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ABSTRACT
                The purpose of this study was to identify the reasons and
processes by which skin tone affects assumptions regarding competence among
African Americans. As such, the study addressed two important hypotheses: (1)
that African Americans demonstrate light skin tone bias as measured by
perceptions of competence, and (2) that African Americans' self-esteem,
ethnic identity, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity
affect individual skin tone bias. Adolescents (N=200) in two states completed
four instruments. Of that group, 145 were appropriate participants for the
study (i.e., they were African American or biracial with one African American
parent). The results of the study indicate that African Americans view
lighter skinned group members as being more competent. In addition, the study
demonstrated that African Americans view attractive group members as more
competent than their unattractive peers. However, the results of the study
did not indicate that self-esteem, ethnic identity, and use of coping
strategies affect the skin tone bias variable. Therefore, it was concluded
that although African Americans demonstrate skin tone bias, the reasons and
processes by which such occurs remains unknown. Appendix A contains the four
survey instruments. Appendix B is the consent form. (Contains 71 references
and 4 tables.) (Author/GCP)

AIRING DIRTY LAUNDRY: REASONS AND PROCESSES BY WHICH

SKIN TONE STRATIFICATION CONTINUES TO BE A PERVASIVE

ASPECT OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

by

ALFIEE MATIESE BRELAND

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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AIRING DIRTY LAUNDRY: REASONS AND PROCESSES BY WHICH SKIN TONE STRATIFICATION CONTINUES TO BE A PERVASIVE ASPECT OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Alfiee Matiese Breland

Under the supervision of Professor Hardin L. K. Coleman

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison

The purpose of the following study was to identify the *reasons and processes* by which skin tone affects assumptions regarding competence among African Americans. As such, the study addressed two important hypotheses; a) that African Americans demonstrate light skin tone bias as measured by perceptions of competence and b) that African Americans' self-esteem, ethnic identity, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity affect individual skin tone bias.

The format of data collection was as follows. 200 adolescents in two states completed 4 instruments. Of that group 145 were appropriate subjects for the study (i.e. they were African American or biracial with one African American parent). The instruments that the students completed were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES); the Multi Construct African American Identity Questionnaire (MCAIQ); the Cultural Diversity Coping Scale (CCDS); and the Skin Tone and Perceptions Tool (STPT).

The results of the study indicated that African Americans do view lighter skinned group members as being more competent. In addition, the study demonstrated that African Americans view attractive group members as more competent than their unattractive peers. However, the results of the study did

not indicate that self-esteem, ethnic identity, and use of coping strategies affect the skin tone bias variable. Therefore the researcher concluded that although African Americans do demonstrate skin tone bias, the reasons and processes by which such occurs remain unknown.

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CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kathe Sandler explains that her motivation for developing the film documentary, "A Question of Color, (1994 p. 109)" was to, "shed light on a recurring theme in human relations: how oppressed people adopt and internalize the very views that their oppressors have used to oppress them." In the film, she addresses a phenomenon familiar to most African Americans, known by many names including color consciousness and colorism. In addition, those African Americans who are affected by it, are often called color-struck. As Kathe Sandler so eloquently demonstrates throughout her film, the phenomenon is a mechanism for oppression that most African Americans have internalized.

Color consciousness, the term this author will use to describe the phenomenon, is the process by which African Americans, "differentially attend and respond to shades of Black skin" (Bond & Cash, 1992; Clark & Clark, 1980; Neal, 1988; Neal and Wilson, 1989). Color consciousness has affected most members of the African American population in a variety of ways. In her novel, The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison (1970, pp. 73, 74) captures this experience, when she writes, "...Maureen screams, I am cute. And you ugly! Black e mos and ugly." The two dark skinned girls at whom this comment was directed respond, "We were sinking under the wisdom, accuracy, and relevance of Maureen's last words. If she was cute-then we were not. And what

could that mean? We were lesser."

The pervasiveness of the manners in which African Americans differentially attend to skin tone is very disturbing. Kathy Douglass (personal communication, July 24, 1995) explained to the author that she noticed a unique phenomenon among her son's playmates. Whenever the African American boys played "cops and robbers" if the group was racially mixed, then the European American boys would be the cops and the African American boys would be the robbers. However, when the group was homogeneously composed of African Americans, the light skinned boys would be the cops and the dark skinned boys would be the robbers. The fact that Mrs. Douglass is a European American and still cognizant of such a phenomenon speaks to the pervasive nature of the issue.

