, including racial groups. For Cindy, coming to MPU allowed her to develop her awareness of her identity by enrolling in an Asian American Studies class. Although the course curriculum did not meet her expectations of discussing current AAPI issues, she was still happy to have taken the class.

The expectations demanded by her core academic responsibilities limit Cindy from participating in many extracurricular involvements. In her own words, she says:

> Being pre-med and a bio major, I don't really have time to get involved. I noticed that most students that are in the same boat just realize they have to give up a lot of the social stuff to make sure they are getting good

95

grades to get into med school. There is a pre-Health club that meets about once a month but that is sometimes hard to even go to. When you're not studying you just want to chill or catch up with friends and hang out. Thinking about giving my time to do the school-related fun stuff doesn't seem as appealing as just vegging out on the couch and watching TV. Expanding on the conversation, I asked Cindy if she ever thought about getting involved later, possibly after taking a majority of her core courses. She stated that the ultimate goal for her was to score well on the MCAT examination which would not be taken until her final year at MPU. Additionally, she believes that her Senior year will be met with medical school applications, which would leave her little to no time to get involved. She states: "I guess getting into med school is why I came to college."

Introduction to the Case: Charles

Charles classifies himself as an "urban city hipster." This identification refers to a current subculture of young individuals who, Charles explains, "value creative ideas, is all about counter-culture, liberalism, appreciate all types of art, and are really well versed in witty banter." Charles fully embraces this identity, rejects mainstream trends, and is often seen wearing thrift store inspired fashions, tight-fitting jeans, weathered sneakers, and thick rimmed glasses. Coincidentally, this identity is prevalent, and almost dominant, in the urban environment around the university.

Beyond his hipster persona, Charles is a 20-year-old junior studying Communication in the Gold School of Education at MPU. He also identifies as being a gay Filipino man. He is a self-proclaimed "socially awkward" student who enjoys his experience at the university. He believes he has challenges in large social settings has believes that he has a hard time meeting new people. After interviewing and observing him, he is the furthest from how he describes his social awkwardness. He was talkative, sarcastic, and very engaged in each meeting. Originally from Seattle, Washington, he went to a predominantly White high school with "the other 50% being an even distribution of Hispanic, African American, and Asian kids."

His interest in attending MPU was due to the distance as well as his fascination with Metro Park. He says:

> [MPU] was the furthest I could go to get away from home. I love my family and Seattle but I just wanted to be far away… to grow and be independent… There were a lot of things going on for me back home toward the end of high school so it was a good decision. I also was so intrigued by [Metro Park]. In Seattle, everyone is super-earthy and kinda hippie-like. Here, it was more the hipster scene and with art and stuff, it was more me. Over there you wear flannel because it's comfortable and you wear it like you are going hiking in the woods with your Birkenstock sandals, over here you wear flannel to be hip and go bar hopping.

97

Beyond personal and lifestyle interests, when asked about the university

appeal and academic reasons for attending, Charlie says:

[MPU] has a good name and reputation. I am not really sure if they are up

there in terms of Communications, which is a weird, regardless, because

it's in the education school, but the name itself is pretty famous. When I

looked at the different majors I could apply to, I knew I wanted to do

something related to media and the internet. I am also really interested in

sociology and psychology, so when I looked it up online and read about it,

it looked right for me. I really would like to go to an art school after but I

know that getting my bachelors at [MPU] will help regardless.

For Charles, academics are just as important as creating a balanced social

life in college. He maintains a diverse array of friends and is connected to a

variety of social circles on campus. A lifeline and source of these connections

stems from classroom interaction and study groups. He shares:

I met a lot of my friends and people I just know, like acquaintances,

through classes and group projects. Freshman year people go to class

because you want to meet people just as much as you want to learn

whatever topic it is that you are talking about. So when you take all your

classes your first semester you are also building your friendships.

Everyone is super nice and then there are some of those weird or stand-

offish students, so you know you won't be friends with them.

During our second meeting he further elaborated on his classroom interactions and the importance of further connecting with others:

> When you get to be an upperclassman, that is when you start taking the classes that matter for your major, so now it's not only about making friends but also really interacting with the people who will be working in the field you are going into… these are the people you should and need to be connected to. Not just to be friends but to be colleagues and coworkers. A lot of us will be going for the same jobs just like right now… we are all going for the same internships. It can be competitive but I think it's important to be friends or at least acquainted because you never know who will hook you up or get you your next gig.

The connection with classmates has evolved as Charles begins to further develop his perspective on career goals and current job related opportunities. He emphasized the importance of having deeper connections with his classmates for career development.

Unlike the other students in this study, Charles lives off-campus. He resides in a popular neighborhood mostly populated by other "hipsters" near campus. According to him it is about a 20-minute commute from his front door to the main campus. He enjoys being off-campus and felt that it was a better way for him to further experience Metro Park and its offerings. Charles feels that students who stay in the residence halls become "sheltered" and this lifestyle may limit the exposure and growth opportunities when living outside a residence hall. He says:

Living in the dorms is awesome but it doesn't give you a real sense of the city. I think a lot of kids come here because its [Metro Park] but end up being really sheltered and less "worldly or global" like the school wants you to be. It's like a bubble, the [MPU] bubble. The kids don't seem to go beyond a certain boundary and even though people say that we don't have a campus and we are all over the city, I bet if you follow an [MPU] student for their entire time here you will find out that they only go in between a certain distance, unless they are forced to, like with an internship or a doctor's appointment or something. Well, a lot of kids like the entertainment options so they would probably go up to the [theatre district] and maybe the further down would be Chinatown or the lower east side. Also, because you kind of change where you live every year with the same kids it's the same stuff over and over again, you see the same kids, talk about the same stuff, and it's the same drama every year just a new building.

MPU's residence life system is unique. Parallel to Charlie's description, each year students are relocated to a different residence hall. The process in which students select their living assignment is based on a lottery system that gives priority by class level. This lottery system is initiated at the end of the academic year and priority goes to first year students who will be returning sophomores. After returning seniors have selection priority and then last are juniors. In theory, the system was created to have a cohort-type experience. However, buildings vary

100

in size (from 300 to 1100 residential bed spaces) which allows for a mixture of students from all different class levels.

Charles is not heavily involved on campus but likes to participate in activities when he has time. He has a close circle of friends, who would also be identified as "hipsters," and together they focus more on enjoying each other's company and in his words, "hangout just chillin' or wandering the lower east side of town." His definition of community is loose. He believes that community if fluid at a place like MPU. In Charles' perspective, community is dependent on each individual and how they perceive community to be. There may be designations of community such as clubs, residence halls, academic majors, that are offered to students. For Charlie, he has interpreted community to be managed by the individual student and the university, by its organizational nature and scale, creates communities by default. He reveals this by saying:

> It's a large school so there has to be pockets or established communities. Because it's a pretty big organization of sorts you have to have these things for students. And at a place like [MPU] you need to because people will get lost in the mix. Giving people these options… will let them be happier and connected.

When asking him if he felt happy and connected, Charles stated that he was "fine." He further stated that he "does not get wrapped up about the idea of community" and he is "not one of those needy students." He was very proud of

being an independent student who is able to navigate the city and university with little assistance.

This perspective also permeated into his experiences with administrators and faculty at [MPU]. He has direct interaction with administrators in the school because of a work-study job he maintains during the year. Beyond the job, he has little interaction with administrators. Like all students, he has an academic advisor but cannot recollect the person's name. He attempted to describe a woman to me thinking all administrators know each other. Unfortunately, he realized that my blank stare meant that I may not know her. For faculty, he feels that he has a deeper connection because of the size of his classes and his appearance, including his gender:

> My faculty knows me, I am pretty sure they do. There aren't many people in class so I know I stick out because I am one of the only guys, usually, and I also feel like I stand out for a lot of reasons, the clothes I wear and because I am Asian. Yeah, so what I wear and being an Asian male in class, it's pretty obvious if I skip or miss a class.

During our second meeting I asked Charles how it felt being Asian American on campus. He paused for a long period of time. After letting the silence go for a while to allow him to process the information, he responded: "That is a seriously tough question. I guess no one really asks you that… and then I started thinking about all the facets of my identity and how complicated such a simple question is." Despite Charles knowing the study was about race, he was

not intending for the question to be as difficult to answer as he had thought. Similar to the other students, it was a complicated question. He supports this by saying:

> The question isn't complicated, it's pretty straightforward but there are so many things that popped into my head… from what I would say to what another Asian kid would say to what people think about Asian students on campus and how crazy different all the Asians are on campus.

Charles followed this comment by realizing that the Asian student population at MPU was much more diverse than he had though as he reflected on this question. As I probed further and requested he think about and further explain his own personal experience he shared:

> Well, for me, I think my sexuality and being Asian is pretty strongly connected. It's kinda funny but I hang out, if you want to know about a community of mine and being Asian too, with a small group of guys known as the "gaysians." We all happened to be gay and Asian, so yeah, the "gayasians." I can pretty much speak about that experience because that's what stands out to me. It's bizarre and random, but we hangout like a clique and everyone calls us that… I don't think we realized it until someone else said it, another gay kid who was White. I think we all were magnetized to each other because like any group of kids you outwardly can tell you're the same…. I am not really sure but you could, it's a feeling, and when someone "like" that would come talk to you, you

would just connect and introduce them into the group. There are about

eleven of us? Maybe twelve? We don't always hangout all the time but

enough that we can be considered a clique or consistent group of friends.

Charles further shared that this core group of friends were the ones he mostly

spoke to about deeper issues revolving around deeper personal issues as well as

spend time together beyond campus activities. Beyond sexual orientation, he also

discusses the aspects of being AAPI with these friends. Charles possessed a

deeper understanding of his identity because of his sexual orientation. Compared

to his peers in the study, he had deeper insight to identity related issues and was

able to articulate the challenges he has experienced; most likely because of the

additional experiences he has an openly gay student.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an introduction to the lives of the AAPI students

who participated in this study. Having a multitude of academic interests and

varied reasons for attending the university, they all have a common connection by

being AAPI. Most of the students did not think about issues related to race as

much as they do now. Prior to college, their conceptualizations of race were based

on their desire to learn more about others. The students saw college as a means to

further enhance their exposure to diverse environments. The students agreed the

academic prestige and rigor of the university was a characteristic that impacted

their choice for attending MPU but the offerings related to city life and interaction

with a diverse array of people were just as important. They understood race to be important in their lives and shared the ways it has influenced their identities during college.

The students acknowledged that being AAPI was different. They were able to share how their race was significant as they began their college career and how it has shaped their perspectives about the campus climate. The following chapters will further illuminate what life is like as an AAPI student on campus. These students share their experiences dealing with the social construction and racialization of AAPI students as well as the factors that contribute to the maintenance of these images. Unlike other racial groups, these AAPI students face a unique set of racialized encounters that shape how they perceive themselves, the campus climate, and their place within the institution.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF AAPI STUDENTS

Introduction

Hurtado et al.'s (1998) framework for the campus racial climate suggests

the component of diversity that generally receives the most attention, structural

diversity, is dependent on other factors to produce a positive campus racial

climate. For instance, an institution can have a high minority student enrollment,

but many students may still be dissatisfied if they experience negative intergroup

relations (Hurtado et al., 1998). This study specifically looked at behavioral and

psychological elements of the campus racial climate framework. Behavioral

interactions include relationships and encounters between groups and individuals

and perceptions related to campus involvement and diversity. The psychological

dimension of the campus racial climate involves individuals' views of group

relations, institutional responses to diversity, perceptions of discrimination or

racial conflict, and attitudes toward those from other racial and ethnic

backgrounds than one's own (Hurtado et al., 1998).

The psychological and behavioral dimensions of the framework reveal the

distinct experiences of AAPI students. While the composition of the student body

is just one of many opinions that students hold about campus racial dynamics,

further interrogating perspectives related to the psychological and behavioral dimensions of a campus become relevant, if not more important, in understanding AAPI students.

The purpose of this study was to capture the unique racialized experiences of AAPI college students and their perceptions of the campus climate. As stated in Chapter 1, racialization involves the construction of a specific image based on a set of assumptions or stereotypes according to a certain race (Lee, 2006). To further elaborate on this concept, it refers to a process of differentiation according to race. It poses an imposition of racial stereotypes on a person, action, or behavior. In order to better understand the behavioral and psychological perceptions of campus climate relative to AAPIs, students of this study shared how AAPIs are socially constructed and viewed on campus.

These perspectives will serve as an important part of what Omi and Winant (1994) refer to as the comprehensively racialized structure that socializes students into a larger social context. Through the racialized experiences manifested in higher education and the campus racial climate, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are uniquely defined within a racial system that shapes their college experiences. The following uncovers students' perceptions on how AAPI students are racialized and treated on campus. This study has found that the stereotypical images of the model minority myth and perpetual foreigner are alive and always evolving. The themes presented explain what the unique experiences are for AAPI students when dealing with the social constructions of race.

107

The Model Minority Myth Reinterpreted

In chapter 2, the definition of the model minority myth was reviewed by stating that AAPIs, as a group, have been labeled the "model minority," for perceived success and overachievement, and culturally based fortitude and self-sufficiency (Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995; Suzuki, 1994, 2002). The participants of the study were aware of this stereotypical image. The stories they shared during the interpretive process resulted in this image to be a dominant and reoccurring theme. The students shared the concept of Asian students being perceived as narrowly focused on academics without any social capital. Going further from the previous characterizations related to the model minority myth, their perceptions were also tightly coupled with the construction of this image being socially deficient.

It is important to note that all of the students, although aware of the stereotype, were unaware this image had a name or identification, even the few that took an Asian American Studies course. Most of the students understood the model minority myth to be a social phenomenon, or construction, permeating throughout American society without a label or identifier. Many students also were pleasantly surprised that it is an area of academic interest. The way this was discovered was when students discussed their initial thoughts about how AAPI students were viewed, many provided anecdotal evidence or referenced how the media portrayed or constructed these images. Once they provided a description, I probed further by asking if they knew of the terminology for this construct of

AAPIs. As I explained to respondents this classification and construction is identified as the "model minority myth," they were surprised and showed a sense of surprise to realize language was placed on this image.

"Asians Are Nerds and Social Outcasts"

The thought of being perceived as "nerds" or "socially awkward" arose several times throughout the interviews. For these students, the model minority myth as academic success stories and "whiz kids" has been transformed into a negative connotation by their peers. Sonia shares:

> Asian kids on campus are seen as super nerdy. I hear jokes here and there about how Asians are always studying and only work on homework together on the weekends. My friends who aren't Asian would ask if I am going to go out on Friday nights to Club [Library] and if that's where all the Asian parties are… it's totally annoying because I hang out with them but it's always something they have to joke about before they ask me if I want to join them.

The reference to "Club Library" is literally referring to the library on campus. As a joke, Sonia shares that students use the words "club" and "parties" to indicate that most of the Asian students' social engagements are situated in the library. Connected to the idea that Asian students are limited to studying and academics, this sentiment has reinterpreted the model minority image as studious and lacking

social capital for students. The notion that the majority of their time was spent in the campus library was experienced by others. Young also recalls:

It's a never ending joke that I live in the library. They think it's a real nerdy thing to do but that's where I find myself studying the best. I know it doesn't help the image because I am heightening the nerdy stereotype that people already have about Asians, but where else are you supposed to find a quiet place to study?

For Amy, the start of her academic year was a day that set the tone for how she would perceive the climate of her living situation. When asked about an incident when people have misperceived her she states:

Well, with my roommate, the first day I moved in I assumed no one was in the room because it was locked, I open the door and see this half-naked guy in the room with no shirt on. It turned out to be my new roommate's boyfriend, and she hadn't fully moved in yet, and I dunno how he got in there, or whatever, because he doesn't even go to [MPU]... But, we were on Facebook, and he had actually left my roommate a comment about me on her wall and a note on our dry-erase board, and he was joking around and saying something about dirty sex, and how he doesn't think that the Asian girl would appreciate getting mud thrown on her while she's studying for Organic Chemistry or Math or something. It was really stupid. He just wrote a lame comment like that, and he'll say racist things to me like that once in a while… mostly about school. My roommate just

laughs and says "well, it's true, right?" which really annoys me because

she doesn't even know me… the extent of our conversations really end up

with her insulting me and its majority something related to being Asian

and school.

Solórzano et al. (2000) argue that racial microaggressions can be deliberate in

casual social and educational settings. Here, it is clearly apparent the image of the

model minority as Asian, studious, and focused on specific academic areas comes

true. The extent of this can also be detrimental in the embarrassment Amy

experiences. Facebook is a website that is used for online social networking

purposes. Within the college student circuit, students use the website to post

online journals, indirectly connect with friends, send personal messages, post

pictures, and write messages to each other. Anyone can have access to view these

personal websites. The note Amy refers to was seen by other MPU students who

make up her roommate's social circle and frequently visit their apartment. Beyond

the public nature of this experience, Amy goes on to affirm her acceptance and

internalization of the hurtful comments:

It's hard because I don't really know how to respond… because the

comments are always connected to being Asian and being school focused,

so what do I say? I don't want to say that I want her to say that I am stupid

and not Asian, but at the same time I actually just want her to shut up. I

was looking for a room change but it was really hard because I can't really

find anyone to live with and I don't want to end up in the same situation.

Sure, so I am good at school and I am Asian, that's something I can't

really change but I know it's not really about that, I just don't think she

likes living with me because she probably wants her boyfriend over more

and I already told her that I didn't.

It is obvious this situation is elevated by the racial nature of what appears to be a

simple roommate conflict. Researchers have shown the spaces in which groups

can experience these stressors are now extending to the online world. For

example, students have reported receiving racist emails through their college

email accounts (Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Tynes & Markoe, 2010).

It is complicated for Amy because she is unsure how to proceed with the

racist comments entangled in a situation where it is actually about lifestyle

differences. Amy's thoughts showing how she internalizes the assumptions

related to stereotypes are just a glimpse of how this further plays out for students.

Responses to these types of experiences will be further discussed in chapter 8

regarding how students cope and respond to incidents.

Amy and Gary further expressed this image by recalling times where they

have been explicitly described as being too studious or overly academic. They

state that this stereotype of being focused on academics has caused them to be

more conscious of exacerbating this image. For Amy, the hypersensitivity of her

peers has made her more aware of her surroundings as an AAPI student. With

that, she is cognizant of the stereotypes that exist, in particular the model minority

myth. Amy states:

When I am in the study lounge, I am sometimes aware that Asians are

overrepresented in places like the library or study lounges, just stuff like

that, you're just aware of things like that. If I am one of three people there

and the other two, one is Asian and there's another White person there,

I'm like, "oh no, we're like the studious Asian people," so if someone

walks in, they're gonna say, "You're at it again!" You know? But that's

just more me and my neurotic issues, I worry that I am gonna make the

image more worse…It's not like anyone's expectations, but I don't want

that to be the only thing people think about me or other Asian people.

Amy's dilemma has never been addressed with AAPI students. However, a

parallel study on stereotype threat can be made. Stereotype threat is the risk of

confirming a negative stereotype about one's group as self characteristic

(Solarzano et al., 2000). The irony in this is the model minority image is a seen as

a positive stereotype. As Amy internalizes these images of AAPIs as studious she

is afraid to further perpetuate this characterization.

For Gary he recalled an uncomfortable encounter when he overheard

students addressing the issue dealing with the over representation of Asian

students in the library, he says:

I was in a cubicle in the basement of the library when a few kids walked

by and were looking for a study room. They are usually first come first

serve and you can reserve them during midterms and finals time… I guess

they were full and the majority of the people in the rooms were Asian…

113

so, I hear one of the kids saying that all the "Asian fucks" took up all the spaces and they have to go somewhere else.

Hearing this comment, Gary felt the need to check all the study rooms to see if the student's comment was true. Investigating the rooms, Gary was surprised to see one room of Asian students. He shared that the rest of the rooms were occupied by a diverse group of students with various racial backgrounds.

For these students, the idea of being socially deviant is a social construction related to race. The experiences with this stereotype create, in their minds, how other peers view their status on campus. The model minority myth is reconstructed to maintain the assumptions related to academic success while embedding a social stigma when applied to AAPI students. Specific to being AAPI, the students share that being studious is a source of ridicule. While this may not occur for students of other racial groups, unique for these AAPI students, being focused on academics is seen as a deficit characteristic within the campus. This portrayal creates a campus climate that makes students feel uneasy and conflicted. For Amy and Gary, these assumptions have them reacting in ways that have them concerned about the perpetuation of this image while Young and Sonia now see the campus library as a space stigmatized because of their race. Research has shown that academic spaces such as libraries and residence halls also shape students perceptions of campus climate (Hurtado, et al., 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Whitmire, 2004).

114

Another image paralleling the portrayal of Asian students being overly academic is rooted specifically in an area of academic study. Previous assumptions of Asian students were connected to superior performance in the math and sciences. Today, the study of business administration is also a part of the list of areas Asian students are perceived to excel or dominate. Strong connections between degree completion and socio-economic mobility in business administration have impacted student pursuits in academic study. Undeniably, many students, including those who are Asian, have been magnetized to careers that require business and finance.

"People Think You're In [Turner]"

There is no question that higher education is a means for socio-economic mobility in the United States. Students' choose certain majors that have the potential for maximum financial earnings in the future. Specifically, the business major has emerged to be an area for potential high salaries post-college. This phenomenon has also caused the reputation of business programs to be related to academic success. Students understand that the completion of a business administration degree and high GPA will lead to a substantial career and paycheck. With the increase in esteem and potential economic gain in a business concentration, AAPI students have followed the trend. However, specifically for AAPI students, it has become a socially constructed image that is constricting. In particular, those not majoring in Business Administration.