Although this phenomenon is insidious, pervasive, and many African Americans fail to acknowledge its existence, there is a paucity of research that attempts to understand it. The purpose of this investigation is to identify the mechanisms by which color consciousness affects assumptions concerning competence in the hopes of enlightening people to its detrimental effects and to lay the foundation for developing alternate conceptualizations of color.

INTRODUCTION

Sociohistorical Considerations

Much has been written about the influence of oppression on the social, physical, and psychological well being of African Americans. Bond and Cash (1992, p. 874) state that, "Black history provides

considerable evidence that the skin color or skin tone of African Americans has exerted powerful and persistent influences on societal attitudes toward and treatment of Black persons--within both Black and White cultures." Even though the "Black is Beautiful" movement of the 60's sought to eradicate some of the negative notions associated with skin tone variance, the phenomenon persists. Recent research suggests that this may be due in part to the fact that historically, European Americans have had distinctive attitudes toward African Americans with European American ancestry, perceiving African Americans of composite ancestry to be more competent than other African Americans (Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Keith & Herring, 1991; Reuter, 1918). Although skin color and tone are an integral part of the African American experience both within the cultural group and in interactions with European Americans, most research has been devoted to the effects of skin color on the perceptions of European Americans.

Very little has been done to ascertain the role that skin tone plays in the African American community. This dearth of research exists for a variety of reasons. Foremost is that the subject is too painful a topic for public discussion among the multitude of African Americans affected by it. In Sandler's film (1992), an interviewee corroborates this sentiment by stating that color consciousness, although painful, has been perpetuated by and inflicted upon a majority of African Americans. Second, many African Americans fear that discussing these issues in culturally mixed groups, will lead to

misinterpretation and be used to defeat much of the positive civic and political change for which so many African Americans fought and died (Wiltz, 1995). Finally, many African Americans fear that the issue of skin tone within the African American community stems from an attempt by some members of the group to distance themselves from their African cultural roots (Wiltz, 1995). One reason for this investigation is that the author believes that no progress can be made regarding the issue of color consciousness if Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds cannot examine it openly, consider its detrimental effects, and begin to consider possible means to address it.

The fact that African Americans live in a society that places great emphasis on physical attractiveness is one possible reason why issues regarding skin tone are so powerful. Like people in many societies, Americans ascribe numerous traits, both positive and negative, to individuals based on their physical appearance. According to the research of social psychologists like Webster and Driskell (as cited in Umberson & Hughes,1987, p. 228), who base their research on attractiveness in status characteristics theory, "...attractiveness is associated with perceptions of ability and success." They further posit that the more attractive an individual is, the more others will perceive him or her as competent. Since American society is one that is primarily influenced by a Western European cultural standard, it should come as no surprise that the primary standard of attractiveness is one rooted in Western European (unclear and implied) ideals. African Americans are no strangers to this idea, in that they too are

heavily, "influenced by the values of white racism" (Sandler, 1994, p. 106). As such, they adhere to a standard of attractiveness that argues.

> If you're white you're all right.
> If you're yellow, you're mellow.
> If you're brown, stick around.
> But if you're black, get back! (Sandler,
> 1994; Harvey, 1995; Freeman, Ross,
> Armor, Pettigrew, 1966)

In other words, "a high value is placed on light skin because white society is more accepting of African Americans whose skin color closely approximates European standards of attractiveness" (Harvey, 1995, p. 5).

An associated aspect of attractiveness is its influence on perceptions of competence. As mentioned earlier, Webster and Driskell (as cited in Umberson & Hughes, 1987) concluded that people direct positive behavioral cues toward attractive others which indicate that they view them (attractive individuals) as being more competent than the general population. As a result of receiving these behavioral cues, attractive people actually tend to behave better socially. In other words, because attractive people are led to believe that they are more competent than others, they begin to believe it; and become more adept at prospering in the social, educational, and financial arenas than their unattractive counterparts.