115

Gary further discussed this by stating that the general assumption by the campus community is that all AAPI students are from the Turner School of Business. He further elaborated:

[AAPI students] are expected to be, with the model minority stereotype, we're expected to be in [Business school], we're expected to be not doing anything interesting, we're just money-grubbing, non-intellectuals. Not exactly the life of the mind kind of thing. It's like trade school except in business you can go out and make a ton of money and its sort of a running joke that everyone thinks you're in [the Business school]… I always get it in [the school of Independent Studies]… this assumption that I should be in business…people get shocked or really find it unusual that I am not one of those [business students]. I always get questions about what I am "really" studying or get asked if the courses I take are just electives just in case I want to do business later… I feel like they always have to reevaluate what their preconceived notions about me were, and I feel like I am always fighting the stereotype.

Similar to Gary, Cindy shares her perceptions about the link between Asian students on campus and the business major. She shares an interesting perspective as Biology major and the image of Asian students in the science fields have been overshadowed by studying business administration. Although she notices there is a strong representation of Asian international and AAPI students in science courses and majors, she feels the negative perceptions related to Asian

students and academic overrepresentation is situated in the business school. She

says: "You would think people would assume the Asian nerdy kids would be

associated with bio, chem, and physics, but no one says anything about them,

when they are talking about all the real studious Asians its usually about the Asian

[Turnies]." The term "Turnie" is a nickname permeated through the campus

which refers to any students majoring in the business school. The business

school's name, Turner School of Business, has been modified to become an

identifier for these students.

The image of the "Asian Turnie" also has permeated into online social

networks. Although Amy's experience with Facebook was specifically pointed at

her and imposed stereotypes, Charles also mentions another issue dealing with

AAPI students and the racialized perspectives targeting the Asian business

majors. Charles shares:

> The notion that [MPU] Asian are all business majors was pretty obvious
>
> when there was a Facebook group made called "I hate Asian [Turnies]." It
>
> was seen as a joke but you can tell that people really were angry to make
>
> up such a group… About 100 or so people joined the group and nothing
>
> much went on, nothing was written besides the description which was
>
> something about people just sick and tired of all the Asians being in
>
> [Turner].

This example Charles shares reveals the creation of campus climate has extended

beyond personal interactions and physical spaces within a university. With the

rise in online communities, this is an additional ways climate is created and messages are sent to students of color.

It is clear the stereotypical image of the model minority has continued to penetrate the social and academic lives of these students. The unique aspect of this assumption for these students, rather than being a positive and seemingly harmless depiction, is a negative and harmful stereotype for campus racial climate. An image that was once used to seemingly epitomize this racial group has now transformed into a social means of exclusion and ridicule. Cindy reflects on this image and provides further insight into the complexity of this image, she states:

> It's a really bizarre issue, or label, I guess… we are all here because we are all smart and competitive, I think people see [MPU] as a pretty good school… so coming here and being labeled as a nerd is really weird. You would think being good in school and super smart would be a good thing, but when you tie it to being Asian and smart it becomes bad. I think it might be a way for students to react to the competition, since everyone is smart you have to distinguish people in other ways and I think race is an easy way to just differentiate and make fun of people… and since that has been the running joke or image for Asian kids in society it's just something that gets recycled here at school.

Charles and Amy also provided mirror statements of the Asian Business student as a persistent image and assumption placed on them. Charles states: "First,

people assume you're in Business then they jump to math or something science related, and then when it's not what you're studying, they might just look clueless and get really surprised you would be studying anything other than that." Amy shares: "Of course people would immediately assume that I was a Business major but it's mostly because that is what most people think when they see an Asian [MPU] kid… I wear suits, but not because I am in business, but people just automatically assume that I am in going to work at Citibank or Merrill Lynch, when actually, I am coming from a Nursing interview."

As the students have shown, researchers also back these findings about the model minority myth stereotype. Suzuki (2002) and Wu (2002) believe the model minority stereotype is still alive and well. The effects may be more insidious because it has become an unconscious image embedded in the minds of the public, subliminally influencing their perceptions (Suzuki, 2002). For the students of this study, the model minority myth is constructed in a distinct way. Stemming from the assumptions from the past, the students perceive Asian students on campus to be seen as socially deviant as nerds and limited in academic interests.

All students agreed that the perception of AAPI students were initially about being studious. By further investigating their own experiences, the notion of the model minority elicited additional factors. This is a prime example of how the racialization of AAPI students is unique. Race related experiences, for them, is described as dealing with assumptions of being academically successful yet socially challenged as well as being centered in Business education. Also, the

119

perpetual foreigner stereotype was working in tandem with the model minority

stereotype to influence the perception of AAPI students (Wu, 2002).

The images these students have provided show how there is a direct link

between multiple stereotypes. Being academically successful has transformed into

an image that is negative and, through race, separates these students as foreign or

outcasts of the social fabric of student life prescribed by dominant perceptions

woven into the fabric of the campus racial climate.

Perpetually Foreign On Campus

Researchers argue that seemingly positive images of Asian American and

Pacific Islander students can give the false impression they do not suffer from

social problems. This notion obscures the presence of racism against AAPI

students (Chun, 1980; Suzuki, 1989; Takaki, 1989; Tan, 1994). Takaki (1989)

asserts that racial slurs, such as "'Look out for the Asian Invasion,' 'M.I.T. means

Made in Taiwan,' and 'U.C.L.A. stands for University of Caucasians Living

among Asians'" (p. 479), have surfaced on college campuses in response to the

critical mass of AAPI student representation. It is apparent that assumptions

related to AAPIs are ambivalent and inconsistent. This is connected to the idea of

the perfidious or perpetual foreigner syndrome and stereotypes, further supporting

the unique racialized experiences these students maintain. This portrayal of AAPI

students is used to produce a heightened sense of fear where the Asian "horde"

will take over the classrooms to raise test scores and ruin the grading curve (Hwang, 2005).

Given the ambiguous nature of stereotypes about AAPIs, it is not surprising that attitudes and emotions toward this racial group are also ambivalent (Ho & Jackson, 2001; Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). Endorsement of the positive stereotype of AAPI competence has been shown to be associated with both positive and negative attitudes and emotions toward them (Ho & Jackson, 2001). For example, endorsement of stereotypes of AAPIs as highly competent but not sociable is related to envious prejudice, which involves both respect and resentment (Lin et al., 2005). In addition, people who indicated that they believed Asian Americans had traits consistent with the model minority stereotype, such as intelligent and obedient, indicated they admired and respected Asian Americans but also reported feeling hostile and jealous toward the same group (Ho & Jackson, 2001).

Consistent with previous literature, students in this study revealed that the critical mass of AAPI students on campus has led to a sentiment that they are "invading" the campus. Other themes connected to the perpetual foreigner image surfaced regarding students' perceptions of what it is like being AAPI on campus. Rather than providing a sentiment of belonging, the students argued that they are seen as outsiders infringing on opportunities entitled to those of the dominant group, in particular White students. These imposed notions also included the

impression of AAPI students taking up limited opportunities within the classroom.

Additionally, instances that related to the theme of AAPI students being "crazy" or abnormal as well as maintaining a level of exotic influence surfaced when discussing campus experiences. Accounts of these specific instances all coincided with the assumption there was something different and particularly "Asian." The following section will describe how the construction of being foreign, or outsider, has further shaped the campus climate for the AAPI students in this study.

"The Asian Invasion"

Amy was the first of the respondents to reveal the concept of the "Asian invasion" as she described her fear of overrepresentation of AAPI students in academic spaces. Her account was a key finding that bridges how perceptions of AAPI students as the model minority are coupled with the idea that this group is seen as outsiders within the university community. Amy shares:

> Well obviously, if [AAPI students] are seen as academically strong and
> [MPU] is a good school, then why wouldn't anyone, including Asian kids
> want to come here? But we are seen as the "Asian invasion" instead of just
> plain old kids just studying just as hard as the next person and wanting to
> go to a good college. I think it happens more because you see more Asians

than other races together but I feel like we get the bad reputation of taking

over the library, classes, and everything else on campus.

When discussing classroom experiences and campus attitude toward AAPI

students, Young also mentioned the idea of the "Asian invasion." He states:

At [Turner], people talk about how Asians have invaded the school and

are the dominant group. I have heard friends and other people talk about

feeling like they are studying abroad in our classes because it's more

Asian faces than anything else. You hear from time to time, especially

during registration about the amount of Asian kids in class or if you think

it will be a sea of Asian faces when you walk in the first day.

Cindy also described the experience she had when discussing representation of

AAPI students with her classmates:

I got asked one time if Asian kids major in anything else other than

premed or business. I thought it was more out of curiosity so I tried to

explain to them about how there are some cultural expectations and

stuff… they went on and on about how there are so many Asians in certain

majors and that we should try to branch out so that we could diversify

ourselves. I was a little thrown off because I didn't know if they meant I

should try something else or what. I know that there are a lot of Asians in

premed and in business but I didn't realize that it was so much to a point

where people thought we should actually go do something else.

Young also experienced the racialized perspectives of Asian students overtaking academic spaces in a study group. Group activities are commonly used strategies for teaching and learning in Young's classes. As a business major, a key component of pedagogical practices is to work with others in an academic environment. Coupled with the critical mass of Asian students (which include those who are Asian American and Pacific Islander as well as international students from abroad) and racialized perceptions, Young recollects a story where he is immediately denied an opportunity due to another student's perception of overrepresentation and competition:

There are a lot of Asians in my major, obviously business is something that is notorious for being an Asian major. That's a huge stereotype but also has it merit because there are so many of us in that specific school. In class you see a big chunk of Asian kids all the time. I think we also stand out because there are times where there are more Asian kids that any other race so it looks like we dominate. The one thing is that you notice they are concentrated in certain areas or concentrations, like finance or economics. You don't see the sea of Asian faces that much in the marketing, social entrepreneurship, and management classes… there are still a good number but not as many, I guess you can say it's more diverse than the other concentrations. Anyway, there was this time, where I generally feel comfortable or welcome in class, but I remember this one real awkward time where we were broken into groups like for any other class. It was for

a marketing class I took for fun, well not fun because I am using it towards graduation, but it deviated from my usual finance-type classes. And we had to do a group project and we had to choose a team leader. Actually, it was a project manager, but basically the leader of the group who organizes, coordinates, and assigns tasks. I thought it would be cool to take that challenge since we don't create study groups like that in my other classes. But after we were randomly assigned to a five-person team and started talking about who wants to do what, I was pretty much shut out because I was Asian. It wasn't subtle either… When the topic of who wanted to be project manager came up, three of us wanted to be it. It was me, another Asian guy, and this White female…the other two people in the group were also White. Even before we could decide on a process of elimination the White student says "I think I should be [project manager] since I am White and a woman." Well, that took me off guard because I wasn't even thinking about that. She keeps going by saying that since there is overrepresentation of Asians and they take up a lot of opportunities because there are already so many of us that she should get an opportunity since she was considered a minority at [Turner]. I dunno if it was because we were pressed for time to identify someone or people just didn't care but no one contested that absurd defense on why she should get it. The other Asian kid was confused but didn't care either… but I found out later when we were talking about it that he didn't know what to say

125

because she was so aggressive. It's so funny because I think about how I get denied this opportunity and how White girls in general deny me a chance to ask them out [laughter].

Although there is laughter and Young reflected back on the sheer absurdity of the situation, it clearly made an impact on him. He states that it "made a difference in the way I saw the entire class experience… and I don't think I invested all that I wanted to or learned as much as I wanted… I just dreaded the group work which was the majority of our grade and time in the class." This poses a new notion of withdrawal when discussing experiences with negative climates. While Tinto (1999) and Hurtado et al.'s (1999) well-known studies pose evidence in explaining physical student departure from less favorable campuses climates, no study has examined situations of psychological departure.

In Young's case, this experience was not at a level where he felt that he needed to transfer or drop out of the university. Instead, he held back on his investment in the class. In reflection, he realizes that he did not want to participate as much as he had hoped and felt little gain or fulfillment from taking the course. Young's story exemplifies the connection between seeing as an outsider and the fear of infringement on opportunities such as leadership roles. In his case, race was the obvious issue. Too many Asians "taking over."

Being seen as invading academic spaces and opportunities on campus is one way students are provided messages as being outsiders. Unlike the model minority myth, the student experiences are directly related to the description

126

related to the perpetual foreigner stereotype. Suzuki (2002) describes the perpetual foreigner as a perspective that is imposed on AAPIs in higher education as taking over classrooms and academic enemies. We see here that this idea has been translated in the experiences of Amy, Cindy, and Young. Rooted in fear and assumptions due to critical mass, they experienced a sentiment and social construction that deals with AAPIs being outsiders invading academic spaces. As students, this experience creates feelings of being unwelcome. Amy further supports this by saying: "I'm not sure where we are supposed to go, if we go to one place and are visible, we are taking over… if we go somewhere else and people see a lot of us, then we are taking over… there's just no end."

The examples students shared are very specific to the AAPI student body. Their visibility, unlike any other racial group, has the impression of "taking over." As individual students, their hope is to do well in school and receive the best academic experience possible. Due to racialized perspectives, the idea of being an outsider and encroaching on opportunities for other students has permeated into the experiences of these students.

"The Crazy Asian"

Counter to the stereotypical ideas of AAPI students as quiet, reserved, and studious, another prevalent theme related to the "crazy Asian" arose from the interviews. Students shared times where they experienced another form of labeling as outcasts when they deviated from the general assumptions of what

AAPI students should be like and were portrayed as out of control and crazy. Cindy recalls a time where she was at a party with classmates:

Everyone was hanging out, drinking, and dancing. It was your normal college party… I was doing what everyone else was going and having a good time. After that weekend I was in the dining hall with some friends and some other kids from that same party came and sat with us to eat… When we were saying hi to each other, one of the guys says "Oh, you're the crazy Asian," which kind of threw me off. So I asked him where he got that from and he said that I was the crazy Asian girl at the party… I guess I didn't realize it until then but there weren't that many other Asian people at the party and I might have stuck out. Even though I was, maybe, the only one there, I don't think I was acting "crazy" per se… I was pretty much having a good time like everyone else. It's totally embarrassing now because I am in class with some of these kids and see them all the time and wonder if that's what they think of me every time I see them.

Other students mentioned the idea of this portrayal of AAPI students on campus. They have variations of this image but similar to Cindy, the perception was imposed by White students on campus. Gary says:

I think there are different ways that the Asian students are seen in that crazy way… When I first mentioned it…it was more about all the Asians going out and drinking like crazy… Maybe it's because we intimidate the White kids? I don't know but what it really is that I think we try to

128

overcompensate for all these lies or maybe some real aspects of us not being able to drink or party with the rest of them. So then a lot of Asian kids take it way overboard and get super drunk and out of control. I have heard other kids really thinking [Asians] are mental. But there are a lot of weirdos at [MPU], it's not just the Asian ones, but mostly I notice that the Asian guys get a bad reputation of being a bit crazy or odd-acting.

Charles had the same feelings about how AAPI students were viewed but went beyond the social environment and elaborated on the connection with this construction of the "crazy Asian" into the academic realm of students' lives and his own personal experience:

I have heard people talk about how psychotic the Asian students might be at [MPU]. There is this connection that they are real insular and to themselves and because they are so driven by school and don't let loose and they ultimately go nuts. I think people think that Asian students focus so much on just academics that they ultimately pop like a bubble and go bananas. I don't really see it but I know my friends in school have mentioned it before. During finals last year… this one girl told me to relax and pull the stick out of my ass before I flip a shit. I was just really stressed about making sure I did well because I wasn't going into the final with a solid grade.

Another aspect of the "crazy Asian" that arose was the recent tragedy that occurred at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in April of 2007.

The university faced a major incident where a gunman shot and killed 32 people before committing suicide. The gunman was an Asian student identified as Seung-Hui Cho, a senior English major at Virginia Tech, who had previously been diagnosed with a severe anxiety disorder. Cindy comments:

> I guess the crazy Asian designation could be connected to how people think we are real quiet but can also go ballistic. I feel that people think about it and remember the event in Virginia. I have heard people talk about it and it was so weird that it was about the student being a crazy Asian rather than the actual loss of all the students. Some of my friends talked about how Asians are quiet but can have real bad tempers and how a lot of guys are also known to be wife-beaters.

Other comments made by students integrated the construction of the model minority with the crazy Asian. Students experienced comments about the connection between being quiet and psychologically unstable. Young told me: "I have heard people say how sometimes the quiet Asians scare them the most because they can be silent but deadly." Gary also stated: "When I am quiet or just don't feel like talking people always ask me if something is wrong. This one time this girl in my class kept asking me if I was thinking about doing something crazy or masterminding some insane way to conquer the world." Gary followed up by saying that he had no idea where that comment was coming from but it was a perspective this student imposed on him. He further elaborated that he barely interacted with this student and wanted to receive it as her way of trying to get to

know him. However, the comments propelled him to be distant from her because he was offended and confused by the remarks.

The following accounts reveal being considered other or foreign plays out for Charles, Cindy, and Gary in the construction of Asian students as being crazy or psychologically unstable. While the perceptions are related to academic stress that has potential to be experienced by all college students, when race in incorporated into this conceptualization, it becomes a characteristic of AAPI students that is strange and exclusive. An interesting topic related gender arose when Gary and Charles provided thoughts about the idea of otherness. They both mentioned that AAPI men were more likely to be seen as being out of the ordinary or different in a negative image, as an outsider. Understanding that gender has influence on racial experiences is also important to recognize. Liu (2002) found that AAPI men dealt with various issues related to racism and gender role conflict. He suggests that cultural norms and racism effect identity development and they ways AAPI men were able to negotiate the demands of work and leisure.

The evidence above provides an interesting understanding related to the students of this study and how their gender and the issues of being foreign are experienced and dealt with. Although stressors of college life and academic expectations are universal for all students, this racialized image has become tailored to marginalize AAPI students. As mental health and wellness are prominent issues within higher education, it is imperative to understand how these

students are stigmatized by constructions imposed by racial and gender-based assumptions.

A student's sense of belonging and experiences shapes the ways in which they also seek resources and support. Having the assumptions of being crazy does not provide helpful opportunities for students who need support to find the appropriate resources. These images have constructed AAPI students to be seen in a way that creates an obstacle for those who ultimately need support in areas such as mental health. This will be further addressed in chapter 8 on how students cope.

"I just don't feel like I will ever fit in"

Deeply connected to the higher education studies focusing on sense of belonging as well as connectivity, a student's feelings of fitting in on campus has impact on their success in both social and academic spheres (Hurtado, 1997). Students recalled situations where their place at the university was challenged and added to the previous images that created an unwelcoming campus climate. The concept of being an outsider or foreign arose again as they further spoke about campus involvement, classroom participation, and social interactions with others non-Asian students.

One of Young's continual experiences dealing with race and the theme of not fitting in, or perpetually foreign, pertains to his involvement with his fraternity. Although the fraternity functions like any other Greek letter

organization on campus, it is continually seen as different. They must abide by the

same policies and expectations set forth by the university related to student

activities. While following the system and guidelines set forth by the institution,

other students view Young's fraternity as separate because of its classification as

a race-based fraternity: "It gets a little frustrating when people say, "oh you're in

the Asian frat." Actually, a lot of those comments get to me. First, I think that

comment suggests that we aren't the same and maybe less because it's Asian."

Another major theme about being foreign and dissimilar from the rest of

the student body were the accounts students had about questioning of their

academic interests. These sentiments were revealed by students who majored in

areas not stereotypically seen as "Asian" majors. Extending from the previous

theme related to the assumptions that all Asian students major in business, Gary

says:

> My classmates, they'll sort of imply, when they ask me what I'm studying.
>
> You know that's like the most banal question you ask someone when you
>
> first meet, you know, what's your major? I say that I'm studying sociology
>
> and anthro and like spit out all the other…social theories and things I am
>
> interested in and then they're like, "Oh, you're in Silver?" In this sort of
>
> questioning way… There were various times where I felt like I didn't
>
> belong and that I should be doing what all the other Asian students are
>
> doing. I was sort of questioning whether I belonged in I guess both the

school and major or maybe I should be studying math or science or something.

Solórzano (1996) pointed out that feeling out of place was a result of discrimination of racial microaggressions. In particular, students of color who have had constant experiences that challenge their position in a social group or academic environment will question their ability to persist and survive in a hostile environment. Although Gary's experiences consisted of one sentence remarks and questioning looks these tiny scars have amounted to larger psychological wounds by feeling as though he did not belong.

Amy also shares a way she experienced feeling different in the classroom as well as how being Asian was considered foreign. Due to her professor's accent and her connection as an Asian person, Amy has an interaction with a classmate that exemplifies the further complexities of being Asian American. She shares:

There was a time where someone asked me what I was … meaning what my ethnicity was, I barely knew her, but I knew there was something behind the reason why she asked me. I wanted to say Earth, but I knew what she was getting at. So, then I told her I was Chinese and then she goes on about how she needs to get me translate what our professor was saying because she didn't understand his English… The thing that bothered me was that the professor didn't have an accent that was hard to understand. I have heard thicker accents and this was not even close… I also told her, to make a point that I was not fluent in Mandarin or

Cantonese and plus the professor was speaking English, so why did it even

matter? She was in utter shock, like it was a problem that I didn't know

the language.

Amy went on to describe how this interaction was a relentless assumption that she

understood the Chinese language. She always had to deal with this assumption

and during our second interview her body language indicated a level of

discomfort with the situation. When asked to elaborate her feelings about the

situation, she further detailed that she did not understand the various dialects of

Chinese and she "gets by" because she is familiar with conversational Chinese.

This instance triggered a variety of identity based concerns for Amy. This is an

example of how second generation AAPI students also must deal with issues

related to cultural identity as well as the racialized assumptions placed on them.

The assumption was that she should speak another language because she was

AAPI; however, she is not fluent in her ethnic tongue. Being born in the United

States, her exposure to Chinese was limited. Beyond being made to feel "other"

by the assumption she spoke another language strictly because of her race, she is

also states: "I wish I knew Chinese, sometimes I feel like I am missing something

or just not Chinese enough." A unique disposition, this type of response only

emerged with Amy and was not enough to further analyze. However, further

research could expand on the duality and complexities of coping with these types

of issues for students.

The conversation between Amy and the other student continued. The student told her that the class was not as interesting or substantial as it could be because of the professor's accent. Amy went on to elaborate that she felt uneasy because she knew why she was singled out, because she was Asian, but there was no difference in comprehending the professor between her and the other students. Amy expresses that it could be viewed as a compliment but, for her, the experience triggered other thoughts she is wrestling with in terms of her identity. This happens because of the targeted comments that appear to be harmless or complimentary. Comments shared by these students regarding their race affirm the microaggression of being "alien" as it constructs the idea that they are different (Sue et al., 2007).

The topic of civic engagement and the experience of being an outsider arose for Charles during the 2008 United States Presidential Election. Charles recalls his first year at MPU and the intensity of political awareness that permeated the campus that electoral year. He says:

> Politics were everywhere. If you didn't know who was running for President you might as well be living in a cave… I think everyone I knew voted, at least everyone in my dorm. It was important for people to be involved and knew about the issues because it was historical, I felt like I was watching history happen right in front of my eyes.

Charles went on to talk about the multiple discussions in both academic and social arenas of campus. Students were discussing issues and were engaged in ways that

the campus had never seen, in particular, the residence hall environment. Due to the racial implications of the Presidential elections, this race was undeniably a topic of discussion in all spheres of American society. However, for Charles, there were some moments where racial microaggressions were present. He elaborates on a discussion with a classmate that challenged the AAPI community's level of engagement and interest in American politics. He says:

> I was talking to a kid at home and I was saying I wasn't sure how the election would roll out. I also wanted to learn more and since he was adamant about voting for McCain I didn't want to make this into a heated debate since I was more for Obama than McCain. When he asked me who I was going to vote for I just said that I didn't know yet and I am going to read about some more issues first. He then went on to say how Asian people don't really vote because they don't get involved in politics or care for it. I think there may be an element to why Asians might not be politically engaged but it was just rude that he would ask me who I would vote for but then have this random remark about Asians not being into politics… He also said that the Asian vote didn't count as much so it really didn't matter.

While having a conversation with this student, Charles' account shows that it was quickly racialized. Although race had much to do with the elections, the comments related to the "Asian vote" seemed to indicate to Charles that the community had little bearing or importance. Charles continued to explain that this

made him feel as though many Americans view Asians as continual outsiders and are portrayed to be indifferent toward community and civic responsibility. Another important note is that this happened outside the classroom in his residence hall. Given that students often spend more time in their residence halls than in the classroom (Johnson, 2003), how the residence hall climate is perceived can have significant influence on student learning and the overall collegiate experience.

Cross-case Analysis

This chapter reveals what students perceive as the image of AAPI students on campus. The accounts they shared through lived experiences dealing with race has resulted in the themes presented above. The racialization of AAPI students on this campus has transformed the broader stereotypes of Asians in society while still maintaining the exact assumptions dealing with academic success and foreignness.

The categories created through their voices reflect the racialized views and stereotypes that have permeated throughout time regarding those of Asian descent in the United States. The uniqueness of these accounts is that they have transformed into the context of this specific institution and current events that have occurred in the recent past. Students felt the root of the images were still connected to the traditional stereotypes from the past but conveyed how the

climate was tailored for them by the way this institution's students, professors, and administrators constructed the way they viewed AAPI students.

The fact that all students have very similar accounts on how AAPI students are racialized on campus reveals how members of a system can also manipulate and alter perceptions about AAPI students. This reinforces the conceptualization that the AAPI student experience dealing with race is unique due to the multiple ways a stereotype can be imposed or constructed and reinterpreted.

It is also important to recognize that the racialized images related to AAPI students converge. For the model minority stereotype students shared that this image was created to be connected with social ostracism furthering their foreignness. Being an exceptional student combined with race became a stigma rather than accepted identity. At a four-year competitive research institution, the image of being a scholarly student would generally be something to be fully accepted and positively reinforced. However, for these students it has become a negative image.

All the students in the study were able to identify the root of how AAPI students are socially constructed on campus through the interactions they had with their peers. The interviews were rich in data leading to a clear indication that peer relationships and the majority of out-of-classroom experiences shaped the ways in which AAPI student perceptions are formed. Even within classroom experiences were connected to how fellow classmates reinforced various ways racialization

occurred for these students. Previous research has also proven peer groups have a significant impact on the ways students perceive the campus climate and diversity on campus (Antonio, 2001).

Amy, Young, and Gary had deeper insight into the experiences they had due to previous knowledge of theoretical concepts dealing with AAPI social constructions. Their levels of awareness allowed them to articulate experiences and identify instances where racialized encounters occurred. The other students in the study had a harder time distinguishing whether the experiences related to race or it was an isolated incident. During interviews, many comments were followed with hesitation or confusion because they have internalized or accepted these experiences as normative, everyday dealings that are commonplace. This will be further discussed in chapter eight related to internalization and response to these situations.

All the students felt their faculty members, unlike their peers, were more aware or responsive and had little to say about encounters with administrators. The interactions they had with administrators were limited and stories reverted back to themes revolving around the size of the institution in conjunction with their invisibility, which will discussed in the following chapter.

In terms of their awareness related to their race, the initial meetings provided information helpful for this study. Their thirst for learning more about the study itself and their questions regarding research related to AAPI students provided insight into their level of consciousness dealing with race. Many

commented on how they did not know the AAPI student experience was studied or considered important. This further highlights how race can be unique for AAPI students. They were unaware that their race and college was an area of interest in academic spheres or important enough to be critically examined. This is also a significant finding when understanding campus climate. Researchers have supported that positive campus climate is also shaped for students when they see their own experiences or identity reflected in the academic curriculum (Hurtado et al., 1999).

Beyond the similarities, the major differences arose in how the students experienced or viewed the way they were made to feel foreign. The model minority myth was consistent among all students. Alternative points of view existed in where the perceived the source of this image to originate from. Some students felt that the Asian community imposed these stereotypes on itself where others believe mass media and non-Asian people perpetuate the image. The messages or experiences of being perceived as an outsider took place in various ways from clubs and organizations to in-class experiences. Although the environments where they experienced a negative climate were different, the messages still remained the same. They were all seen as different and out of place.

Chapter Summary

The messages dealing with race exposed in this chapter further establishes that AAPI students do experience race and racialization. The differentness is that

the levels in which these experiences are imposed are unlike other racial groups. Due to a different history and social context, AAPI student experiences are clearly divergent from what mainstream perspectives see as racism or race related issues. For these specific students, the cycle of these images and constructions are also based within peer group dynamics more than any other entity within the institution.

The social constructions of AAPI Students detailed here by using student perspectives related to campus climate illuminates how AAPI students perceive racialization on this campus. Ideas connected to prevailing stereotypes of AAPIs and their interactions with others within the institution have shaped how the students of this study constructed their perspectives related to AAPIs on campus. These accounts have shown that AAPI students have had a range of observations tailored their experience and view about the campus climate. The following chapter will further address factors that reinforce and further sustain the social constructions of AAPIs using the lens of racial microaggressions.

CHAPTER VII

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION
OF AAPI STUDENTS

<u>Introduction</u>

Omi and Winant (1994) posit that racialized ideologies and practices are
inherent in social systems such as institutions of higher education. These beliefs
reproduce themselves and are passed on, albeit in different form, from generation
to generation. After becoming reproduced as aspects of the cultural and structural
components of the social system, racialized ideologies and practices are
necessarily overtly racist in their intent nor do they require the conscious effort of
individual actors to produce racial consequences; as long as the social system
remains racialized, race differences in outcomes, such as perceptions in campus
climate and satisfaction, are the expected consequence (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2003).

To better identify the unique racialized experiences of the AAPI students
within this study, this chapter will further detail emergent themes captured in the
data provided by students in this study. Beyond the psychological and behavioral
perceptions related to campus climate the lens of racial microaggressions was also
employed to obtain data on how students perceive their experience with race.
Racial microaggressions are described by Sue et al. (2006) as "commonplace
verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or

143

unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults that potentially have harmful or unpleasant psychological impact on the…person or group." These exchanges are commonplace, subtle, and automatic in day to day life.

By further analyzing perceptions of campus climate, such as peer interactions and classroom experiences, and racial microaggressions, this study allows for further understanding of the factors that contribute to the maintenance of stereotypes related to AAPIs. Studies focusing on the racialization of students (Solórzano, et al., 2002, Solórzano, et al., 2000; Sue et al., 2007; Yosso et al., 2009) have proven to reveal parts of campus climate that are unseen or discussed in previous academic literature. In addition, it targets the day to day lived realities of students and how these brief, commonplace, verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities (Sue et al., 2007) have an impact on student satisfaction, identity development, and perceptions of campus climate.

In the previous chapter, themes were created dealing with the social construction of AAPI students. This chapter will further raise questions with regard to the additional factors related to the racialized experiences of these students to illustrate how race plays out for them on campus. This section further develops and extends the discussion on how racialized experiences play out on this specific campus.

The results of this chapter will reveal the specific instances where students deal with racialization. The accounts related to being an AAPI student further

illuminates how and why the phenomenon of race is complex and unique when dealing with other campus constituents.

Invisibility

"There are a lot of Asians on campus but nobody cares"

Being unseen or invisible is a complex experience when examining AAPI students. One on hand, due to the critical mass and visible pockets of students throughout the institution it appears as though there is strong structural representation of this group. However, the other side of the coin is the social and behavioral phenomenon of being treated as invisible. Student accounts provide a new understanding of invisibility that occurs on this campus.

Sue et al., (2007) describes AAPI invisibility as the experience of being overlooked without conscious intent. A few of the students who participated in this study reveal how the aggressors had full awareness as they created an environment that allowed for them to feel invisible. Sonia recollects a time where she attempted to pursue an avenue of mainstream student involvement and acceptable among her network of peers to only be rejected and made to feel invisible. She says:

> My roommates were rushing a sorority this past year and I thought it was
> something that could be an option to meet more people. I know there are
> one or maybe two Asian sororities but that's like joining an Asian club, so
> I went with my roommates to see what the regular ones were about. After

we went to a meeting where they talk about rushing and requirements and stuff I didn't think it was for me… When most of the girls were talking to us, I felt like I was just standing in the back and it kind of seemed like they weren't interested in me… Some girls would make eye contact with me but look away right after, like they didn't know what to say to me… I also remember that there wasn't anyone else that was Asian in the room…I really knew it wasn't for me when I talked to my roommates who all decided they were going to go for it… They said that it made sense because not a lot of Asian people do that kind of stuff and but if I wanted to seriously rush and be a member that it would probably be easy because they would probably want a token Asian. I know they were joking but it wasn't like I was going to pay less [dues] or do anything less, so it turned me off even more because I didn't want them to think that I had it easier because I was the token girl.

Due to the lack of interest posed by the current members and lack of representation of other AAPIs, Sonia felt rejection. She struggled with this idea as she realized her roommates validated the situation. Subtle insults delivered through dismissive gestures and tones toward people of color; often automatic or unconscious can be identified as a microaggression (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). The apparent actions and words from other students triggered a feeling of invisibility as she processed this incident. Although Sonia's friends may think they are being supportive, the comments clearly had an impact on how Sonia

146

see's the attitude toward her identity and acceptance within Greek-letter organizations.

Additionally, she was then characterized as potentially serving as a token for the group if she were to join. Functioning as a token or representative for one's racial group is a common experience for people of color (Castagno, 2005). In this situation, Sonia realizes that these sororities only cared about the appearance of diversity without actually valuing diversity. Niemann (1999) also discusses issues with tokenization and race. Although Niemann (1999) focuses on faculty in academia, there are parallels when discussing tokenizing and racism. Unwelcoming climates can be created by the people who are well-meaning and unaware of their own biases. The idea of tokenization is unique in this case because of the tension between overrepresentation on campus versus lack of visibility in communities within the institution.

Sonia also feels the strain to have to choose by denying the option to do something more Asian, she was interested in looking for an involvement that was "regular." However, after this interaction she realized that she is still different and may not be accepted for anything beyond the sole visibility of her race. Previous studies have also confirmed that minority women often are expected to represent their own ethnic group and at the same time to be on par with mainstream women (Samuel, 2004). This can further cause students to feel confused, disengaged, and at times unwelcome.

Young provided an interesting observation that paralleled the idea of invisibility and overrepresentation of AAPI students on campus. Being a business major, he also has a lot of friends who are international students. He provided an observation about campus services that was unnoticed for analysis until he shared perspectives about student support. He stated:

I have a lot of friends from abroad that have different hurdles, but they get help from the [Office of International Student Services]. They have their own counselors that help them with class schedules and the other stuff like visas and, you know, like the papers and authorization to go to school in the U.S… I know they can go there for help so they have that added benefit.

When further asked about resources geared specifically toward Asian American and Pacific Islander students, Young paused for a long time trying to think of any that were beyond student run clubs and organizations. He shared, with little confidence, that he knew there was an Asian American Studies major for "kids who want to know more about their culture" and "there may be a person in the multicultural office that does activities geared toward all Asian students." He was unable to identify if there were any explicitly created or initiated programs to support AAPI students.

Upon examination of the various publications and documents provided by the institution it appears there are a small number of resources and support services geared specifically toward AAPI students. Although the identifiers for

148

the offices maintain Asian, American, and Pacific Islander, their emphasis may not be directly focused on student support. For example, the A/P/A Institute's mission at MPU states:

"The Asian/Pacific/American Institute at Metro Park University recognizes that as the world becomes connected at higher speeds on a certain level, international cultural connection, translation and a shared re-imagined space come increasingly into play. A/P/A Institute aims to promote discourse on Asian/Pacific America defying traditional boundaries, spanning Asia, to the Americas, through the Atlantic and Pacific Worlds. A/P/A Institute works to dispel socio-cultural and political misconceptions, provide cultural and scholarly connections, lead collections building, and encourage innovative research and interdisciplinary exploration. A/P/A Institute's goal is to serve as an international nexus of interactive exchange and access for scholars, cultural producers, and communities from [Metro Park] to beyond."

There is no doubt this office welcomes AAPI students. Serving as a rigorous academic unit, it is not connected to the Division of Student Affairs where support services or education related to the Asian American and Pacific Islander student experience can be useful. Additionally, its mission is to provide programming focused specifically on artistic and literary interests. The presence of this office is symbolic of the University's mission to embody a liberal education and meaningful for students who pose academic interest in this topic. However, there

is an absence of visibility when it comes to holistic support in identity development, awareness, and retention of AAPI students. Young summarizes this observation in a short quote: "Maybe there's just too many of us they don't know what to do and because there are so many, it's easier to think we can just help each other and be okay with that."

Another perspective of invisibility was provided by Gary, who had a strong academic awareness of AAPI issues than the other participants. Gary shares his opinion with regard to the lack of diversity and representation within the larger Asian and AAPI community:

> There are a lot of Chinese, Korean, and Indian kids and a lot of them are either international or some are born here, but not many. I think that there are so many more other Asian ethnicities but you don't really see it at school, you might see it more on the streets when you walk to class or your work. And I think, going back to the stereotype of Asians, a lot of it is exacerbated because a lot of students are from international places, I haven't really interacted or seen a lot, or more, kids who are Asian and born here. There are a good number but the feeling is that there are more international kids.

Alongside the previous experiences, the theme of invisibility in the classroom appeared relevant to both Gary and Cindy. Both students felt when issues of race were being discussed in the classroom, AAPIs were not a part of what the instructors considered being "diverse" communities. This contributed to

150

the understanding that the university was "not as diverse as it makes it out to be." The students were not only concerned with a diverse aesthetic and representation in numbers of minority students but also a part of their learning environment. Both students recalled of having expectations of a multicultural curriculum. However, they experience a lack of opportunity especially dealing with their own experiences as a AAPI students. Hurtado et al. (1998) asserts that institutions who move towards building an inclusive campus climate must continually examine academic curriculum to be more inclusive of racial issues that encompass all students. These accounts of student experiences confirm for AAPI students the campus may not be as inclusive as they would like it to be.

To further investigate Gary's observation with the lack of ethnic representation within the AAPI community I inquired with the University to see disaggregated data related to several categories, as revealed in chapter 5. Numerous requests for data about the demographic breakdown of groups that identify as Asian on campus were denied or dismissed. I received a response from a university administrator who told me: "unfortunately we do not do that, all Asian students, international or domestic, are categorized together." The administrator further stated that there has been no interest or need for disaggregation for this population.

The idea of invisibility also can be supported when examining institutional documents. Specifically, the university's Student Affairs office publishes an annual report of events, updates, and policy changes. A review of the past 5

reports spanning from 2004-2009, there was only one mention of anything related to "Asian" students. Each year the report listed in a one sentence bullet point that the university had celebrated Asian Student Heritage Month. Also , after learning from students there had been administrators on campus that focused on AAPI student support services, documents pertaining to the offices that housed these positions were reviewed. Upon reviewing brochures, newletters, and various websites, it would learned that two administrative positions previously dedicated to service specifically Asian American and Pacific Islander students were eliminated. One position, which was housed in the largest academic unit, Sciences and Arts, within the institution no longer exists. The other position that resides within the multicultural affairs office has been transformed into job duties that have become more generalist and has eliminated the AAPI designation within the job title. Invisibility not only is experienced by students but is also perpetuated by the systemic way the institution omits or eliminates the structural components, such as administrative positions, originally created to serve AAPI students.

Researchers studying Asian American and Pacific Islander students continually make a case for the need of such disaggregation (Museus & Troung, 2009; Teranishi, 2002). The irony of invisibility for AAPIs is the continual assumptions made because of structural representation in numbers. Since there appears to be a large collective of Asian students there are numerous considerations that are overlooked and made indiscernible. The critical mass of AAPI and Asian international students creates a sentiment that sheer numbers

means these students are not in need of support or resources. Rather, I would argue because of high attendance rates for AAPIs, situations such as becoming invisible or overlooked, need to be continually analyzed.

Although the theme of invisibility is addressed by researchers studying multiple racial groups in higher education (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado, 1998; Solórzano et al., 2000; Solórzano & Yosso. 2002), AAPIs have a distinct experience with this issue. For this case, AAPIs maintain a critical mass on campus but still deal with invisibility through a lack of presence in academic curriculum, representation of role models on campus, and social environments. This also poses an interesting quandary for students as they navigate the campus climate as they receive message, as previous reported, of AAPIs being overrepresented. However, students encounter experiences where their race is unseen or unrecognized. Invisibility factors into the social construction of AAPIs on this campus by limiting involvement, voice, and presence on campus. Without representation and access to resources for the needs AAPI students, the assumptions related to the model minority, overrepresentation, and foreignness continue to permeate within the institution.

Invalidation of Interethnic Differences

"All the Asians are seen as the same"

The initial evidence indicating the institution views Asian students as a monolithic group was neglecting to provide or collect data in a disaggregated

153

method. The absence of disaggregated data for AAPI students is a direct institutional message that there is a lack of interest, and priority, in better understanding the complexities of this student group. The encounters students shared also surfaced with regard to the idea of lumping or seeing AAPIs as a monolithic group. Subtle messages or comments suggesting all AAPIs are alike and that differences between groups do not exist or matter can be categorized as microaggressions related to the invalidation of interethnic differences (Sue et al., 2007). Having a connection to the theme of invisibility, this theme further exemplifies the specific instances where interethnic differences are negated. One outstanding comment students made to highlight this theme in the transcripts was: "all the Asians are seen as the same." Each student provided stories with those specific words when referring to how they felt others perceived AAPIs on campus.

The invalidation of interethnic differences is also deeply connected to the assumptions that all Asian ethnicities are similar and become lumped together and viewed as a homogenous group. Amy recounts a time where she was in a cultural competency class focused on the health professions where she experienced this racialized experience. She shares:

> We had to do an exercise where the teacher made us group into race and
> ethnicity in class; it was weird to begin with. I think the focus was to talk
> about how different groups want patient care and communicate what they
> need and also to give examples of how there are different ways that people

154

want to be treated in a hospital… She asked us to group together and she started calling out different groups like Italian, German, Irish, Jewish, and then she said all the Asians go there and the African American students go there… the part that was weird was that some people didn't know where to go… There were a few Indian students and a girl who said she was Dominican so she wasn't sure if she should go in the Black group or make her own… but there wasn't any other Hispanic people to make a full group so the teacher told her to just join the Indians… then the even weirder thing was when we began working on the assignment it was kind of hard because another girl was saying how she didn't know how to participate because we were supposed to present Asian-type needs… and we all agreed because we also talked about how it was different by ethnic group. Like, one girl is Japanese but her parents were also born here so she didn't know what people from Japan would want from a health professional.