It is the author's contention that (a) attractiveness is a primary mechanism by which American society decides who is competent; (b) a

European standard is the primary mechanism used to measure attractiveness, and (c) since light skinned African Americans' skin is closest to the European ideal, African Americans with light skin will be perceived as more competent than their dark skinned peers. In previous attempts to explain this same phenomenon, some investigators, (Berry, 1988; Neal, 1988) included facial features and hair texture with skin color as influential factors in creating perceptions of competence. In Neal's study attempts were made to operationalize facial features and hair texture as major portions of the study. Berry's study, on the other hand, did not operationalize these variables via pictures, but attempted to ascertain their influence via self-reports in interviews. As Neal's investigation proved problematic with regard to their operationalization of facial features and hair texture via pictures, and as Berry's did not isolate these variables and manipulate them in some manner; these stimuli were excluded from the current study. In addition, although these researchers made worthwhile efforts, neither attempted to define the mechanisms by which skin tone affects perceptions of competence. Berry's study addressed individuals' experiences with discrimination based on skin tone, and Neal's study addressed perceptions of women's attractiveness but did not address perceptions of competence as a major hypothesis. Further, given the inconclusive evidence garnered from these attempts to explain the mechanisms that influence color consciousness, this study focuses on the effect of skin color only. Even though facial features and hair texture may contribute to the differential attention to racial appearance,

it is hypothesized that an individual's skin color is the power stimulant of perceptions. The researcher believes in approaching this area of study in a reductive manner with the idea of adding other variables like facial features and hair texture on perceptions of competence in the future.

Variables Associated with Skin Tone and Perceptions

It is hypothesized that two variables possibly associated with perceptions of competence based on skin tone are the perceiver's skin tone and gender. Given that the subjects who were solicited for this study were adolescents, there is strong evidence that they may make judgments of others' competence based on feelings of affiliation along gender lines. Specifically, it has been found that adolescents tend to affiliate with each other based on gender (Powlishta, 1995). Further, researchers have speculated that within the African American cultural group, boys may be less likely to make negative judgments about same gender peers in an effort to maintain a "social distance" from negatively perceived others (e.g. Fine and Bowers, 1984). African American girls, on the other hand, may be less likely to attempt to "identify up" and away from negatively viewed others based on their socialization toward more collective and interpersonal relationships (Fine and Bowers, 1984). In addition, the author posits that the skin tone of the perceiver may affect his or her perceptions of competence of the stimulus object. This belief is corroborated by the findings of Perkins (1995) and the conclusions of Wiltz (1995) which state that African Americans themselves have differential expectations of how

fellow group members will be perceived based on their own experiences and in observations of other African Americans' experiences based on skin tone. Many African Americans overtly and covertly believe that lighter skinned African Americans are more competent and have more societal advantages regardless of their own (perceivers') skin tone (Porter, 1991; Wade, 1996).

Overview of the Study

The study sought to add to the existent body of knowledge regarding color consciousness. It examined the process by which African American skin color affects African Americans' perceptions of a person's competence. The study consisted of multiple groups of middle school aged African American adolescents. This age group was chosen as the researcher believed that they would provide the most honest and least socially desirable answers based on the research of people like Northcraft & Hastorf (1986).

The author has developed a model that proposes a relationship between similarity and contrast effects on the perception of the stimulus object's competence. In this model, the researcher argues that if a perceiver is more rooted in his or her ethnic identity, and if he or she has a more well developed sense of self, then he or she will be less likely to make biased judgments of other African Americans. The argument further states that the phenomenon motivating this altered judgment is that a) an African American with stronger ethnic identity may be more comfortable with the multitude of skin tones existent in the cultural group because he or she is possibly more familiar with the

origins of skin tone variance within the population. Second, African Americans with stronger ethnic identity may be more comfortable with their own skin tone which may temper their potential to project stereotypes onto other African Americans (as exemplified in Langlois argument regarding cognitive mediators of perceptions of attractiveness and competence). This hypothesis is corroborated by the research of Banks (1984) in which he found that, Black children socialized within predominantly European American suburban communities were likely to become highly attitudinally assimilated into the European American society and as attitudinal assimilation increased, African Americans became increasingly positive toward European Americans, but less positive toward fellow African Americans. Third, the researcher argues that African Americans with a stronger sense of self (as demonstrated by sense of self-esteem) may be more likely to make unbiased judgments about other African American's competence, because they view themselves more positively. Various studies have examined the relationship between an individual's self esteem and his or her perceptions of multiple variables, including the environment, familial support and liking for others. The results suggest that there may be a positively correlated relationship between an individual's self esteem and evaluations of various variables including the immediate environment, peers, family members and authority figures (e.g. Fischer, & Good 1994; Sarason, Pierce, Shearin & Sarason, 1991; Sprecher & Hatfield, 1982).

Given these proposed relationships, the researcher attempted to

test them via questionnaires. Students were asked to complete the Multi Construct African American Identity Questionnaire (Smith & Brookins, 1996) (MCAIQ); the Cultural Diversity Coping Scale (Coleman, Casali, & Wampold, 1996) (CCDS); the Skin Tone and Perceptions Tool (Breland, 1997) (STPT); and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) (RSES). The MCAIQ and the CCDS were used as measures of both the internal (MCAIQ) and external/behavioral (CCDS) components of ethnic identity. The RSES was used as a measure of self- competence operationalized as self esteem.

It was the author's hypothesis that the middle school aged subjects would in fact corroborate the belief that attractiveness, based on skin color, is the mechanism by which African Americans make judgments of competence about each other.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to empirically validate a pervasive phenomenon among African Americans with the hope of developing interventions for families and others to eliminate it in the future. Clinically, a purpose of this study was to devise a mechanism by which African Americans might ascertain the degree to which skin tone discrimination exists and further find a means to address this issue. It is the author's belief that the prevalence of this issue is so widespread and causes such hermetic feelings of hurt, anger, and hostility among Americans, that it can no longer remain unaddressed. The researcher hopes that by empirically validating the issue of color consciousness, she might assist the African American community in

openly acknowledging its existence and subsequently find ways to assist

African Americans in alleviating its multiple associated stressors.

Research Questions

This study sought to address the following questions:

Do African Americans demonstrate skin tone bias as measured by perceptions of competence?

Does an African American's degree of skin tone bias affect that individual's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

<u>Introduction</u>

Included in this chapter is information regarding the origins of color consciousness or colorism within the African American community. The available literature explains the historical origins of this issue as well as the manners in which it manifests itself presently. Also included is a review of the effects that appearance and level of attractiveness have on perceptions of competence. Each of these issues will be defined with a subsequent description of how they are related. Finally, the author will describe the limitations of previous research on color consciousness and explain how the present study seeks to avoid these limitations.

Skin Tone

Based on the research question previously presented, there are three primary areas of research that must be addressed including a)African American skin tone theory, b) appearance/attractiveness theory, and c) competence theory.

For the purposes of this study, skin tone is defined as the visible color gradations that exist within the African American racial/cultural group.

It appears that within the African American community, skin tone is used as a mediating variable in determining levels of attractiveness and through association, competence. For example, it is

widely recognized within the African American community that, "in Black music videos, a fairly accurate barometer of trends in popular culture, fair-skinned and/or ethnically nebulous actress/dancers with long flowing hair or hair weaves, are more often than not depicted as the love interests of featured artists. Women of darker complexions are often relegated to lesser roles in the background if they appear at all" (Ebony, 1992, p. 121). Regarding levels of attractiveness, many explanations have been offered to explain the fine distinctions that African Americans make using skin tone as a mediating variable. Some of the more prevalent findings include the phenomenon sometimes referred to as the skin color paradox which suggests that, light skinned women are preferable as mates because they have more positive characteristics while dark skinned women, on the other hand, are viewed as sensual and promiscuous. In addition, lighter skinned men are viewed as more desirable by women and less masculine by darker skinned men. Finally, this paradox suggests that dark skinned men are viewed as less intelligent and more aggressive than their lighter skinned peers. An additional paradox here is that even though many African Americans would like to believe that they are more enlightened and do not adhere to such ideals, too much behavioral observation data exists suggesting that they do. Leeds (1993, p. 153, p.153), provides a strong example of the pervasive nature of this paradox using young African American women as a focal point. The young women she interviewed for her research, "...frequently stated that there was a beauty standard that valued lighter skin and longer

and straighter hair." Even though the girls she interviewed espoused disdain for this particular standard and argued for a more inclusive standard of beauty, "their own taunts about skin color and hair length indicate[d] that they, to some degree, accepte[d] a Eurocentric ideal." The research of Goering (1971) and Udry, Bauman, & Chase (1971), in addition to numerous researchers (see Grier & Cobbs, 1968; Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Neal & Wilson, 1989; Perkins, 1996) speaks to the complexities of skin tone within the African American community. Each study either qualitatively or quantitatively inquired about the role of skin tone in the everyday life of African Americans. As an example, note the aforementioned work of Leeds (1993) in which she interviewed African American women to ascertain the complex role that skin tone plays in their lives. The subjects responded with numerous accounts of the various judgments that other African Americans make about them based on their skin tone and the effects associated with these judgments. Leeds concluded from her work that skin tone is indeed a pervasive issue within the African American community. The significance of her study was that its primary goal was to address the effect of the "Black Power" movement of the 60's on perceptions of skin tone, beauty, and other judgments in the African American community. She concluded that even though this movement sought to alter perceptions associated with African American skin tones, "...exposure to positive images of African Americans occurs within the context of a society that continues to reward lighter skin" (Leeds, p. 149). This sentiment was reiterated by

each of Leeds subjects. All of the studies mentioned corroborate "the skin color paradox" as being a pervasive and persistent aspect of African American society.