Amy further shared the professor never acknowledged the differences of ethnic groups, although they had brought it up in discussion. The activity became a realization for students to be attentive and inquisitive health care practitioners instead of making blanket assumptions about racial groups. Inadvertently, the students were able to create a learning moment from the situation. A classroom exercise going down a very slippery slope dealing with race became a realization

155

of their own interethnic differences. The message the instructor sent, however, was clear to Amy. She further stated:

> I was pretty shocked… I or anyone else, couldn't believe she thought an activity like this was going to help us, I think she is pretty old school so she might just think that all racial groups have some common need but the other weird thing was that she kept asking our group about what Chinese people wanted out of health professionals… I know a lot of us do clinical in Chinatown and Flushing but there are other Asians and people, in general, in those places.

Young also experienced a microaggressive experience where the existence of many ethnic groups within the AAPI umbrella was not acknowledged. This time, the example was related to a group exercise related to diversity awareness for student leaders. Young shares:

> We had to go to this training for all club leaders and we had a series of activities to do team building and stuff like that. It was pretty fun for the most part, I learned a lot and met a lot of people. The one time I noticed something different about being Asian American or being Chinese was when we had to do this activity where you stand in a circle and walk into the circle when the presenter says a certain identity you have. They asked you things like if you are a Senior, then you step into the circle, if you are from California, you step in the circle, things like that, and then it got pretty intense because she started asking about religion and race… the one

reason that I became aware of my Chinese-ness was that she started saying if you were Italian and Dominican and German and being specific even like if you were from the Caribbean, to walk into the circle. So I was ready to step in if she was going to say Chinese, but she never did. She actually never said an Asian ethnic group. Afterwards I thought it was pretty messed up but I didn't know what to say so I just let it be.

While Young and Amy faced the invalidation of interethnic differences in structured environments, Sonia experiences situations among her peers. In particular, she is continually reminded that being Vietnamese American is a minority within the AAPI student community. This also tailored how she viewed herself among her group of friends. She shares:

It was first semester of this past [sophomore] year. My friends and roommates all knew I was Asian, obviously, but they never knew, or asked, what ethnicity I was. We were talking about getting dinner and trying to decide which place we should order from. When we were going through all the menus to see what to order one of my roommates brought up the idea of trying Vietnamese food. She thought it was interesting and said that it was something she would never try back home… She was from Maine and apparently there weren't many different ethnicities where she came from. So when we were all looking at the menu, I said something like "I wonder if it's the same way my mom makes it." They all looked at me confused and I told them that I was Vietnamese. Then I said, "um,

157

well, what did you think? That I was Chinese?" to cut the awkwardness. And one my roommate, the girl I shared a room with last year and this year says "wait, Vietnamese people go here?"

Sonia proceeded to reveal she wanted to make it an "educational moment" for her roommates instead of making it an issue. She had conflicting feelings and wanted to probe the situation more but felt that it wasn't a "battle worth fighting."

I couldn't believe that they didn't think Vietnamese people went to this school. I mean, c'mon, seriously? So then in my head I wondered a lot of things from how stupid they could be to thinking that they must have thought I was Chinese or something this entire time. I was really offended by it. I think for the first time I felt like they didn't even care about who I was. I know that we don't ever talk about their ethnicities, but I wasn't sure how that would even come up or if they would even entertain talking about it.

Having these types of discussions related to Sonia's race and ethnicity was new to her. She expressed, as our interviews continued, how many opportunities to challenge this assumption passed or were neglected due to what her peers said or did. She never had a time to process in a way where she was able to reflect on the ways she let other's influence her decisions, especially with regard to her race and ethnic identity.

Cindy also recalled a time where her former roommates were deciding living arrangements for the following year. She shared where an assumption was

that she and another AAPI friend would be the best match because of their race.

She further elaborated on how they ignored the fact they had very divergent living

habits and cultural lifestyles. Instead, the students who were White, assumed the

"Asians would want to live together because of similar lifestyles and you can eat

Korean food together." She articulated how the other student who they suggested

for her was Taiwanese and had very different interests, did not like Korean food,

and had divergent academic schedules. Cindy further shares:

> I told her that the other girl wasn't even Korean and didn't like Korean
>
> food and they kind of brushed me off. They said that was even better that
>
> there wouldn't be Korean food being cooked all the time then because it
>
> was smelly and didn't even acknowledge that she wasn't Korean… I guess
>
> they just see all Asians as the same or something.

Sue et al. (2007) posits that the invalidation of interethnic differences is when

there is an assumption imposed that most Asians are familiar with each other,

regardless of their Asian ethnic background. This circumstance detailed by Cindy

not only shows invalidation of ethnic differences of AAPI students by her peers

but also shows xenophobic attitudes when challenging the initiators of the

microaggression. It transformed into another challenge as Cindy reveals that they

add insult to injury by adding the comment related to Korean food.

As seen in this section, there are multiple ways students experienced the

invalidation of ethnic differences. Whether it was the lack of acknowledgement

related to their specific ethnic heritage to the assumptions that all AAPI students

were the same, these students were able to share encounters that challenged significant aspects of their identity. Invisibility takes shape again but in a different form. Beyond race, the ethnic identities of these students become erased due to the assumptions imposed on them that "all Asians are alike." For some students, this oversight caused them to be more vexed than situations that were directly connected to being AAPI. Sonia and Cindy exuded the most irritation as they continued to discuss the situation and the confusion with their peers' ignorance toward understanding that AAPIs consist of many diverse ethnic groups. Young and Amy were less angry and pardoned the issue. They shared that since the situations occurred in a facilitated environment, it could not have been intentionally done to hurt anyone who was AAPI. Excuses were made for the facilitators and both, Young and Amy, were not interested in pursuing any further action.

Whether in a classroom, in social settings, or during a casual conversation, this invalidation of interethnic differences has impact on how these students see themselves within the university. All agreed that their ethnicity was just as important as their racial identity and to have experienced situations that negate their deeper cultural roots shaped the campus climate to be further challenging.

While observing the campus, many students, in particular AAPIs, were grouped together by race. Parts of campus, such as the business school and social spaces such as the residence halls and dining commons were locations of what researchers may call racial balkanization, self segregation, or self-preservation

160

(Duster, 1993; Villalpando, 2003). Curious about the visible racial groupings observed on campus, students were also asked to respond to this phenomenon. Charles astutely responded: "I think that is why sometimes people think all Asian are the same… because we just hang out with each other and that's what they notice… the clumps of Asians all hanging out." Sonia also responded by saying: "Well, you have all the White kids that hang out together and they have a common ground, even though they say they are Italian or Irish, they can be aware of [their ethnicities] but when it comes to Asians they don't apply that we may have ethnic differences to us… it's just their entitlement." These two quotes further elaborate on the observation made related to the clustering of students by race on campus. Although, in the observations, all racial groups on campus are noticeably lumped together in social settings on campus, the AAPI students are not only noticed to be "self-segregating" but also viewed as "the same".

Researchers have also revealed that a deeper analysis of the racial balkanization myth, or the idea that students of color self-segregate, reveals how it is undergirded by a racist, white ideology (hooks, 1995), that is influenced by cultural deprivation and deficit theories about students of color (Tatum, 1997; Villalpando, 2003). For AAPI students in this study, there is a direct link between the phenomenon of the invalidation of interethnic differences and cultural values and/or practices being viewed as a deficit by others. Theoretically, Villalpando (2003) states that neglecting to account for the racist ideologies that frame and promote the racial balkanization myth, research in higher education often

161

contributes to the perpetuation of deficit-based beliefs about students of color. Charles connects the theme of the invalidation of interethnic differences to the next section, the finding that others assume or impose that the cultural aspects of AAPI is deficient, by saying: "They don't really see Asians or AAPIs as different, we are pretty much seen as the same, nerdy or competitive… and how would most people who think that even change when they freak out about other Asian-type things, it's a never ending double-edged sword… they assume stuff but also are too scared get over their xenophobia."

<center>Culture Viewed as a Deficit</center>

<center>*"You're not a leader… because you're Asian"*</center>

Negative reactions related to Asian culture were not limited to food. Student stories revealed how components of culture extended beyond surface level perceptions to comments related to behavior. Focusing on classroom settings where students are required to actively participate in discussions and ask questions, Sue et al. (2007) identified microaggressions that involve the perception of cultural values and communication styles other than that of the White majority as being less desirable and as a deficit. Participants of this study provided stories revealing how this theme plays out on this specific campus. These accounts also support how unique and complex the racialized experience can be for AAPI students as they faced the assumptions dealing with cultural values and communication differently.

It is apparent that student experiences in the classroom shape perceptions about climate. When inquiring about experiences directly related to race on campus, for Sonia, she distinctly remembered a time where she was impacted by a situation dealing with the assumption related to Asian values and communication style, Sonia told me:

> The Tavistock Method… I remember a time where we were talking about the Tavistock Method in one of my smaller psych classes. It was so random, but our professor had asked us a question about theories and stuff. We were discussing the reading from the week and the teacher was explaining issues dealing with groups or something and asked us what model she was describing, and I said it under my breath…"The Tavistock Method…I think." Then the teacher asked me what I had said and I said it again, "Tavistock." And then she said that I was right and continued to explain it some more. I felt pretty good until after class I went up to her [the professor] and was going to ask about the assignment that was due next week. She told me that I should speak up more in class. I would have taken that as support or encouragement… but she also added that I don't stand out to her as a leader because I am too shy. I really don't think I am a shy person, I just don't feel like always being the one to raise my hand, you know?

This incident caused Sonia to think about what associated her with being Asian and quiet. She continued to challenge this idea as she expresses:

163

Now I'm wondering why she said the Asian thing, being quiet in class

really doesn't have anything to with being Asian, I personally think. There

are a ton of other kids in class that are quiet and never volunteer. I kind of

want to talk to my professor about it now, too. I'm pretty sure she doesn't

think it's an "Asian" thing but I am not sure either. I am only one of two

Asian people in my class and both of us are pretty quiet but now I don't

know if I should bring it up or not with my professor… I don't really

know if she will be receptive to my question and I don't want to offend

her because of an assumption that I made. I don't know, we'll see.

Sonia is caught in a quandary. She wants to gain clarification about the situation

but does not know how her professor would receive the question or process the

encounter with her. The seemingly innocent comment that intertwined the notion

of Sonia's race had a clear impact on, not only her feelings toward participating in

class, but her relationship with her faculty member as well.

Liang, et al. (2002) argues that students who perceive administrators,

faculty, or other students as uninterested in their needs may feel misunderstood

and as a result be less invested in their campus. Results may include feeling

disenfranchised where they do not wish to participate in campus life or engage in

leadership roles. For Sonia, her experiences with her roommates and instructor

have resulted in this apathetic and disinterested perspective about her campus

experiences.

Charles also shares a time where communication style and culture were considered abnormal. It played out uniquely for him as his experiences dealt with what the "correct" behaviors are dictated by his White peers as well as a time when he faced ridicule due to his concern with grades. As a Filipino American, there are cultural nuances that he discussed, in particular how he eats that ensued another racial microaggression. He explains:

> In Filipino culture we eat with a spoon and fork. There's a specific method, I noticed it when I came to college and ate with the other kids in the dining hall. I can use my spoon and fork to cut meat and don't really need knives. Some new kids I met noticed and started asking me about it because they thought it was weird. I was embarrassed at first but then I didn't really care because it worked fine… It bothered me more when they kept saying that they never saw anyone eat like that before or that knives would be easier.

Beyond cultural practices, Charles also shared a time when his commitment to school became a racialized attitude from his peers. Charles elaborates:

> I was wrapped up in school last year and trying to make sure I did well so I could get at least a 3.5 GPA by the end of the semester and the other kids were saying it was because I was one of those obsessed Asians that want to beat everyone in school. I don't really see myself as the smartest person in class but still wanted to do well and really buckle down to study. My parents want me to do well and I think its connected to culture but I would

say American culture is also about getting good grades not just Asian but

when it's an Asian kid it becomes an issue. A lot of the White kids see

how Asian culture is really limited to being studious and I think they

impose that impression on us as being a bad thing.

This can also be interconnected with the reinterpretation of the model minority

myth evidence presented in chapter six. The dedication and work ethic related to

academic achievement has become, ironically, a deviant behavior in the eyes of

Charles' White peers. His desire to be academically successful is seen as less

laudable because they correlate it to his cultural disposition rather than seeing him

as a peer student focused on his academics at a research university. Race mattered

because it was because he was Asian and not a student concerned about his

grades.

This theme of culture being viewed as a deficit provides another factor

related to how the social constructions of the model minority myth and perpetual

foreigner play out through the lens of culture. It is important to show that both

stereotypes are playing in tandem for students. Again, images of being quiet, shy,

and submissive arise alongside students' experiences instances where they are

labeled as abnormal. Specifically, here we see how constructions dealing with

AAPIs and leadership and well as family values are imposed as deficits. For

Sonia, her attributes as a leader is contested due to the assumption she does not

speak enough in class while Charles has negative encounters dealing with culture

practices and family expectations.

The Questioning of Racialized Experiences

"People think Asians don't face racism"

The perception that AAPIs do not face discrimination and are dismissed when they convey or express experiences with racial discrimination is another factor in furthering the social constructions of AAPIs on campus. Intertwined with the model minority stereotype, students' shared how they have been dismissed and marginalized as well as the institutional practices that are exclusionary. This theme was illuminated by student accounts of classroom discussion, policies related to academic opportunities targeting minority students, and the assumption dealing with the critical mass of AAPI students on campus.

When discussing a classroom experience, Gary recalls a time when a fellow classmate challenged the idea of racism for AAPIs:

> Someone in class said that Asian's can't be victims of racism because they weren't enslaved like the African Americans and aren't mistreated in labor like Hispanics. They went on and on about how Asians have a lot of success in the U.S. and that besides the stereotypes or derogatory comments people might make on the street… Asians don't suffer as much as other races.

Young is another student who experienced the assumption that AAPIs do not have a racialized experience: "I think people think Asian people don't face racism because they see how there are a lot of success stories or people who are making it financially and driving nice cars and living in nice homes." Young

further elaborates on how the connection between socio-economic status and perceptions of AAPIs being void of racist experiences. He says:

> A lot of people think race and class are connected and just focus on simple ways of looking at the situation. They think because there are a lot of Asians that go to [MPU] that we probably have a lot of money and no issues but they don't see the fact that even if people are rich, race alone can be a situation… I know that even my friends who are Asian American face racism that's more obvious too, just because there is financial success doesn't mean you don't get called a chink or hear something totally stereotypical in the real world. The more I notice it and being exposed to it in the streets of [Metro Park]; you hear derogatory stuff about Asian people a lot.

This assumption about financial success and higher economic status, entrenched in the model minority myth, impacted how the students experience others' perceptions about AAPIs. This was also an interesting account because most students in this study, including Young, embraced the idea that Metro Park was a place with diversity and awareness. His perspectives related to how he sees Metro Park and the real experiences he has encountered are divergent. However, he never consciously connected his experiences with his broader internalized views of Metro Park.

Cindy and Charles also provide perspectives related to the theme of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders being dismissed as a group experiencing race

related situations. While in classroom environments both of these students experienced this sentiment. Cindy says: "It might be because we are taught that racism is more about the historical injustices that happen and what is in the books we read… and there's not much information about Asian Americans… and if there is it's more of a historical overview of immigration and the development of Asian communities while when you talk about Native Americans and African Americans it is also about all the bad things that happened to them." Charles also echoes and similar sentiment:

> I took classes that discuss critical theory or issues that focus on race and ideology but there is never anything about Asian people or issues relative to the Asian American experience. It's always about Black people and their struggles or just the typical White person's history or ideas. And we talk about racism with a real specific scope, they teach us that racism is about Black people and we are saturated with the idea that race is about being Black and everyone else just kind of falls somewhere in the middle.

It is apparent there is little to no presence of the AAPI experience in the class curriculum for these students. Even when discussing issues related to race and racism, the focal points turn race into being a Black experience. When asking both students if they felt any need to address the situation, they stated their focus was to learn and not make an issue out of their curriculum. They felt there was a value in learning about the African American experience and did not want to challenge the information being taught. However, they were clearly frustrated and

concerned about the lack of visibility and denial of racial experiences. Cindy further elaborated by saying: "If I brought up that Asians were not represented, I am sure someone or everyone would look at me like I was from outer space… they don't see racial issues to be as compelling as it is for like African Americans and other groups."

Cindy also brought up the topic of internship and scholarship opportunities that made her ineligible due to her race. She was frustrated and presented a sense of anger when explaining the confusion she had when searching for ways to enhance her academic background in the health profession. She noticed many minority based scholarships would specify being African American or Latino and/or Hispanic. To be more critical, Cindy also said: "I thought maybe I could be eligible for lab internships or scholarships as an Asian woman because I saw a bunch for African American and Latino woman as well as just women… but there wasn't anything for me so I wondered if being an Asian woman meant that I didn't need help or no one really cared about us." At another meeting Cindy further elaborated that our previous interview prompted her to conduct a more rigorous search for opportunities. She found a few scholarships geared toward Asian women but the remuneration was insignificant when compared to other minority based scholarships. Also, to her dismay, she noticed some of the scholarships went to international students; none were specifically geared toward Asian American women.

Another concept that aligned with this theme was connected to the idea of the "Asian invasion" discussed in the previous chapter. Because of the critical mass and structural visibility of Asian students on campus, the idea that numbers equates to the minimizing of racism and race-related experiences arose in discussions. Amy shared:

> There are so many Asians that people think racism disappears. I think people believe that when we are larger in numbers that racism becomes a non-issue. I always hear people saying that representation is a form of overcoming adversity. One of my friends who works in Admissions is always talking about how she feels like her boss is always focusing on the numbers of Black students who come here. She is always talking about increasing the admissions of students of color and how diversity is a priority for them.

I further probed Amy about her response with regard to "students of color." I asked her if she considered herself a student of color which yielded a long pause. She subscribed and paralleled the designation to only be used to refer to African American and Black students. She had not realized that students of color also incorporated her identity. After some thought, she stated she is unable to connect with the phrase as being a student of color because: "at [MPU] or when I hear it I just only think of the African American students." Systematically, she has learned that student of color is only referred to, by the institution, African American and Black students. This is also significant as this correlated with how Amy has

171

further learned, through institutional language, the denial of her racial reality as she has come to believe that she cannot identify herself as a student of color.

The outcome of this factor brings concern as students in this study tended to juxtapose their experiences with those of other racial groups. Known as oppression sweepstakes, students have subscribed to a game of systemic racism that pits those who are oppressed against each other. Oppression sweepstakes can be seen as a competition to measure one form of oppression against another (Allen, 1999; Teranishi, 2007; Yosso, 2005). Students received messages that challenge their experiences with race and racism. As AAPI students, their experiences are real and lived through their eyes, but not acknowledged like other racial groups. This directs them to feel dismissed, overlooked, and less important with regard to the institution and climate. Linked to assumptions dealing with being the model minority and not having significant academic challenges, AAPI students are also assumed to not have racialized experiences or issues that limit their resources, opportunities, as well as impact their view on other racial groups.

Exoticization of Asian Women (and Men)

"I have the Asian Persuasion"

Like many other students on campus, all of the students embrace the variety of nightlife and cultural events throughout the city. Sonia shares that she "goes out as much as the next girl." There's always a social engagement that she is aware of and maintains a multitude of options for every weekend. These events

are with students from campus and rarely comprise of individuals that are non-MPU students. When further discussing experiences related to her interactions through the lens of race, she reveals:

> Being Asian is interesting. Well, it can be uncomfortable. I am usually with a whole bunch of White kids and then there are a good number of African American kids at a lot of [MPU] functions I go to… I get hit on a lot and hear the same pick up lines or whatever you want to call it. A lot of White guys come talk to me and try to talk to me and I think it's funny because they use stupid lines about me being Asian, like I heard a couple times "you have the Asian persuasion" and one guy just came up to me and said "I only like Asian girls, they're hot." I'm not sure how to receive that because I feel weird, what am I supposed to say? "Then I wonder what my White girlfriends are thinking about me because they also say from time to time how lucky I am to be Asian because it's "in" right now. I guess dating an Asian girl is supposed to be cool, but really? It just makes me feel weird… This reminds me… I am different, but not really the type of different that makes me feel that great about myself.

A part of understanding the behavioral dimension of campus climate for Asian American and Pacific Islander students, the social interaction Sonia has with her peers clearly shaped how she views herself and the climate through the attitudes of fellow students. Campus climate researchers state that interracial contact and social interaction can lead to a more positive campus climate

173

(Hurtado, et al., 1998). In this case, the interracial exchanges for AAPI students can also be negative and unique due to exoticization.

Cindy and Amy had similar experiences with being an Asian American woman and the assumptions related to their appeal. Amy has had several passive instances where she had been objectified but had no real reaction. She was very matter-of-fact and felt it was something that will always be an issue. Her feelings were that women, as a whole, deal with this and being Asian "is just another layer" to people's behavior.

Cindy provides a different perspective about how she avoided interacting with specific men because of their reputation of dating exclusively Asian women. She felt that: "guys like that don't see me for who I am and make up what they want me to be." Correlated with another theme of invisibility, it is clear that many racialized experiences for students also cross thematic boundaries due to the intersections of identity. Regardless, this theme was rooted in the objectification of these students.

When examining AAPI students, this microaggression can be further complicated when examining the results of seemingly positive attitudes toward AAPI students. Existing within the tenets of the model minority stereotype, having the "Asian persuasion" and dating Asian women being "in" on campus may appear to be an attitude that can be seen as a compliment. However, this perception has negative outcomes for the student because it objectifies and further alienates the individual experiencing this attitude, in this case Sonia.

174

This conceptualization of AAPIs also was described by Charles. The culture of intimate gay relationships and stereotypes of Asian men paralleled the stories dealing with the exoticization of the women in this study. He revealed:

> Being gay and Asian together can be really awkward and make me pretty stand-offish. There's this term where Asian gay men are sought out by White guys, they are called rice queens… where White men only look to date Asian men and on the reverse there's a stigma of Asian guys only dating White guys and they are called potato queens. It's really funny, actually. It's the gay version of the Asian persuasion they talk about when White guys like Asian girls. I guess the gay community has its own version of it. But the concept is the same, it's the fetish.

As Charles further elaborated on this phenomenon he analyzed that: "there are probably more White men who want Asian guys because I think Asian guys seem more submissive." He went on to discuss how the impression is that gay Asian men are seen very similar to the stereotypes imposed on heterosexual Asian women as submissive and docile.

These stereotypes and expectations, described by Charles, constituted a gendered form of racial oppression against Asian American males. Researchers have also discussed this experience related to the intersection of sexuality and race. Being Asian was marginalized, at least in part, by being associated with the feminine while Whiteness was privileged by being associated with the masculine norm (Kumashiro, 1999; Okihiro, 1994).

The evidence provided in this chapter further supports how race is a distinctive experience for AAPI students. The assumptions and persistent stereotypes of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander students in society play out in many complex ways. Evidently all encounters were, in some way, rooted in the themes related to the social construction of AAPIs on campus. When reflecting on the in and out of classroom experiences with faculty, administrators, and peers, additional factors regarding the racialization of AAPI students shaped how campus climate is created and sustained.

For many of the students, the racialization they experienced were perturbing yet excusable. These students felt a discomfort with the multiple experiences related to being racialized by the various communities on campus. Despite the challenges they faced they all felt that it was a "normal" occurrence unnecessary of challenge.

While probing all students about the impetus for why the initiators, whether peers, faculty, or administrators, may have imposed the racial microaggressions on them, they acknowledged the majority of those who imposed these assumptions were generally not abusive or intended to be hurtful. Several students followed up stories by stating that it was delivered through jokes in a facetious manner or were comments that came across commonplace. This supports the theory of racial microaggressions as the subtle insults they are designed to be. This study supports how racial microaggressions are invasive

vehicles to maintain racialized social structures within higher education. The subtlety of these messages mask the seriousness of these encounters and the effects it has on racialized groups, such as AAPI students.

A common response prompted by students after they shared stories occurred. Each student ended with comments such as: "whatever," "it doesn't matter," "not a big deal," "weird," and "it is what it is." They possessed a tone of defeat upon reflection. They ascertained a level of awareness that acknowledged the situation as being negative or unacceptable but portrayed a sentiment that Sonia captures for all of them by saying: "What can you really do about it? Nothing, so you just deal and look at the positive things about going to [MPU]." Also, similar to Sue et al. (2007), those students who decided to challenge or respond to situations dealt with consequences. Most students who spoke about taking a stance or speaking up about others' behaviors or comments were encountered with animosity or were dismissed immediately.

Chapter Summary

Racialization of AAPI students on campus has real consequences for these students. This chapter paints a portrait of how specific messages, blatant or implicit, target AAPI students and challenge their sense of belonging within the larger campus community. The examination of these racialized experiences shows that AAPI students are continually marginalized regardless of the type of institution and public values focusing on diversity and multicultural awareness.

The experiences with the subtle messages through racial microaggressions have made these students feel conflicted and frustrated. The anecdotes shared by students present the multiple ways racialization is imposed on AAPI students collectively. Although the term "micro" is a part of the theoretical lexicon, it is no less hurtful then overt racism. It also is important to emphasize that the term "micro" is used because those who impose these experiences see it as trivial and understated.

Uncovering the factors that contribute to the racialized experiences of AAPI students paints a broader, more comprehensive, picture of the systematic effects that devalue members of a larger university community. It shows how AAPI students deal with race in a unique way that can be overlooked or indiscernible. These narratives complicate how we view race and the racialization of certain groups, in particular on a college campus.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERNALIZING AND RESISTING RACIALIZED EXPERIENCES

Introduction

In this chapter, I will elaborate on how AAPI students in this study internalize and resist racialized experiences on campus. Studying the response AAPI students have toward unique racialized experiences will further help in better understanding how a total campus climate is created and developed. Solórzano et al. (2002) affirm this perspective by stating campus racial climate studies should examine students' responses to incidents dealing with race, in particular, racial microaggressions. Pyke and Dang (2002) also support the further study of how students view themselves, the other members of their own racial group, and their reactions to racialized experiences with regard to their identity development.

Several themes emerged while examining how students internalized and defy the experiences they shared in the previous chapters. As students adopted stereotypes, evidence emerged on how they continued to reinforce assumptions about AAPI students within their own lives. Students subscribed to color-blind ideologies, believed in big city exceptionalism in relation to racism, and recreated stigmatizing perceptions of within group members of the AAPI student

community. Most of the subjects conformed to dominant ideologies of race and reproduced the cycle of socialization (Harro, 2000) when discussing their perspectives toward their experiences with race.

Also, students shared feelings of having to prove themselves to the aggressors who imposed racialized opinions about AAPI students. Other themes related to behavioral and wellness issues arose, such as high levels of alcohol abuse, in relation to proving themselves, and significant levels of depression. Surprisingly, the notion of self-initiated invisibility as well as escape emerged as a response to racial experiences.

Lastly, resistance was another way students reacted to various experiences they shared. Strategies that led to both positive and less desirable outcomes will be shared in this chapter. Vital to the broader context of identity development, all coping mechanisms and responses to racialized experiences had implications related to how students perceive themselves and their growth in college.

Continuing the Cycle of Socialization

The students of this study were found to have behaviors that conformed to dominant ideological perspectives imposed on them regarding the social construction of AAPI students. Their thoughts related to the racialized disposition of AAPI students emerged in the data as reinforcing the cycle of socialization that occurs on this campus. Harro (2000) explains this process is experienced by individuals who are born into a specific set of social identities, such as AAPI, and

through socialization processes that permeate our culture; we are predisposed to assume unequal roles assigned by the environment on the basis of these identities. During interviews, examples correlated with reproducing the cycle of socialization arose as students reflected on their perceptions of campus climate and experiences. The most prominent theme was the internalizing of the social constructions of AAPIs.

Internalization

Scholars of race recognize that racism shapes the attitudes and subjectivities of everyone living within its cage, including the oppressed (Feagin, 2000; Omi & Winant, 1994; Pyke & Dang, 2003). By accepting and internalizing mainstream racialized perspectives, subordinated people, often without conscious awareness, justify the perceptions related to their own racial group (Baker, 1983; Pyke & Dang, 2003). In chapter five, the major themes extracted from interviews were the model minority image transformed into a negative image of nerd-like studious students lacking any social capital. Also, there were perspectives that created the image of AAPI students continually being seen as foreign in a contemporary context. I found students subscribed to these images, although not consciously. It was through the coding of their narratives similar themes emerged when discussing their own perspectives related to understanding and managing these perceptions.

As an individualized study major, Gary went against the grain of the prescribed assumptions of AAPI students. When asked about how this made him feel, he stated that his initial feelings were that he was a "trailblazer" and felt "special." He realized that he "is one of the only older Asian males" in his program and described his academic interest to be superior to what "all the other Asian kids usually study." During our second interview and his review of the transcripts, Gary had an epiphany that allowed him to share the following:

> For a while I thought that I was the one who's the opposite of all these bad ideas of the nerdy Asian kid… so I went with that for a little bit. Like, I am the special one… I felt like I was eventually trying to make myself into the honorary interesting White kid… I feel like I was in some sort of elite that these nerdy Asian kids couldn't [be a part of]. And I feel like that's how I felt about [Silver] and my major… that I was better than the business major and sciences, at first. So when I first came to [MPU]… I sort of felt like this special intellectual… [but] I started to reject that the end of last year and this year… but I think I still believe it to some extent because I am still reminded of how there are so many Asians in business and premed all the time.

Due to the internalization of specific images and designations of the model minority stereotype, Gary felt acceptance and belonging by rejecting what he presumed to be a negative image, the Asian business or science student.

Amy presents a different perspective on how she internalizes her experiences. She subscribes to the notions of being a model student and copes with it as a temporal experience. She exudes a sentiment of defeat while expressing her opinions about conforming to the images imposed on her. The quote used to start this section was Amy's sentiment at our second interview related to her disposition as an AAPI student and the persistence of stereotypes.

Later, Amy reveals the challenges of balancing the competitive collegiate environment and the complexities of bifurcating feelings being labeled as a model student. In the words of Amy: "who wouldn't want to be a good student." However, the bad experiences come along with this perspective are further internalized because she negotiates that there are better returns when being labeled as a socially rejected student. She states:

> I can live with being labeled as just focusing on school. A lot of students think you have to party and be really involved and popular but I don't really need that. I came to college to get a good career not to win Homecoming Queen or be the Student Body President. Plus it's only for a couple years and then I will graduate and move on to real life where I don't have to worry about this kind of stuff.

She sees the social environment separate from the academic experiences and focus on their survival in the academic area of her life. However, we do know that both social and academic experiences are interrelated and impact one another (Cabrera et al., 1999; Tinto, 1997).

The following sections will further reveal the ways students shared internalized perspectives related to race. Students subscribed to beliefs that reproduced the cycle of socialization toward the constructions related to AAPIs and society and on campus. Themes dealing with big city exceptionalism, color-blind ideology, co-ethnic othering, and self imposed invisibility surfaced as ways they internalized racialized experiences. Lastly, resistance was a type of response to the challenges they faced related to race. However, the type of resistance, self-defeating, provides a revealing aspect of how students deal with issues of race.

Empire State of Mind: Big City Exceptionalism

"It's a big city, it's diverse and tolerant and kids come to [MPU] for the diversity"

In a study of AAPI students who attended UCLA, Poon (2010) discovered students had experiences with racial inequalities but believed certain geographical locations, such as California, were not affected by issues dealing with race. Focused on how students reproduced dominant ideology, Poon (2010) revealed that students perceived Los Angeles and California to be a place of acceptance and conflict-free. Similar to the students in the UCLA study, my participants also had a similar sentiment with regard to issues of race and geographic location. In addition to the quote displayed above, Charles states:

> [Metro Park] has so many people from everywhere and it is seen as the
>
> crossroads of the world. The problems with race aren't that major here.

Everyone comes here or who lives here understands that they need to be more accepting which eliminates a lot of oppressive behavior and problems that other places might have.

For Sonia, growing up in North Dakota, there is stark difference in the way she is treated. Her juxtaposition of living in a very homogenous environment with blatant racism to a place like [Metro Park], she reconciles the minimal experiences of racialization at school. She further elaborates:

In North Dakota, or the Midwest, it is really racist. I hear comments or get really awkward stares and I know because I am Asian… people in the Midwest are harsh. They make really hurtful comments and react in obvious ways about their attitude about Asian people. So, coming to a large city and [MPU], I feel a lot less worried about racism and stuff like that.

Young believes that racism is a direct and overt action and believes that racial acceptance and tolerance is already achieved at a place like MPU as well as within the city. He further states:

I don't see any problems related to racist actions or anything like that, Asian people are more accepted and embraced at [MPU] because there are so many of us. I think it can get really hairy or complicated if there was something to happen that was race related. People just keep certain ideas or thoughts to themselves and for the most part, I think that everyone is really accepting of Asian people. There are jokes and comments thrown

around but the really bad actions or hate crimes don't happen at [MPU] or in the city.

During our third interview, Young does acknowledge that he has experienced overt racism in Metro Park, but justifies it by saying it was an isolated incident. He states: "I do remember one time on the city bus some woman randomly called me a chink… I am not sure why she did that but that rarely happens… she may have been mental or something."

Although students recognize there are issues related to AAPI social constructions, they believe that we are in a society that has embraced racial diversity and the issues that existed in the past no longer exist. Using big city exceptionalism, which frames the area as a place impervious toward oppressive actions, students justified the everyday experiences with racialization. They reverted to the idea that places such as Metro Park and MPU are not possible of having visible issues related to race, although they were able to easily identify their own situations dealing with racialized experiences.

Color-blind Ideology

"I want people to look past my race"

Color-blind racial beliefs have received growing attention as an emerging racial ideology within higher education research (Gurin, Peng, Lopez, & Nagda, 1999; Gurin et al., 2002). There are a variety of ideas related to color-blind ideology that can be adopted by individuals across racial and ethnic groups.

Conceptualizations of racial color-blindness include responses dealing with the elimination of seeing race as a significant factor in peoples' lives to the subscription of moving beyond others' color or race and focusing on the content of their character. Research also has shown that color-blind racial attitudes and racial harassment predict general campus climate (Navarro, Worthington, Hart, & Khairallah, 2009).

The internalization of color-blind ideology was significant in their accounts of coping with racialized experiences. Students felt the need to overcompensate or invalidate the unilateral assumptions of being academically successful in concentrated areas of study by being exceptional in their "non-traditional" majors. Rather than seeing the imposed assumptions of AAPIs as derogatory or unnecessary acts of racism, they subscribe to the constructed beliefs of how AAPIs are viewed and accompany their thoughts with meritocratic ideals. The participants made additional comments related to being accepted for their contributions and preferred race to be eliminated from the equation of their experiences.

Gary internalizes the image that AAPI students are seen as limited and wants to be valued and accepted for his intellect in other fields on inquiry. He prefers for people to listen to him before seeing him. Subscribing to the belief Asians only excel in math and science, he believes he needs to prove to others he is capable of studying outside of those academic majors. He further elaborates:

I feel like I have to try extra hard to prove to people that I am also good at

philosophy and social science related topics. I don't want people to

assume that I am good at math and science. I want them to know that I can

talk about worldly things and have substantial conversations. It would be

easier if they can just look past my race so that my first impression

wouldn't be consumed by being seen as Asian.

Not only has Gary internalized the assumptions related to Asian students being

focused on math and science, he has also bought into the negative image. His

words describing the want to be "worldly" and "have substantial conversation"

incited his perspective about AAPI students lack these normalized attributes. With

internal ideas of this image, he feels the initial assumptions people place on him is

with the same sentiment leading him to see a color-blind ideology as a solution.

This is problematic as described by Neville, Coleman, Falconer, and Holmes

(2005) who purport that color-blind attitudes by minority groups reinforce the

belief in a social hierarchical system that is justified by the existence of inferior

and superior social groups and reproduce oppressive climates.

Charles is also a believer in color-blind ideals as a way to supersede the

racialized viewpoints of others. He specifically says:

People should just focus on the human aspects of who we are, culture is

just an add-on to who we are as human beings. I think everyone should be

treated the same so that we are equal and be given a chance to show that

there are more similarities than differences between people.

Cindy has a slightly different take on the color-blind philosophy. She wishes to believe that at an institution such as Metro Park University, issues related to race are not significant and the cases she, or other students experience, are isolated due to the reputation of the institution. She elaborates:

> At [MPU] I don't think people are focused on race because students come here because the school is known to be diverse. I think that students are beyond talking about race and it is just a part of life. They see, or learn that we are all here for the same goals and respect each other without looking at race. We all come into school and purposely come here because of that. Everyone is open and respects each other for who they are not because they are Asian, African American, or whatever. When I deal with ignorance about being Asian it's not all the time, it's just random times when you bump into the random idiots on campus.

Cindy has an interesting view about race on campus. Although she was able to recall specific instances where race was significant for her, she rationalizes her encounters by the internalized messages she received about a color-blind and diverse campus. Contradictory in many ways, we see the messages provided by the institution as a campus embracing difference overshadowing her thoughts about race.

This finding related to color-blind ideology among AAPI students is perplexing and fascinating. Their understanding of multicultural awareness was connected to color-blind ideologies challenged by scholars who promote social

189

justice and diversity in higher education (Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000; Tynes & Markoe, 2010). Current academic literature and research argue against color-blind philosophies while these students, of color for that matter, value and embrace ideals related to erasing color lines and focus on meritocratic measures for acceptance (Tynes & Markoe, 2010). Unfortunately, these stories also find students feeling the need to compromise their race in order for the campus climate to be ideal.

This type of racial framework is a revived contemporary set of beliefs that serves to minimize, ignore, and distort the existence of race and racism; at its core is the belief that racism is a thing of the past and that race and racism do not play an important role in current social and economic realities (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Cindy, and other students, subscribe to this framework. They also believe the institutional culture of MPU and Metro Park exudes this philosophy leading them to further rationalize the incidents they experience.

Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, and Hart (2008), found those who express an unawareness of racial privilege, specifically color-blindness, may be more likely to perceive the racial-ethnic campus climate more positively. Their findings suggest that a color-blind approach is likely to result in perceptions of climate that are potentially more positive than is warranted which may explain why in some studies it appears as though AAPIs have higher levels of positive campus climate but less satisfaction (Helm, et al., 1998; Ancis et al., 2000).

By rendering color meaningless, challenges faced by AAPI students are also rendered meaningless and internalized. As an emergent theme in this study, internalized color-blind philosophies, combined with fictions of equality and meritocracy, has preserved greater issues related to race and campus climate that continues to limit and impinge on the experiences of AAPI students.

Being a "FOB" (Fresh Off the Boat)

"I would rather be a nerd than a FOB"

The term FOB continually surfaced when students discussed their perspective related to how Asian students were seen on campus. The term FOB stands for "Fresh Off the Boat." FOB is an acronym labeling an individual, specifically of Asian descent, who is perceived to be culturally distinct from normative American values and culture. Pyke and Dang (2002) also share a comprehensive definition taken from *English with an Accent* by Lippi-Green (1997):

> "FOB" is applied to those who display any of several ethnic identifiers such as speaking native tongue with peers, engaging in behavior and leisure pursuits associated with newer arrivals or ethnic traditionalists, dressing in styles associated with the homeland or ethnic enclaves, or socializing with recently immigrated co-ethnics or ethnic traditionalists. Accent and foreign language are particularly important markers of the "FOB" (Lippi-Green 1997).

In the interviews, I found students used the term FOB to distinguish and separate themselves from those who were "super Asian" or considered, in their opinion, "the ones who perpetuate stereotypes of Asians." Pyke and Dang (2002) affirm this internalization process and consider this labeling as "intra-ethnic othering." This process is when co-ethnics in subordinated groups mark those within their racial or ethnic group as different and reproduce myths and stereotypes that permeate in dominant ideology. This othering is a type of identity work employed by targets of racialization who attempt to distance themselves from the stigma linked to their own racial identity. This is unique for AAPI students because it is a intergroup construction that creates another layer of stereotypical images. Not inflicted by those outside of the AAPI racial group, it is distinctive for this community.

Amy elaborates on how the term FOB plays out on the MPU campus for her, she says: "It's more of a term that other Asian kids use to label each other, especially the international students and ethnocentric kids who just came here for school." She further elaborates by describing characteristics of a FOB. She says they lack strong English skills and have a physical aesthetic, such as apparel, that are strongly connected to the image of what she also described as the stereotypical model minority student: "You know, I guess like the real Asian nerds. They are kind of tacky and don't really follow the styles that everyone else does... I would rather be just a nerd than be labeled a FOB, for sure."

Young tells another story regarding FOBs. His account shows a very clear internalized perspective of further subordination of those who are considered FOBs within the AAPI student community. He shares:

> Last year we used to play intramurals dodgeball on Thursday nights and there were a lot of Asian clubs that compete against each other. It's pretty fun and you get to see a lot of other Asians from all over campus. Even though we go for fun it gets pretty competitive and it becomes really heated… Usually the "fobby" kids get knocked out first because they suck at sports… A lot of kids go into the competition knowing that they can knock out the FOBs first and then it becomes pretty intense when it's KSA [Korean Student Association], my fraternity, and this Asian Christian club.

Young's reflection regarding the "fobby" kids and their lack of athletic ability can be seen as further internalization of how he further subordinates those who are more ethnically traditional.

Charles furthers Young's story by providing his own insight. He observes the differentiation that occurs within the total Asian student community and says:

> FOBs don't know what's going on and get made fun of a lot. Usually by other Asian kids who are more American. I think the kids who are born here have a feeling of entitlement or that they are better because they know about the more common things that FOBs don't know…like music, books, and art.

Rather than internalized oppression, Charles correlates the distinctions and negative behavior toward those who are more ethnically connected as a sign of entitlement. Although it provides another lens to examine the co-ethnic othering phenomenon, he validates the idea of creating the image of Asians as perpetually foreign and his own acceptance by admitting that he has also created a social hierarchy in his head: "FOBs just make all Asians look like we don't fit in even more."

As previously mentioned, there is a critical mass of Asian students on campus. Researchers have championed the need for structural representation for students of color because of the impact it has for a sense of belonging, multicultural awareness, and improvement of campus racial climate (Hurtado, et al., 1998; Hurtado, et al., 1999). For these AAPI students, although sheer numbers and critical mass is not an issue, another unique experience is revealed through their perspectives. For Sonia, she has internalized the perception of the Asian invasion and FOB. She recounts:

> The FOBs stick together a lot. I think they make the image of Asians sticking together worse or maybe create it because they generally hang out with each other, probably because they like speaking their language and doing Asian stuff. But we are in a huge city, why would you want to just hang out with the same people? I'm pretty sure other kids see that and just think more bad stuff about all Asians.

For clarification purposes, I asked Sonia who these "other kids" were. She was quick to respond by saying "American kids… like the White kids who go here." Her comment indicates she has come to believe that American is also synonymous to White and the idea of Asians being perpetually foreign. I asked in a follow up interview if she would consider herself American. This question yielded a long pause as she had to fully consider if the term she had conceptualized in her head was accurate. She later stated that she realized that: "being American really meant being White."