The aforementioned examples of African American issues of skin tone are rooted in the history of oppression and the enslavement of the first Africans forcibly transported to the shores of America. It is a widely held belief that during slavery, the offspring of African women who were sexually assaulted by European American male enslavers, were of lighter hues and were afforded privileges that most other enslaved Africans were not (Keith & Herring, 1991; Okazawa-Rey et al., 1986; Sandler, 1994; Scales-Trent, 1995). They were often freed from slavery, provided with formal and informal education, and acquired the training necessary to become skilled artisans. With the eradication of slavery in 1865, the lighter skinned African Americans who had disproportionately established themselves in what were then considered high status occupations, were placed in the position of liaison class between European Americans and other African Americans. In addition, due to a stratification process that provided blacks of mixed parentage with opportunities for, acquiring property, and socialization into the dominant European American culture, lighter skinned African Americans emerged in the upper stratum of the social hierarchy in African American communities. (Edwards, 1972; Frazier, 1957a, 1957b; Keith & Herring, 1991; Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Seltzer & Smith, 1991). There are any number of reasons that describe why this occurred, however one of the most compelling is that

European Americans considered lighter skinned African Americans to be more adept intellectually and socially, because they possessed traces of European ancestry. As African Americans moved from the plantations to cities and towns, the color based caste system followed (Keith & Herring, 1991; Okazawa-Rey et al., 1986; Sandler 1992; Scales-Trent; 1995). This pattern has been maintained until the present day as, "whites may continue to play a role in the perpetuation of the relationship... [due to] their control of employment in middle class occupations in white-dominated corporations and institutions" (Hughes and Hertel, 1990, p. 1116).

Various researchers have concluded that, lighter skinned African Americans have greater educational attainment, occupational prestige, and family income than their darker skinned peers. Edwards, (1972), used a questionnaire with 2,809 African Americans aged 16-69 to determine stratification outcomes regarding social status, economic level, and personal beliefs regarding race. His researchers judged each respondent and categorized him or her as either light, medium, or dark skinned. They then collected demographic information on each respondent and asked a series of questions that ascertained feelings on issues including personal experience with discrimination; attitudes about Whites, and African American cultural pride. Edwards and his colleagues found that significant differences existed among African Americans socioeconomically and socially. Darker skinned African Americans were found to report more experience with white racial discrimination while lighter skinned African Americans reported

higher educational attainment, income, and occupational prestige.
Hughes and Hertel, (1990) conducted a similar analysis of data to
determine the differences existent between light and dark skinned
African Americans on a variety of variables. These researchers
analyzed data from the 1980 Survey of Black Americans (a probability
household survey of 2,107 African Americans aged 18 and older) to
examine the relationship of skin color with, a) socioeconomic status; b)
socioeconomic status of spouse; and c) scales measuring African
American identity, African American separatism, and racial self-
esteem. Respondents' skin tone was judged by the African American
examiners who administered the survey. To evaluate whether skin
tone correlates were due purely to the respondents' socioeconomic
status, the authors controlled for age, sex, and parental socioeconomic
status. In addition, to evaluate whether skin tone correlates were due
to the socioeconomic status of the spouse and to evaluate the
relationship between skin tone and African American consciousness,
the authors controlled for age, sex, education, occupational prestige,
family income and parental socioeconomic status. They concluded
that, African Americans with lighter skin have greater education,
occupational prestige, personal income and family income than their
darker skinned peers and that these differences were not due to the
historical prevalence of lighter skinned African Americans in the
higher socioeconomic stratum. One very disturbing determination
made by the researchers was that for education and occupation, the
differences existent between lighter skinned and darker skinned

African Americans is nearly identical to the differences between African Americans and European Americans. A final conclusion reached from this study indicated that no significant change occurred regarding the socioeconomic disparities between lighter skinned African Americans and darker skinned African Americans from 1950 to 1980. Keith & Herring (1991) also analyzed the data from the 1980 Survey of Black Americans and derived the following conclusions; a) skin tone has a direct bearing on one's personal and family income, b) skin tone affects one's personal and family income through the effect it has on educational attainment; and c) skin tone influences one's personal and family income through the consequences it has on occupation. As insidious and pervasive as these issues are in the African American community, there is a dearth of empirical, quantitative research devoted to these topics. In general, it can be said, however; that the differences in skin tone among African Americans are associated with intraracial stratification measures. As Keith and Herring (1991, p.777) note, "These facts suggest that the effects of skin tone are not only historical curiosities from a legacy of slavery and racism, but present day mechanisms that influence who gets what in America." Indeed, it is possible that lighter skinned African Americans are still viewed stereotypically as more competent despite their socioeconomic status and education.