Self Initiated Invisibility

"It's easier to be flying under the radar so you don't have to deal"

Another theme found when examining the ways in which students cope with racialized experiences deal with the idea of "flying under the radar" or self initiated invisibility. Asking students about how they responded to specific encounters dealing with racialization solicited responses heavily focused on evading situations, environments, and people in order to feel comfortable on campus.

An obvious retreat for all students who are lucky enough to have family nearby is to go "home" to get away from their day to day lives as students. However, for Amy this getaway is prompted by the negative experiences dealing with her racial identity revealed in a previous chapter.

Yeah, well, I like going home every weekend. I can get away from all this
bullshit and my roommates… it's just nice to not have worry about little
things, like having to always explain yourself when you do something
weird, like cook Chinese food and stink up the place….I can eat whatever
I want and not deal with all the looks and comments… and plus my
roommate's boyfriend is always around and he makes me uncomfortable
anyway.

Amy initially states that she goes home every weekend to do laundry. However,
she further elaborates that this was a weekly trip she looks forward to because of
the constant negative interactions she has had. In particular, she identifies the root
causes which directly related to racial microaggressions. The reference to "little
things" directly connects with the multitude of minor experiences of
microaggressions that ultimately lead to a negative campus climate (Solorazo et
al., 2000). She further comments:

Plus, I don't want to say anything, I mean… what can anyone do about it?
If I say that I am pissed and that they are being racist wouldn't fly… it's
not like they are overtly racist, it's just that I am different, and I know it's
weird because it's not what they are used to, that All-American kinda
thing…and it's easier to just stay quiet and just deal with it, plus we are all
going to move out and so I'll just keep to myself and not worry about it.
Plus, it seems better when I disappear for a while and come back, it's like
they appreciate the time away from me.

In this excerpt, we see that Amy's internalization of the model minority assumption sets in as she "just deals with it" and "doesn't want to say anything." She feels that it benefits her and her roommates if she tries to "be the good, quiet, Asian girl."

Cindy, Charles, and Sonia provide an additional perspective when it comes to flying under the radar. Self-imposed, like Amy, the theme of becoming invisible was prevalent in their remarks. For the analysis, invisibility is defined as an inner struggle with the feeling that one's talents, abilities, personality, and worth are not valued or even recognized because of prejudice and racism (Franklin, 1999). To extend Franklin's (1999) theoretical frame regarding the invisibility syndrome, the students of this study succumb to the struggle and feeling and self-initiate this invisibility. Cindy shares:

> I guess I have tried to mix in with others and really be open to different people, with race and class and stuff… but all I feel is that there is no way around it. All my encounters with a lot of people who aren't Asian are always dealing with stupid stereotypical things so hanging out with other Asians is easier, you don't have to explain yourself or defend ignorant comments or assumptions people make… it also makes me less angry at times… It's easier just to avoid people and not be so present, so that you don't become a target or topic of ridicule.

Charles echoes this sentiment when discussing issues related to coping with racialized experiences. He states: "it's sometimes better to blend in with everyone

else and not be seen… that way there are a lot of Asians and you are just one of the many, you feel stronger in numbers than being alone and always having to combat things people say because you can avoid that kind of stuff." Sonia follows suit by saying: "Sometimes it gets so annoying that you want to crawl into a hole and just stay there… but really, you can't do that, more like just go to class and do what you want to do and not interact with people who will judge you specifically about race… that's way easier… to avoid them and just let them be and so if you aren't in their way they really won't have much to say and even if they do, I won't hear it." Because of their experiences, the students believe being invisible would be a better tactic in order to avoid situations dealing with race. This self initiated invisibility is harmful as it furthers the challenges of issues already related to the invisibility that is imposed on these students.

Hurtado et al. (1998) maintains that positive campus climates validate students' experiences and contributions. For these students, their actions are annulled. This lack of validation propels them to create a strategy of invisibility to survive in the unreceptive environment. Becoming transparent has a variety of negative outcomes, not only a negative view of the university climate. Lee (1996) argues that marginalization and invisibility will lead AAPI students to disregard other services and opportunities that may enhance future learning outcomes. In particular, compiled with the cultural stigma of seeking mental health services, students may cope with problems alone creating further alienation and dissatisfaction with their academic experience.

In other studies related to race and oppressive experiences on campus, students were found to have transformative responses such as political activism, collective grassroots movements, and social agency to move towards the elimination of stereotypes (Poon, 2010; Solórzano & Bernal, 2001; Yosso, 2000). For the students of this study, little transformational action ensued. Resistance and countering of the images did arise but in a unique way.

Self-Defeating Resistance

Initially, when examining the data, a picture of positive responses began to be displayed. Students were finding other opportunities related to fulfilling a sense of belonging and comfort during their collegiate years. By further examining the transcripts and coding, a theme of self-defeating resistance became prominent. Students elaborated on perspectives that conveyed a lack interest for change to occur when dealing with oppressive experiences and race. Instead it was for someone else to deal with. They also shared the challenges of participating in or maintaining these outlets for satisfaction and belonging. Solórzano and Bernal (2001) call this behavior as self-defeating resistance. Self-defeating resistance refers to students who may have some understanding of their social conditions but are not motivated by an interest in social justice. These students engage in actions that do not assist in change and in fact help to re-create the oppressive conditions from which it originated (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001).

Self-defeating resistance recognizes that individuals experiencing marginalization are aware of the injustices or inappropriateness of bias related actions or racism. However, the type of resistance ensued by the individuals are self-defeating because these specific individuals maintain an incomplete understanding of the issues, for this case race. Additionally, those performing self-defeating resistance demonstrate behaviors that can be destructive or counterproductive.

The major themes extracted from the data that indicated a self-defeating resistance dealt with the attempt to prove others wrong and finding counterspaces on and off campus. These themes were situated in the idea of a self-defeating resistance because of the end results for the students and institution. While attempting to disprove others, some students had to cope with high levels of stress and wellness related issues. Also, in order to find counterspaces, students exacerbated invisibility, alienation, and racial segregation on campus.

Proving Others Wrong

"I want to show the White kids that Asians can be like them too"

Young and Gary felt the need to counter the racialized images of AAPI students by proving the assumptions were incorrect. Gary's main perspective related to disproving other's constructions of AAPI students related to his academic and social interests.

Gary finds himself in a racial dilemma. While trying to break the rigid stereotype of Asian American students as non-intellectuals he also faced the

challenge of proving himself on an academic playing field with his White peers. This image of the model minority myth and perpetual foreigner caused Gary to think that people do not take him seriously. He further elaborated:

> Until I show that I am competent and smart enough to carry a conversation about social theory or whatever in my major, I have to prove myself… and I feel that all the time. And I also feel like, we sort of touched on this before... but in regard to what I am studying and what I am doing in cultural studies, I think people think that I want to start some yellow power movement.…I feel like that… you know, people assuming that I am in business and then having to prove that I am able to be a part of [Silver], it gets annoying… I can get really tired of it.

Later on in a follow up interview he further stated:

> It's very stressful; I have a hard time relaxing. I was just talking to my ex-girlfriend and she was saying it was just hard being with me because I was always on guard. And I was always angry… she said that I was always trying to be on the top of my game and unconsciously trying to prove to others that I was capable of being a part of different groups. And I realized that was true, except with a few people in certain situations, I guess mostly with other Asians.

Previous studies have shown racism related stress has had an impact on Asian American and Pacific Islander students. The results of these investigations found that a perceived negative campus racial climate had an effect on AAPI student

depression, self-destructive habits, and their overall satisfaction with the undergraduate experience (Liang et al., 2004; Cress & Ikeda, 1999).

With regard to self destructive habits, for Young, the topic of proving others wrong was deeply intertwined with social behaviors such as drinking alcohol. He states:

A lot of White people think Asians can't drink; it's another stereotype that comes with being meek or weaker and nerdy. But I know I try to disprove that and my other fraternity brother follow suit. There are a lot of times at parties where we will see other guys from the White frats or just guys in general where we have drinking competitions and we pretty much beat all of them. We make sure they know that Asian people can drink… I guess it is really stupid but I just don't like that we look weak in a lot of things and want to show them that it's not an Asian thing.

Sonia also had a few remarks about the collegiate environment and assumptions related to AAPI students and drinking. She mentioned that proving one's prowess in drinking was something that appeared to be an issue AAPI students faced. It was not something she partook in, specifically, but knew her other AAPI student friends did participate in binge drinking and correlated it with them trying to disprove the assumptions related to AAPIs having low, or referred to as "weak," consumption levels of alcohol.

Gary and Young's experiences with microaggressions and racialization suggest a new perspective on stress and racism: these students are caught between

resisting, overcoming, and challenging numerous stereotypes in potentially harmful ways. This constant negotiation of racial microaggressions has led Gary to "always be on guard" and never able to fully be happy with whom he is while Young is participating in harmful behaviors with alcohol consumption.

Their stories do not only expose the impact of racialization and microaggressions but also how both positive and negative images trap students in a tug of war proving themselves while jeopardizing their well-being. Kibria (1999) argued that Asian Americans faced with the model minority stereotype are faced with the troubles of combating the negative images. These student experiences illustrate how stereotypes regarding AAPIs are being redeveloped through academic and social spheres and affect student experiences regarding their wellness and sense of belonging on campus.

<u>Finding Counterspaces On and Off Campus</u>

Critical race research in higher education has established that students who experience racial microaggressions find alternate environments called counterspaces. Counterspaces serve as sites where deficit notions of people of color can be challenged and where a positive collegiate racial climate can be established and maintained (Solórzano et al., 2000). Some students sought both on and off campus retreats in order to fulfill the positive experiences to strengthen their sense of belonging and connectivity.

Some spaces on campus included organizations, such as Young's Asian American fraternity or informal study groups. Off campus collectives or organizations also were revealed as safe spaces for students. Places such as churches and non-profit groups for community service were best seen as safe spaces where race was acknowledged and positively embraced. Although these spaces provided safety and comfort, it also created complications for students.

For on campus counterspaces, Young further reveals:

I guess my fraternity, since it is almost all Asian guys, is a place where I don't really feel the race issue as much. We can talk about Asian things but also they can really understand me because we talk about being Asian American and the issues we face. Although I am Chinese, there are a lot of guys who are from all the ethnic groups and we have a common understanding because there are a lot of the same issues we go through… things like school stress and dating isn't really talked about or the issues Asian guys face with girls, but at fraternity events or meetings we have side discussions about stuff like that… I guess I don't really think about it but now that we are talking about it, I talk a lot about being Asian and the issues I face with them and it's not like anywhere else on campus.

Cindy and Amy both identified their counterspaces as informal study groups that organically formed which happened to consist of mostly AAPI students. Further probing the demographic makeup of the group, it was confirmed the groups were mostly or all AAPI students, Amy stated there was one

international student, but this student was also an anomaly because "she spoke perfect English because she went to an international school in Korea that primarily had ex-patriots' kids from the U.S." Cindy further elaborates:

> Even though we would study [Organic Chemistry], we would talk about Asian stuff, but it wasn't like about Asia per se… it was more like the stuff you wouldn't necessarily talk to your White friends about, even things like food and inside information or jokes about being Asian American. I guess I feel more comfortable in those types of settings just because I don't think about whether someone will say something ignorant or they aren't just looking at me different.

As Solorzano and Villalpando (1998) have determined, counterspaces allow students to cultivate their own learning and to nurture an encouraging atmosphere where their experiences are validated and viewed as important. With regard to identity development, it is clear that their Asian American identities are positively reinforced and cultivated in these organic, academic and social spheres within the institution. Often social counterspaces develop out of academic ones, and vice versa. Also, social counterspaces allow room outside the classroom confines for students to vent frustrations and cultivate friendships with people who share many of their experiences (Yosso et al, 2009). It is evident that the building of community in social counterspaces cultivates students' sense of belonging and nurtures their resilience.

As for off campus counterspaces, Charles and Sonia have specific examples of how they feel embraced and accepted in ways they do not in the campus community. Sonia shares:

Beyond looking for things at school, I go to church a lot. Probably two times a week. It is really important for me. It is primarily an Asian American church but it consists of all races. We do very Asian-like things, especially the meals afterward and most of the small group leaders are Asian American. It's nice to see that type of leadership or people who you can turn to and talk to about issues about school to just your everyday stuff. I guess I don't really focus on what the school provides because I have my church and the people there. They give off really good vibes and really help me out when I have issues. I know I can turn to them with anything I need.

Similar to the counterspaces found in a study of Latina college students by Yosso et al. (2009), Sonia builds a culturally supportive community and develops skills to navigate the "everyday stuff" including the experiences of being AAPI. Charles also found a supportive space outside of school. He says:

I find a lot of connections and meet cooler people outside in my community service commitments. I spend a good amount of time at the YMCA in Chinatown and just help with the programs and stuff, I didn't really think about it but there are a lot of Asian folks there who come to the center and kids who come to get tutoring. There is a real wide mix of

206

people, but I think the whole idea that there are a lot of Asians around in a

place like the "Y" makes me feel more welcome and comfortable. We

mostly talk about the changes in Chinatown and I learn a lot about what it

was like before I got there, I like learning about that stuff, it gives me

better insight to other historical things I never would have learned just at

school.

With his involvement at the YMCA, Charles not only finds another community to

embrace his AAPI identity but also builds his knowledge in understanding issues

pertinent to the Asian communities within Metro Park. Yosso et al. (2009) states

counterspaces enable students to develop skills of critical navigation and succeed

in the face of racism. For Charles, although not deliberate, has enabled this

outcome to occur and can be seen as a direct response to his experiences on

campus.

Other students in the study mentioned outside communities but were not

significant in relation to their racialized experiences. However, they alluded to

having a stronger sense of connection and comfort in comparison to their campus

environments. Some of these spaces included places of internship, part-time jobs,

and other community organizations.

One unique characteristic related to counterspaces for these AAPI students

is they identified places outside of the campus. Previous studies focused on

students of color who had experiences with negative campus climates found

counterspaces to be situated within the institution (Solórzano et al., 2000;

Solórzano & Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009). For this study, students ventured within and outside the social and academic perimeters of the campus. This proved to be valuable but when examined further, this response also necessitates further investigation focusing on the various types of outcomes it may yield.

Young expands on the how his fraternity is a counterspace as well as why they operate with only Asian-oriented activities in mind. He states:

> Our fraternity, well maybe besides parties, just does Asian things, pretty much we just hang out with other Asian sororities and help out with cultural specific philanthropies and stuff. We rarely do anything the regular Greeks would do… We don't really care about what other people are concerned with mostly because I feel like they don't really care about us so we don't really get involved.

When I asked Young who "they" were, he mentioned the university. Specifically, he identified "they" as any university office that solicits the help of campus organizations. He further states that it is easier "to stick to what's comfortable" and has a tone similar to what other students said about flying under the radar, however, this dynamic is how he views and has experienced the culture of his counterspace.

While Amy shared her interactions with the mostly-Asian study groups she participated in, she shares that she is not concerned with meeting new people or "taking time and energy to make friends." Instead, she is comfortable with the

208

groups she has considered to be her core study group. She has no interest in going

beyond learning about diversity and others and accepts this phenomenon to be a

reality of college and life. She further states:

> I guess this is how it is, people generally find people who have a common
>
> interest or similar background. It's like a survival strategy so that you can
>
> be comfortable and happy without worrying about all the other nonsense
>
> that goes on, including stupid racist remarks. People can go on and be
>
> ignorant and believe what they want because at the end of the day
>
> everyone is here just to finish school and get out. I don't think they ever
>
> look back and say how diversity or interacting with someone Asian made
>
> their college experience.

Amy justifies and makes sense of her retreat to a counterspace by believing that

society and college life ultimately guides people to become insular. She has dealt

with issues, dealing with race, to allow her to find a place she feels safe while also

limiting her perspectives about diversity. This is parallel to the self-defeating

notion of resistance because she has little knowledge or agency to embrace social

justice viewpoints. Rather, she re-creates the issues that plague AAPI students by

being silent and invisible within the system.

Finally, the problems surrounding personal wellness surfaced when

discussing the theme of proving others wrong with students. As stated above, both

Gary and Young experienced harmful effects of this coping strategy. For Gary, he

was exposed to high levels of stress that affected his everyday life. He carried the

weight of always having to "be on guard" and worrying about what others were thinking to acknowledge his presence or involvement in both academic and social settings. While Gary experienced stress, Young was confronted with issues related to high level of drinking which can be a dangerous habit, leading to other problems with health and wellness.

Chapter Summary

The stories revealed in this chapter develop a new way of understanding how AAPI students navigate and respond to issues related to race on campus. Unlike previous studies that portray outcomes that illuminate the ways students are champions of social justice, these students provide a unique story of resistance. Their behaviors represent a group of students who have not had the opportunity to fully engage in understanding AAPI issues and race. They have limited knowledge on identifying the causes of their experiences beyond the social norms and messages provided to them by their own live experiences and external social forces, such as peer groups and the media. This sheds a unique light on students who have not had a strong agency of involvement in AAPI or race-related topics and encounters. Perhaps the AAPI student who engages in self-defeating resistance or is less versed in social justice and activism is the population researchers may need to further examine because they potentially represent the critical mass on campuses.

When synthesizing all the ways in which these AAPI students internalize and resist situations dealing with race, we can see there are broader ramifications dealing with identity formation. Racial identity is a surface-level manifestation based on what we look like yet has deep implications in how we are treated. Racial identity, tied to the experience of all people of color with oppression (Helms, 1995), becomes central to a student's overall sense of identity and psychosocial development. Racial identity theories help explain the various ways that students approach, negotiate, and understand their identity as racial beings and how it affects other aspects of their lives.

The AAPI students in this study demonstrated behaviors that enabled them to further examine their own identity as a racial group and responded in ways that allowed them to maintain satisfaction and survival but also had self-defeating outcomes. They retreated from wanting to interact with others, felt levels of stress, as well as participated in potentially harmful behaviors.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

The Asian American and Pacific Islander college student population

maintains a distinctive and unique racial experience in higher education. The

objective of this study was to explore how AAPI students describe race and

articulate their interactions on campus when encountering race-related situations.

Focusing on student experiences with racialization and campus climate, this study

uncovered the lived realities of participants through the lens of campus climate

and racial microaggressions. Additionally, the study paid attention to their

responses to these experiences. The research questions that guided this study

were:

1. How do Asian American and Pacific Islander college students describe
   race as a part of the college experience?

2. How do they describe racialized experiences and explain the sources
   of these interactions?

3. How do they understand and respond to experiences dealing with
   racial stereotypes?

4. How do students manage racialized experiences?

In order to understand student experiences, I used a framework consisting of campus racial climate and microaggressions. This conceptual lens helped me to understand AAPIs racialized experiences as well as race relations on campus. Employing a methodological stance of critical race theory, in-depth interviews were conducted with six participants at Metro Park University who identified as second generation AAPI upperclass students. This chapter reviews the findings of this study, limitations, as well as directions for future research and practice.

Analysis of Findings

The major findings in this study reveal how racialized perspectives about AAPI students impact campus climate, students' sense of belonging, and identity development. Students' perceptions were influenced by how they were treated on campus due to race and stereotypical images about AAPI students that permeate American society. The racialized images these students discussed dealt with the model minority myth and perpetual foreigner stereotypes. Further, these images evolved in a way that is unique to this campus and added to the stereotypical traits already entrenched in society to create a challenging campus racial climate for these students.

The first theme presented in this study focused on the social construction of AAPI students on campus. All six students revealed ways in which the prevailing stereotypes were embedded in their interactions with others at the institution. By examining AAPI student experience using the lenses connected to

213

the psychological and behavioral dimensions of campus climate, this finding illuminated how AAPI students are constructed as nerds or social outcasts as well as outsiders invading academic opportunities meant for others. Seen as narrowly focused on academics and socially deviant emerged as a new iteration of the model minority myth. This new form of the stereotype created a direct link to the perception of the perpetual foreigner. This image creates an impression of AAPI students as outsiders on campus due to their race. The way campus racial climate was shaped for these students were situated in the stereotypical assumptions placed on them by members of the institution, including faculty.

The messages and encounters that students faced took place within academic and social spaces and were mostly initiated by their White peers. The meaning behind these experiences leads me to believe that this institution replicates societal stereotypes of AAPIs while integrating additional constructions connected to the academic environment. The factors associated with academic competition, meritocracy, and social status are coupled with the social stereotypes in society of AAPIs to create a unique racial climate for this institution. Further, the creation of this type of campus climate makes race salient in the lives of these students.

The second theme further explained the factors contributing to the social construction of AAPI students. Student experiences were further examined by inquiring about racial microaggressions imposed on the participants as well as how AAPI students felt they were racially situated with regard to campus

214

resources and programs. Aligning with various themes found in the common racialized experiences of the AAPI community by Sue et al. (2007), factors such as seeing culture as deficit and the exoticization of men and women reveal how the broader social conceptualization of AAPIs are sustained and perpetuated. Although there is critical mass and visible representation of Asian students on campus, the experience of the students in this study reveal that being AAPI meant facing unique aspects of invisibility. Not being reflected in the academic curriculum and being overlooked for various campus opportunities created this experience for the students within this study. Ultimately, racial microaggressions impeded AAPIs total engagement on campus and their sense of belonging. They shared feelings of being excluded, rejected, and dismissed.

The majority of experiences shared during the interview process were primarily focused on peer to peer interactions on campus. The instances where students experienced microaggressions were often deeply connected to specific social spaces such as in the residence hall or campus library. Since students spend most of their time outside the classroom in their living environments, it was not a shock that most interactions or microaggressive experiences would occur in this type of dwelling. Students were also reluctant to identify issues dealing with marginalization and race when questions related to faculty arose. All students indicated there was limited engagement with faculty due to class size or just ambivalence to approach faculty which will be addressed again for future implications for research.

215

Lastly, this study provides evidence on how these AAPI students internalize and resist racialized encounters on campus. Students deal with racialized situations by adopting beliefs imposed on them, which is seen as internalization, as well as initiate self-defeating resistance which allows for the cycle of socialization to perpetuate. When discussing the coping mechanisms and responses to racialized experiences, students reacted in a variety of ways including the search for counterspaces, furthering invisibility, and resisting the assumptions placed on them. All students maintained indifferent attitudes which were described as normal everyday occurrences that are a part of their lot in life. This had a significant impact on their agency to challenge or change the attitudes toward AAPIs. Unlike other critical studies on race and college students, these participants did not have major transformative responses. Their response, or lack thereof, should be a future area to study with regard to student diversity awareness and campus involvement.

Additionally, it is important to note these students were not acutely aware of Asian American and Pacific Islander issues previous to this study. They did not have a strong academic foundation in AAPI issues nor did they participate in activist-related organizations. This had an impact on the themes and content of the interview responses because they were being exposed to the theoretical concepts, such as the model minority myth, for the first time. It was a challenging, yet illuminating, experience for them to examine the themes that emerged in their stories. The interview relationship in this study provided both the investigation of

this phenomenon as well as a learning process for the students involved in this study.

The findings in this study are important as they create greater insight into issues of race in higher education. The study goes beyond the Black-White paradigm of understanding the student experience. It provides voice for AAPI students and provides a new perspective for understanding the racialization of campus climates unique to this racial group. In particular, this study supports that AAPI students experience race in a distinctive way with a specific set of social perceptions constructed and maintained in a system such as a college or university. It reveals how race is salient and a factor in how these students view their academic experience in college. The issues revolving around academic achievement, social interactions, and campus support transpire differently when applying the lens of racial dynamics for these students.

Beyond the social constructions of AAPI students, understanding the factors that contribute to and sustain these images are important for understanding and addressing the racialization of AAPI students. It reveals how powerful and complicated encountering stereotypes can be for students of color. Interconnected in multiple ways, the racialization of AAPI students is rooted in historically embedded images that evolve throughout time and institutional context. For the students of this study, we see how previous stereotypes and assumptions about the AAPI population thrive in this campus community.

Implications for Practice

University faculty and administrators can significantly strengthen issues related to campus racial climate for AAPI students in several ways. By being the primary agents of change and altering patterns of socialization, university faculty and administrators wield power to create and reinvent programs and services to better meet the needs of all students of color, including AAPIs. By creating, supporting, and sustaining educational programs that deliberately address issues related to stereotypes and continue discussions related to race, leaders on campus will help all members of the campus community to become more aware of issues that deal with the themes uncovered in this study.

Through programmatic services and constantly initiating updates to academic curriculum are just a few ways to pragmatically create change and awareness about the AAPI student community. Examples of programs include intergroup dialogue (Hurtado, 2001). Such programs foster learning that integrates consciousness-raising, relationship building across cultural and power differences, and strengthens individual and collective capacity to promote social justice. Issues such as race, gender, sexuality and other areas of identity are discussed for student growth and critical thinking. Intergroup dialogue is one of many educational programs that can be facilitated by practitioners on college campuses.

Also, student assessment related to race-related experiences was a missing component within the institution studied. A focus on student perceptions related

to campus climate should be administered on a frequent basis to gain up to date information related to the ever-changing student demographics. College campuses should also perform audits related to student organizations and support services to capture what needs and resources are available for AAPI students. A result from this study shows that students do not know where to turn to for support or discuss issues related to race and resort to the creation or retreat to counterspaces to fulfill their needs. It is imperative that support services are rendered vital in the cadre of student services on campus as race is continually an important aspect of a student's experience as well as their perceptions related to their sense of belonging.

Taking it a step further, the limited encounters dealing with student interactions with administrators prompts me to address professionals within higher education. Student affairs professionals should view Asian American and Pacific Islander students as a unique group of students with distinctive experiences and needs. Examining the multiple ways race plays out for students should be further discussed and examined. Stemming from the purpose and need for this study, practitioners should deconstruct notions of the Black-White paradigm related to race and support services and better understand how the variations within the population of students of color demands varied responses.

Additionally, it is important to note the impact an administrator or faculty member may have on a student's ability to learn. Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) found that AAPI students, out of all racial groups in their study, who had

satisfying relationships and frequent interaction with faculty members, especially those that encourage students to work harder, were strong predictors of learning. Although the study was specifically about faculty interaction, I would argue that the interactions with administrators are just as important, if not more. As educators who promote learning in and out of the classroom, there is clear evidence that further interactions and attention toward AAPI students will yield positive outcomes for this community.

Another element that institutions need to consider is how they articulate the expectation and value of diversity on campus. Rather than using it as a marketing or public relations component, universities must actively engage in dialogue and provide students opportunities to challenge and enhance the diversity that is purported on campus. In order to accomplish this, practitioners must also construct language and culture that allows for a positive campus climate. Practitioners must first challenge their own constructions of diversity and the values within this broad context and initiate inclusive ways to embrace student difference and learning.

As colleges and universities strive to do a better job in addressing the social and psychological needs of their ethnic minority students, administrators and policymakers must consider the complexity of their student body and continually strive to ensure the climate and resources are adequate and sustained to further assist in the positive outcomes and development of all their students.

Implications for Future Research

While the qualitative methods used for this study provided rich data on the lived experiences of AAPI students and their dealing with race, it would be helpful to further develop quantitative measures related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and racial microaggressions as well as student satisfaction. Beyond the theoretical topics related to race, it is imperative that colleges and universities look at enrollment data with a narrower lens. Not being able to obtain disaggregated data for this study indicated the institutions problematic understanding of and receptiveness toward AAPI student issues as well as their inattention to address the needs of these students. One of the major steps that should be taken is to disaggregate data to provide richer information and understanding of the many communities within the AAPI umbrella.

It is clear the AAPI college students in this study experience and encounter racism. In a broader context, further studies related to how they internalize variations of racialized images of AAPIs should be further studied to see how this continually impacts identity development and support seeking strategies. Specifically, it would be interesting to examine specific ethnic identities, such as solely Korean American college students or gay Asian American men and their experience with both gender and race in relation to their sense of belonging and identity development. There can be a multitude of identity categories that can be integrated and combined due to the complexities and diversity of the AAPI population of college students. The lack of research and

awareness related to the complexity and heterogeneity of AAPIs further exemplifies why this racial group is still misunderstood and invisible to the field of higher education research. This study, along with others cited and currently being conducted, only skim the surface of this large racial group.

Another area with potential for future study is the ways in which students create a sense of belonging on campus. The creation of counterspaces only provided a cursory understanding of how these spaces came to fruition. An interesting investigation would entail how counterspaces outside of campus are acting as places for students' growth and sense of connection and the impact the spaces have on campus involvement. Also, what is it about these spaces and organizations that allow them to survive, succeed, and maintain satisfaction for these students? Also, the theoretical perspectives in Villalpando's (2003) study related to Latino students self-segregation and racial balkanization versus self-preservation would be further illuminating when applied to AAPI students. This would further answer questions raised about why AAPI students cluster together on campus and how campus racial climates are tailored through peer group dynamics.

Methodologically speaking, I believe there continually needs to be a critical race theory lens applied to AAPI college student research. Teranishi, Behringer, Grey, and Parker (2009) state the inclusion of the CRT lens is vital for the success of current policies and practices, and particularly for better understanding how AAPI students are positioned within higher education.

Through this methodology researchers can develop a stronger understanding of AAPIs within this field of study. Critical race theory ensures that the sensemaking and experiences of students will continue to be solicited giving voice to those who are rarely represented or illuminated in research.

Methods dictated by CRT allowed the students of this study to have a space for self reflection. They were allowed to deconstruct their experiences with race and used the process of storytelling to share the challenging experiences they faced. They were able to identify situations, gain clarity, and challenge mainstream perceptions focused on racialized assumptions of AAPIs. This type of critical qualitative research, using CRT, is necessary to further shed light on the unique experiences AAPIs have with racialized encounters on campuses like the one in this study. CRT shatters the Black-White conceptualizations of race in educational research by centering the dialogue on the issue of race, for AAPIs, as the core of the discussion (Delgado, 1995; Teranishi, 2002; Teranishi, 2008). Also, the emphasis on further analyzing the intersections of identity with race also provide further opportunities for researchers to study the diverse AAPI community. For example, this study also found gender and race had impact on how the students perceived the campus climate. Also, to further complicate and extend the use of CRT, I would recommend researchers examine how CRT may not directly fit the deeper ways to understand AAPI students, similar to LaCrit, CRT should also be refined and challenged to become a more robust methodological frame in accordance with AAPIs. Specifically, by integrating the

223

elements of group histories, cultural characteristics, values, and other uniquely specific traits linked to the AAPI community.

I further assert, alongside other researchers focused on race and higher education, that AAPI populations can and should no longer be overlooked or misrepresented in higher education research. If postsecondary education scholars, policymakers, and practitioners are able to critically examine and integrate AAPI students into the discussion related to race and higher education it will lead the more robust and socially just implications that further the tenets embraced in academic literature and practice in relation to student success, satisfaction, and positive identity development.

REFERENCES

Allen, W. (1999). Missing in action: Race, gender, and Black students' educational opportunities. In Devon W. Carbado (ed.), *Black men on race, gender, and sexuality: A critical reader* (pp. 194–211). New York: Metro Park University Press.

Ancheta, A. (2000). *Race, rights and the Asian American experience*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Ancis, J. R., Sedlacek, W. E., & Mohr, J. J. (2000). Student perceptions of the campus cultural climate by race. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 78*, 180-185.

Antonio, A. L. (2001). Diversity and the influence of friendship groups in college. *Review of Higher Education, 25*(1), 63-89.

Antonio, A.L. (2004). The influence of friendship groups on intellectual self-confidence and educational aspirations in college. *Journal of Higher Education, 75*(4), 446-470.

Astin, A. W. (1988). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25*(4), 297-308.

Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Balón, D. G., Duffy, A. P., & Toya, G. J. (1996, March). *Asian American and Pacific Islanders and Involvement: Navigating through myths and realities*. Paper presented at the annual convention of the American College Personnel Association, Baltimore, MD.

Barceló, N. (2007). Transforming our institutions for the twenty-first century: The role of the Chief Diversity Officer. *Diversity Digest*, *10*(2), 5.

Baker, D. G. (1983). *Race, ethnicity and power: A comparative study*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bonilla-Silva, E., Forman, T. A., Lewis, A. E., & Embrick, D. G. (2003). "It wasn't me!": How will race and racism work in 21st century America. *Research in Political Sociology, 12*, 111–134.

Cabrera, A.F., & Nora, A. (1994). College students' perceptions of prejudice and discrimination and their feelings of alienation: A construct validation approach. *Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies, 16,* 387-409.

Cabrera, A. F., Nora, A., Terenzini, P. T., Pascarella, E., & Hagedorn, L. S. (1999). Campus racial climate and the adjustment of students to college. *The Journal of Higher Education, 70*, 134-160.

Castagno, A. (2005). Extending the bounds of race and racism: indigenous women and the persistence of the Black-White paradigm of race. *The Urban Review*, *37*(5), 447–468.

Ceglowski, D. (2000). Research as relationship. *Qualitative Inquiry, 6,* 88–103.

Chan, S. (1991). Asian American and Pacific Islanders: An interpretive history. New York: Twayne.

Chan, S., & Wang, L. L. (1991). Racism and the model minority: Asian Pacific Americans in higher education. In P. G. Altbach, & K. Lomotey (Eds.). *The racial crisis in American higher education* (pp. 43-68). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Chang, M. J. (2000). Improving campus racial dynamics: A balancing act among competing interests. *Review of Higher Education, 23*(2), 153-175.

Chang, M. J. (2002). Preservation of transformation: Where's the real educational discourse on diversity? *Review of Higher Education, 25*(2), 125-140.

Chronicle of Higher Education. (2005). *College enrollment by racial and ethnic groups, selected years*. Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac. Available: http://chronicle.com/weekly/almanac/2005/nation/0101503.htm

Chou, R.S. & Feagin, J.R. (2008). *The myth of the model minority: Asian Americans facing racism.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Chun, C. A., & Sue, S. (1998). Mental health issues concerning Asian American children. In V. O. Pang & L. Cheng (Eds.), *Struggling to be heard* (pp. 75–89). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

226

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cress, C. M., & Ikeda, E. K. (2003). Distress under duress: The relationship between campus climate and depression in Asian American and Pacific Islander college students. *NASPA Journal, 40*, 74-97.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Delgado, R.,& Stefancic, J. (2001). Critical race theory: An introduction. NewYork: NewYork University Press.

Denzin, N.K. (1992). *Symbolic interactionism and cultural studies: The politics of interpretation.* Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Denzin, N.K. (2001). *Interpretive Interactionism.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2003). The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Dickson-Swift V, James EL, Kippen S, Liamputtong P. (2007). Doing sensitive research: what challenges do qualitative researchers face. *Qualitative Research, 7*(3), 327-353.

Diver-Stamnes, A. C.,& LoMascolo, A. F. (2001). The marginalization of ethnic minority students: A case study of a rural university. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *34*(1), 50–58.

Duran, R.L. (1983). Communicative adaptability: A measure of social communicative competence. *Communication Quarterly, 31*, 320-326.

Duster, T. (1993). The diversity of California at Berkeley: An emerging reformulation of "competence" in an increasingly multicultural world. In B. W. Thompson & Sangeeta Tyagi (Eds.), *Beyond a dream deferred: Multicultural education and the politics of excellence* (pp. 231–255). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Eckel, P. D., & King, J. E. (1992) An Overview of Higher Education in the United States: Diversity, Access, and the Role of the Marketplace. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 2004.Espiritu, Y. L. *Asian Pacific American panethnicity: Bridging institutions and identities.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Egan, T. (2007, January 7). Asian-Americans challenge ideas of race in U.S. universities. International Herald Tribune (New York, NY), p. 1. Retrieved January 22, 2009 from Google Scholar database.

Espiritu, Y.L. (1992). *Asian American panethnicity: Bridging institutions and identities*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Espiritu, Y. L. (1997). *Asian American and Pacific Islander women and men: Labor, laws, and love*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Franklin, A. J. (1999). Invisibility syndrome and racial identity development in psychotherapy and counseling African American men. *Counseling Psychologist, 27,* 761-793.

Fuertes, J.N., & Sedlacek, W.E. (1995). Using noncognitive variables to predict the grades and retention of Hispanic students. *College Student Affairs Journal, 14*(2), 30-36.

Gloria, A. M., & Ho, T A. (2003). Environmental, social, and psychosocial experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander undergraduates: Examining issues of academic persistence. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 81*, 93-105.

Gomez, G. G., & Teranishi, R. T. (2001). *Perspectives on college opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islanders through critical race theory and social capital theory*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle,WA.

Gould, K.H. (1988). Asian and Pacific Islanders: Myth and reality. *Social Work, 33*(2), 142-147.

Gurin, P., Dey, E.L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review, (72)*3, 330-366.

Gurin, P., Peng, T., Lopez, G., & Nagda, B. A. (1999). Context, identity, and intergroup relations. In D. A. Prentice & D. T. Miller (Eds.), *Cultural divides: Understanding and overcoming group conflict.* (pp. 133–170). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Harper, S. & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. *New Directions for Student Services, 120, 7-25.*

Harro, B. (2000). The cycle of socialization. In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfeld, R. Castañeda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, & X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice: An anthology on racism, antisemitism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism and classism.* (pp. 15–21). New York: Routledge.

Heine, S. J., & Lehman, D. R. (1999). Culture, self-discrepancies, and self satisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 25*, 915–925.

Helms, J. E. (1995). An update on Helms' White and people of color racial identity models. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & G. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling.* (pp. 181-198). Thousand Oaks, GA: Sage.

Helm, E. G., Sedlacek, W. E., & Prieto, D. O. (1998). The relationship between attitudes toward diversity and overall satisfaction of university students by race. *Journal of College Counseling, 1,* 111-120.

Ho, C., & Jackson, J. W. (2001). Attitudes towards Asian Americans: Theory and measurement. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31*, 1553-1581.

Hoffman, M., Richmond, J., Morrow, J., & Salomone, K. (2003). Investigating "sense of belonging" in first-year college students. *Journal of College Student Retention, 4*, 227-256.

hooks, b. (1995). Representations of Whiteness in the Black imagination. *In Killing rage: Ending racism*. New York: Henry Hold.

Hune, S. (1997). Higher education as gendered space: Asian-American women and everyday inequities. *In Everyday sexism in the third millennium*, C. R. Ronai, B.A. Zsembik, andJ. R. Feagin, eds., pp. 181-96. New York: Routledge.

Hune, S. (2002). Demographic and diversity of Asian American college students. In M. K. McEwen, C. M. Kodama, A. N. Alvarez, S. Lee, & C. T. H. Liang (Eds.), *Working with Asian American college students* (pp. 11-20). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hune, S., & Chan, K. S. (1997). Special focus: Asian American and Pacific Islander demographic and educational trends. In D. J. Carter & R. Wilson (Eds.), *Minorities in higher education: Fifteenth annual status report* (pp. 39–67). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

229

Hurtado, S. (1992). The campus racial climate: Contexts for conflict. *The Journal of Higher Education, 63*(5), 539-569.

Hurtado, S. (2001b). Research and evaluation on intergroup dialogue. In D. Schoem & S. Hurtado (Eds.), Intergroup dialogue: Deliberative democracy in school, college, community, and workplace (pp. 22–36). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Hurtado, S., & Carter, D.F. (1994) *Latino students' sense of belonging in the college community: Rethinking the concept of integration on campus.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Hurtado, S., Dey, E., & Trevino, J. (1994). *Exclusion of self segregation? Interaction across racial/ethnic groups on college campus.* Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Hurtado, S., Inkelas, Briggs, C., & Rhee, B.S. (1997). Differences in college access and choice among racial/ethnic groups: Identifying continuing barriers. *Research in Higher Education, 38*(1), 43-75.

Hurtado, S., Milem, J. F., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity: Educational policy and practice. *Review of Higher Education, 21*, 279–302.

Hurtado, S., Milem, J. F., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1999). *Enacting diverse earning environments: Improving the climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education.* ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report (Vol. 26). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

Hurtado, S., & Ponjuan, L. (2005). Latino educational outcomes and the campus climate. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *4,*(3), p. 235-251.

Hwang, S. (2005, November 19). The new White flight. *The Wall Street Journal*, p. A1.

Inkelas, K. K. (2000). *Demystifying the model minority: The influences of identity and the college experience on Asian American and Pacific Islander undergraduates' racial attitudes.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan.

Inkelas, K. K. (2003). Diversity's missing minority: Asian American and Pacific Islander undergraduates' attitudes towards affirmative action. *The Journal of Higher Education, 74*(6), 601-639.

Johnson, V. D. (2003). Cultural group perceptions of racial climates in residence halls. *NASPA Journal, 41*, 114–134.

Jones, L., Castellanos, J., Cole, D. (2002). Examining the ethnic minority student experience at predominantly White institutions. *Journal of Hispanic Education, 1*(1), 19-39.

Kibria, N. (2002). *Becoming Asian American*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kim, C.J. (1999). The racial triangulation of Asian American and Pacific Islanders. *Politics and Society, 27*(1), 105-138.

Knox, W., Lindsay, P., & Kolb, M. (1993). *Does college make a difference?* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Kodama, C. M., McEwen, M. K., Liang, C. T. H., & Lee, S. (2001). A theoretical examination of psychosocial issues for Asian American and Pacific Islander students. *NASPA Journal, 38*, 411-437.

Kodama, C. M., McEwen, M. K., Liang, C. T. H., & Lee, S. (2002). An Asian Pacific American perspective on psychosocial student development theory. In M. K. McEwen, C. M. Kodama, A. N. Alvarez, S. Lee, & C. T. H. Liang (Eds.). *Working with Asian American college students* (New Directions for Student Services Series No. 97, pp. 45-59). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kohatsu, E. L., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1990*). Breaking the myth: An analysis of Asian Americans on a university campus over a decade*. Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Counseling Center, University of Maryland at College Park. Research Report #13-90.

Kuh, G. D. (1995). Cultivating "high-stakes" student culture research. *Research in higher education, 36*(5), 563-576.

Kumashiro, K. K. (1999b). Supplementing normalcy and otherness: Queer Asian American men reflect on stereotypes, identity, and oppression. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 12*(5), 491–508

Kvale S. (1988). The 1000-page question. *Phenomenological Pedagogy, 6,* 90-106.

Lee, S. J. (1996). *Unraveling the "model minority" stereotype: Listening to Asian American youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lee, S. S. (2006). Over-represented and de-minoritized: The racialization of Asian Americans in higher education. InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 2(2), Article 4. Retrieved from http://repositories.cdlib.org/gseis/interactions/vol2/iss2/art4

Lewis, A. E., Chesler, M., and Forman, T. A. (2000). The impact of "colorblind" ideologies on students of color: Intergroup relations at a predominantly White university. *Journal of Negro Education, 69*, 74–91.

Liang, C.T.H., Li, L.C., Kim, B.S. (2004). The Asian American and Pacific Islander racism-related stress inventory: Development, factor analysis, reliability, and validity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 51*(1), 103-114.

Liang, C. T. H., & Sedlacek, W. E. (2003). Attitudes of White student services practitioners toward Asian American and Pacific Islanders. *NASPA Journal, 40*(3), 30-42.

Lin, M. H., Kwan, V. S. Y., Cheung, A., & Fiske, S. T. (2005). Stereotype content model explains prejudice for an envied outgroup: Scale of Anti-Asian American stereotypes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 31*, 34-47.

Lippi-Green, R. (1997). English with an accent. New York: Routledge.

Liu, W.M. (2002). Exploring the lives of Asian American men: Racial identity, male role norms, gender role conflict, and prejudicial attitudes. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 3,* 107–118.

Liu, W. M., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1999). Differences in leadership and co-curricular perception among entering male and female Asian American and Pacific Islander college students. *Journal of Freshman Year Experience, 11*(2), 93–114.

Loo, C.M., & Rolison, G. (1986). Alienation of ethnic minority students at a predominantly White university. *Journal of Higher Education, 57*(1), 58-77.

Lowe, L. (1996). *Immigrant acts*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lundberg, C. A., & Schreiner, L. A. (2004). Quality and frequency of faculty-student interaction as predictors of learning: An analysis of student race/ethnicity. *Journal of College Student Development, 45*(5), 549–565.

Manalansan, M.F., IV. (2000). Diasporic deviants/divas: How Filipino gay transmigrants "play with the world." In C. Patton & B. Sánchez-Eppler (Eds.), *Queer diasporas* (pp. 183-203). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Manalansan, M.F., IV. (2003). *Global divas: Filipino gay men in the diaspora*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Massey, D. S., Charles, C. Z., Lundy, G. F., & Fischer, M. J. (2003). *The source of the river: The social origins of freshmen at America's selective colleges and universities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Merriam, S. B. (Ed.). (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (Ed.). (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Milem, J. F. (1994). College, students, and racial understanding. *Thought and Action, 9*(2), 51-92.

Milem, J.F., & Hakuta, K. (2000). The benefits of racial and ethnic diversity in higher education. In D.J. Wilds (Ed.), *Minorities in higher education: Seventeenth annual status report* (pp. 39-67). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Miles, M. and Huberman, M. (1994) Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook. London: Sage.

Min, P. G. (1996). *Caught in the middle: Korean communities in New York and Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mooko, D. (1995). The Asian American and Pacific Islander college student as model minority: The myth, the paradox and the deception. *The Vermont Connection, 15*, 47-57.

Morrison, T. (1992). *Playing in the dark: Whiteness and the literary imagination.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Museus, S.D. & Chang, M.J. (2009) Rising to the challenge of conducting research on Asian Americans in higher education. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 142,* 95-105.

Museus, S.D. & Troung, K.A. (2009) Disaggregating qualitative sata from Asian American college students in campus racial climate research and assessment. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 142,* 17-26.

Nakanishi, D. T. (1989, November/December). A quota on excellence? The Asian American admissions debate. *Change*, pp. 38-47.

Nakanishi, D. T. (1995). A quota on excellence? The Asian American and Pacific Islander debate. In D. T. Nakanishi & T. Y. Nishida (Eds.). *The Asian Pacific American educational experience: A source book for teachers and students* (pp. 273–284). New York: Routledge.

Nakanishi & T. Y. Nishida (Eds.). *The Asian American and Pacific Islander educational experience: A source book for teachers and students*. New York: Routledge.

National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (2008). *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: Facts, not fiction: Setting the record straight.* New York: The College Board.

Navarro, R.L., Worthington, R.L., Hart, J., Khairallah, T. (2009). Liberal and conservative political ideology, experiences of harassment, and perceptions of campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education 2*, 2, 78-90.

Neville, H. A., Coleman, M. N., Falconer, J. W., & Holmes, D. (2005). Color-blind racial ideology and psychological false consciousness among African Americans. *Journal of Black Psychology, 31*(1), 27–45.

The new whiz kids. (1987, August 31). *Time*, pp. 42–51.

Ng, J.C., Lee, S.S., Pak, Y.K. (2007). Contesting the Model Minority and Perpetual Foreigner Stereotypes: A Critical Review of Literature on Asian Americans in Education. *Review of Research in Education, 31*. 95-130.

Okihiro, G. Y. (1994). *Margins and mainstreams: Asians in American history and culture*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Omi, M. & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formations: From the 1960's to the 1990's*. New York: Routledge.

Ong, P., & Hee, S. J. (1993). *The growth of the Asian American and Pacific Islander population: Twenty million in 2020. The state of Asian Pacific America: A Public Policy Report.* Los Angeles: Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics and the UCLA Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Center, University of California.

Osajima, K. "Racial Politics and the Invisibility of Asian Americans in Higher Education." Educational Foundations, 1995, *9*(1), 35–53.

Park, J.Z. (2008). Second-Generation Asian American pan-ethnic identity: pluralized meanings of a racial label. *Sociological Perspectives, 51*, 541-561.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Patton, M. Q. (1987). *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Perea, J. (2000).The Black/White binary paradigm of race. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), Critical race theory: The cutting edge (pp. 344-353). Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Peterson, M.W. & Spencer, M.G. (1990). Understanding academic culture and climate. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 17*(4), 3-18.

Peterson, M.W. & Spencer, M.G. (1990). Understanding academic culture and climate. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 17*(4), 3-18.

Pewewardy, C., & Frey, B. (2002). Surveying the landscape: Perceptions of multicultural support services and racial climate at a predominantly White university. *Journal of Negro Education, 71*, 77–95.

Pierce, C. (1974). Psychiatric problems of the Black minority. In S. Arieti (Ed.), American handbook of psychiatry (pp. 512-523). New York: Basic Books.

Poon, O.A. (2008). Asian American students in higher education research: A review of seven journals. Paper presented at the 33rd annual conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Jacksonville, FL.

Poon, O.A. (2010). More complicated than a numbers game: A critical race theory examination of Asian Americans and campus racial climate. *Dissertation Abstract International, 71*(4). (UMI No. AAT 3405578) Retrieved August 12, 2010, from Dissertations and Theses database.

Ragin, C. C.,& Becker, H. S. (Eds.). (1992). What is a case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Merriam, S.B. (1988), *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, .

Reid, L.D. & Radhakrishnin, P. (2003). Race matters: The relation between race and general campus climate. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology 9*(3), 263-275.

Rendón, L. I., & Hope, R. O. (1996). *Educating a new majority*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rohrlick, J., Alvarado, D., Zaruba, K., & Kallio, R. (1998). From the model minority to the invisible minority: Asian & Pacific American students in higher education research. Paper presented at the 38th annual forum of the Association for Institutional Research. Minneapolis, MN. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 422 820).

Rubin, H., & I. Rubin (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Saenz, V.B., Ngai, H.N., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Factors influencing positive interactions across race for African American, Asian American, Latino, and White college students. *Research in Higher Education, (48)*1, 1-38.

Samuel, E. (2004). Racism in peer-group interactions: South Asian students' experiences in Canadian academe. *Journal of College Student Development, 45*, 407–424.

Sanders, M. G. (1997). Overcoming obstacles: Academic achievement as a response to racism and discrimination. *Journal of Negro Education, 66*, 83–93.

Scisney-Matlock, M., & Matlock, J. (2001). Promoting understanding of diversity through mentoring undergraduate students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 85*, 75-84.

Solórzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano Studies. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 11*, 121–136.

Solórzano, D. G., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000) Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *Journal of Negro Education, 69*, 60–73.

Solórzano, D. G., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education, 3*, 308-342.

Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*, 22-43.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Orellana-Damacela, L., Portillo, N., & Andrews-Guillen, C. (2003). Experiences of differential treatment among college students of color. *Journal of Higher Education, 74*(4), 428-444.

Sue, D. W. (1994). Asian-American mental health and help-seeking behavior. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41*, 292–295.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2003). Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sue, D. W., Bucceri, J., Lin, A. I., Nadal, K. L., & Torino, G. C. (2007). Racial microaggressions and the Asian American experience. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*, 72–81.

Suyemoto, K., Kim, G.S., Tanabe, M., Tawa, J., & Day, S.C. (2009). Challenging the model minority myth: Engaging Asian American students in research on Asian American college student experiences. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, *142,* 41-55.

Suzuki, B. H. (1989, November/December). Asian American and Pacific Islanders as the "model minority": Outdoing Whites? Or media hype? *Change*, pp. 12-19.

Suzuki, B. H. (1994). Higher education issues in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. In M.J. Justiz, R. Wilson, & L. G. Bjork (Eds.). *Minorities in higher education* (pp.258–285). Washington, DC: American Council on Education/Oryx.

Suzuki, B. H. (1995). Education and socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islanders: A revisionist analysis of the "model minority" thesis. In D. T. Nakanishi & T. Y. Nishida (Eds.). *The Asian American and Pacific Islander educational experience* (pp. 113–132). New York:Routledge.

Suzuki, B. H. (2002). Revisiting the Model Minority Myth stereotype: Implications for student affairs practice and higher education. In M. K.

McEwen, C. M. Kodama, A. N. Alvarez, S. Lee, & C. T. H. Liang (Eds.). *Working with Asian American and Pacific Islander college students* (New Directions for Student Services Series No. 97, pp. 21-32). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Takaki, R. (1989). Strangers from a different shore: A history of Asian Americans. New York: Penguin Books.

Takaki, R. (1998). *A larger memory: A history of our diversity, with voices*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Tan, D. L. (1996). Uniqueness of the Asian American and Pacific Islander experience in higher education. *College Student Journal, 28*, 412-421.

Teranishi, R. T. (2002). Asian American and Pacific Islanders and critical race theory: An examination of school racial climate. *Equity & Excellence in Education,35*(2), 144-154.

Teranishi, R. (2003). Asian American and Pacific Islanders and critical race theory: An examination of school racial climate. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 35*(2), 144–154.

Teranishi, R. (2007). Race, ethnicity, and higher education policy: The use of critical quantitative research. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 133,* 37-49.

Teranishi, R. T., Behringer, L. B., Grey, E. A., & Parker, T. L. (2009). Critical race theory and research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, *142,* 57-68.

Tierney,W. (1993). *Building communities of difference: Higher education in the twenty-first century*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (1997). Classrooms as communities: Exploring the educational character of student persistence. *Journal of Higher Education*, *68*, 599-623.

To, Duc-Le (2008). Methodological Issues in Model Minority Research: Where Do We Go from Here? In Li, G & Wang, L. (Eds.). *Model minority myth revisited* (pp. 299-314) Charlotte, N.C.: Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Tuan, M. (1998). *Forever foreigners or honorary Whites: The Asian ethnic experience today.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Tynes, B., & Markoe, S. L. (2010) The role of color-blind racial attitudes in reactions to racial discrimination on social network sites. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 3*(1), 1-13.

Umbach, P. D., & Porter, S. R. (2001). How do academic departments impact student satisfaction? Understanding the contextual effects of departments. Paper presented at the Meeting of the Association of Institutional Research, Orlando, FL.

United States Census (2000). Retrieved from http://factfinder.census.gov.

United States Department of Education (2010). *Negotiated Rulemaking for Higher Education 2009-10: Integrity Issues, Analysis, and Additional Data*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/integrity-analysis.html.

Valencia, R. R. & Solórzano, D. G. (1997). Contemporary deficit thinking: In R. R. Valencia (Ed.), The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice (pp. 160–210). The Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy. London: Falmer.

Villalpando, O. (2002). The impact of diversity and multiculturalism on all students: Findings from a national study. *NASPA Journal, 40*(1), 124-144.

Villalpando, O. (2003). Self-segregation or self-preservation? A critical race theory and Latina/o critical theory analysis of a study of Chicana/o college students. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 16*(5), 619-646.

Wang, L. L. (1993). Trends in admissions for Asian American and Pacific Islanders in colleges and universities. In LEAP Asian American and Pacific Islander Public Policy Institute. *The state of Asian Pacific America: Policy issues to the year 2020* (pp. 49-59). Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Center.

West, C. (1992, August 2). Learning to talk race. *New York Times Magazine,* pp.24-26.

Whitmire, E. (2004). The campus racial climate and undergraduates' perceptions of the academic library. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy, 4*, 363-378.

Why Asian guys are on a roll (2000, February 21). *Newsweek*, pp. 50–51.

Williams, D.A. (2002). Ethnic identity, integration and academic outcomes: A study of African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Latino/a students. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 63*(02), 526A. (UMI No. 3042193)

Wong, F., & Halgin, R. (2006). The "model minority," bane or blessing for Asian Americans? *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 34*, 38–49.

Woo, D. (1997)Asian Americans in higher education: Issues of diversity and engagement. *Race, Gender and Class, 4*(3), 122–143.

Worthington, R. L., Navarro, R. L., Loewy, M., & Hart, J. (2008). Color-blind racial attitudes, social dominance orientation, racial-ethnic group membership and college students' perceptions of campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 1*, 8–19.

Wu, F. (1995). Neither Black nor White: Asian Americans and affirmative action. *Third World Law Journal, 15*, 225-284.

Wu, F. H. (2002). *Yellow: Race in America beyond Black and White*. New York: Basic Books.

Yin, R.Y. (2003). *Case study research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Yonezawa, S. S., & Antonio, A. L. (1996). Educational research on Asian Pacific Americans: Critical gaps and issues. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Asian American and Pacific Islanders in Education, San Francisco.

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 69–91.

Yosso, T.J., Smith, W.A., Ceja, M, Solórzano, D.G. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for Latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(4), 659-691,

Young, K., & Takeuchi, D. T. "Racism." In L. C. Lee and N.W.S. Zane (eds.), *Handbook of Asian American Psychology*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1998.

Zia, H. *Asian/Pacific Americans and higher education: Facts, not fiction— setting the record straight*. New York: College Board, 2006.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP & TECHNOLOGY
Program in Higher Education and Student Affairs

APPENDIX A

LETTER REQUESTING ACCESS TO STUDENTS

[Date]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [Faculty/Administrator Name],

I am a doctoral student at New York University writing to you in reference to Metro Park University student participation in my dissertation project about the unique racialized experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander college students. The University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects at New York University has approved both this project and all materials to be provided to students. I wish to contact students to ask directly for their interest in potentially participating in a research project.

Within the email I will provide a description of the project and follow up with another email to interested students. The follow up email will include a letter of introduction, a student information sheet, a student consent form for those interested in submitting to a series (approximately 3-4) of less than 2 hour interviews at mutually agreed upon times and locations on campus. I am interested in as many student referrals as possible for the purpose of soliciting interest from 10 students who are able and willing to participate in research interviews. Of the individuals who return the student information sheet and student consent form, five will each be asked to participate in one-on-one.

At the end of each interview, I will inform the students of the project's timeline status and request further meetings to clarify points in our conversations and follow-up on particular comments or themes; participation in this second phase is voluntary and students may request that no further contact beyond the initial interview be made. Finally, a copy of my completed dissertation will be available to you upon its successful defense to be approved by my dissertation committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this study. I would also like to provide you with my dissertation advisor's contact information for your reference:

(page 1 of 2)

Dr. Robert T. Teranishi, Associate Professor of Higher Education
82 Washington Square East, Pless Hall Annex, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10003
(T) 212-998-5522, email: robert.teranishi@nyu.edu

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,
Daniel K. Choi, Doctoral Candidate
310 3rd Avenue, Suite 213, New York, NY 10010
(T) 646-997-3411, email: daniel.choi@nyu.edu

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP & TECHNOLOGY
Program in Higher Education and Student Affairs

APPENDIX B

STUDENT CONSENT FORM

You have been invited to take part in a research study about how Asian American and Pacific Islanders experience race in college. This study will be conducted by Daniel Choi, Department of Administration, Leadership, and Technology, Steinhardt School of Education, New York University, as a part of his Doctoral dissertation. His faculty sponsor is Professor Robert Teranishi, Department of Administration, Leadership, and Technology, Steinhardt School of Education, New York University.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

1. Complete an information sheet about your background (age, gender, education, etc.).
2. Take part in 3-4 two-hour interviews over the course of a semester about your experiences as a student and your perceptions about campus racial climate with additional interviews upon your consent.
3. Allow the researcher to observe campus settings you interface with (such as a class, club meeting, etc.). Observation site will be decided between you and the researcher.

The total participation time for the completion of both the information sheet and, at most, four interviews over the course of the semester will not exceed 8 hours and 20 minutes.

Your interviews will be audiotaped. You may review these tapes and request that all or any portion of the tapes that includes your participation be destroyed.

There are no known risks associated with you participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research may help the investigator understand how Asian American and Pacific Islander students experience race on a college campus.

Confidentiality of your research records will be strictly maintained by assigning as alias to each participant so that data is never directly linked to individual identity.

Your responses will be kept confidential by the researcher.

(page 1 of 2)

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at anytime without penalty. For interviews, questionnaires, or surveys, you have the right to skip or not answer any questions you prefer not to respond to.

Nonparticipation or withdrawal will not affect your grades or academic standing.

If there is anything about the study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, if you have questions or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Daniel Choi at (646) 997-3411, daniel.choi@nyu.edu, 310 3rd Avenue, #213, New York, NY 10010, or the faculty sponsor, Robert Teranishi at (212) 998-5522, robert.teranishi@nyu.edu, 82 Washington Square East, Pless Hall Annex, 7th Floor, New York, NY, 10003.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact:

The New York University, Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects
15 Washington Place, #1-A, New York, NY, 10003,
human.subjects@nyu.edu or (212) 998-4808

You have received a copy of this consent document to keep. You may email the researcher at daniel.choi@nyu.edu upon completion of your participation to request a final copy of the written report.

Agreement to Participate

_____
Subjects Signature & Date

(page 2 of 2)

APPENDIX C

STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Birthday: _____Age: _____ Gender: _____

Email Address: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____

Country of Birth: _____

Academic Major/School: _____

Graduation Date: _____

High School Attended and City/State: _____

Generational Status: _____

Do you also identify as Asian American and/or Pacific Islander?   YES   NO

APPENDIX D

Interview Protocol

Interviewee:
Date and Time of Interview:

<u>Introduction</u>
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I will be asking you questions
about how your academic experiences influence your educational and career
plans. I anticipate the interview will take approximately two hours. Although this
interview will be recorded, the information I gather will be kept confidential. You
may review these audio files (mp3) and request that all or any portion of the tapes
that includes your participation be destroyed. Your participation is totally
voluntary. You may choose to change your mind about your participation in this
interview and you may refuse to answer any particular question during the
interview with no adverse effects.

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
   a. What was your high school experience like?
   b. Tell me about your friends and peer groups previous to college?
   c. How did you decide you wanted to attend college?
   d. Why did you choose this college? What other colleges and
      universities did you apply to?

2. What is like being a college student?
   a. Tell me about your classes?
   b. What is the student life like at your college?
   c. What are you involved in? How did you get involved? Why did
      you get involved?

3. What attracted you about the college?
   a. How has your experience been since you have come to campus?
   b. What is it like living in the residence halls?

4. Tell me about your experiences with different people, offices, and
   organizations on campus.
   a. In what ways do you feel connected on campus? How do you
      define your community?
   b. How is your relationship with faculty?
      i. What do you feel are some expectations that faculty have
         from you?
   c. What about other students on campus?

        i. How has your experience been with classmates?
    d. What about administrators at school? (Ex: Academic Advisors)

<u>PART II:</u>

5. What is it like being an Asian American/Pacific Islander on campus?
    a. Tell me about being an AAPI student on campus.
    b. Have you ever felt that you were treated different because of your race?
        i. Is this the first time you have been a minority in a classroom or school? What is that like for you?

6. What do you think is the general campus attitude is toward AAPI students?
    a. How is this conveyed or communicated?
    b. How did these impressions impact the way you interacted with other students? Faculty? Staff?
    c. How does this affect your academic and goals as a student?
        i. How about your social goals and satisfaction?

7. Has there ever been a time where you felt uncomfortable as an AAPI student on campus? In a class? In a social setting on campus?

8. Can you describe a time where you felt that you were unwelcome on campus?
    a. Are there times when you felt misunderstood? How was that?

9. What kinds of expectations do you have for yourself? Any personal goals?
    a. What areas of school do you feel you are excelling in?
    b. What are your plans for next year?

10. What things are you looking forward to while you are in college?

APPENDIX E

Observation Protocol

Interviewee:
Date and Time of Observation:
Location:

1. What type of environment is the observation taking place?
    a. What type of meeting/class is it?
    b. What is the racial make up of the setting?
    c. Are the students engaged?
    d. What type of interactions (and with who) are happening?

2. What is the interviewee's general demeanor?
    a. Are they in a leadership position?
    b. To what extent is their involvement in the setting?

3. How are the other students behaving?
    a. What is their level of engagement with the environment?

4. Are there any non verbal or symbolic messages or visual identifiers in the environment?
    a. Is there anything creating or impacting the climate within the space?
    b. Are there things that are missing or apparent that may have an impact on the climate of the setting?

APPENDIX F

Student Profile Table

Name	Ethnicity*	Class Level**	Hometown	Major
Sonia	Vietnamese	Sophomore	Bismark, ND	Psychology
Young	Chinese	Junior	Chicago, IL	Business
Amy	Chinese	Sophomore	Queens, NY	Nursing
Gary	Chinese/Japanese	Sophomore	San Jose, CA	Independent Study
Cindy	Korean	Sophomore	Atlanta, GA	Biology
Charles	Filipino	Junior	Seattle, WA	Communication

* Ethnicity refers to country of origin; all students identify as second generation Asian American Pacific Islanders.
**All students are enrolled full time in undergraduate programs