Appearance/Attractiveness and Competence

As stated earlier, "attractiveness as a status characteristic may be of particular relevance in the U.S. where beauty and fitness are highly valued" (Umberson & Hughes, 1987, p. 235). Images abound that reiterate this point. Attractive individuals are portrayed as more competent in every venue from children's books to popular films. Books such as Cinderella and Snow White juxtapose beautiful heroines who defeat ugly or unattractive villains. In addition, television commercials frequently associate attractive individuals with exciting, interesting, and fun activities as a means of enticing viewers to purchase products. Several authors have reviewed this literature and concluded that there is indeed a relationship between attractiveness and competence. As an example of this research is a 1972 study by Dion, (cited in Langlois, 1986), where it was found that adults attribute more positive behavioral characteristics to attractive children and negative behavioral characteristics to unattractive children. In the study, Dion gave adult, college-aged women photographs of attractive and unattractive children with whom the participants were unfamiliar. Included with the pictures were descriptions of misdeeds that each child had committed. She asked these adult raters to discuss and describe their feelings regarding why each child had committed the misdeed. She found that the misdeeds of the unattractive children were more often associated with enduring personality characteristics while the misdeeds of the attractive children were attributed to an ephemeral characteristic such as a "bad day." Subsequent research on

this subject confirmed this finding. In other studies, (Lerner &Lerner, 1977; Perkins & Lerner, 1995; Maruyama & Miller, 1981; Styczynski, 1979 as cited in Langlois, 1986, p. 41) researchers concluded that, "...for young adolescents, physical attractiveness is related positively to peer relations and to several indexes of academic ability, including IQ scores... and standardized achievement test scores". Stephan and Langlois, (1984, as cited in Langlois, 1986), conducted a cross-cultural study using African American, Hispanic American and European American children and adults. They asked the adults of these three ethnic groups to rate pictures of infants from the same ethnic groups at three stages of the first year of life: immediately after birth, at three months of age, and at 9 months of age. The adults were asked to assess the infants on 12 bipolar adjectives which were then collapsed into 4 categories that reflected infant behavior and competence. For three of the four collapsed categories, attractive infants were rated more positively than their unattractive counterparts. Those categories included good baby, smart-likeable baby, and causes parents problems. It appears from these studies that adults, hold higher and more positive expectations regarding interpersonal behavior, academic ability, and performance for attractive children than they do for unattractive children. There have been numerous theories posited for why attractive people are evaluated more positively than unattractive people. Langlois (1986, as cited in Herman ,Zanna, & Higgins, 1986) offers the most comprehensive explanation of why this phenomenon occurs. An explanation of her model, which includes four parts,

follows.

Langlois characterizes her model as orgasmic and transactional. She posits that children are born into the world with certain characteristics (orgasmic). The children's parents and peers have beliefs regarding what behaviors and attitudes to expect of attractive and unattractive individuals based on socialization (orgasmic). In addition, parents and peers have ideas as to what constitutes attractiveness and unattractiveness based in their socialization. Upon evaluating a child's level of attractiveness, parents and peers respond to the child based on a combination of how they have evaluated that child regarding his or her level of attractiveness and the attitudes and behavior that correspond to that level of attractiveness (transactional). The child in turn learns to behave and respond to its parents and peers based on their treatment of him or her regarding attitudes and behaviors (transactional). Specifically, Langlois posits a four part explanation for her model. Included in the model are differential expectations; the mediating variables of behavioral expectations; differential treatment; and the development of differential behavior. *Differential expectations* - Langlois presents a diverse body of research that all points to the same conclusion; that people generally have higher expectations for attractive children and lower expectations for unattractive children. In studies conducted with both adults (typically parents) and children (typically school peers) more attractive children are viewed as being more capable of exhibiting more positive behaviors and having higher intellectual abilities. Dion and Berscheid

(1974, as cited in Langlois, 1986) conducted a study using preschoolers as subjects. They asked the preschoolers to nominate familiar classmates they liked and disliked and to indicate which of their peers exhibited positive and negative interpersonal behaviors. The children nominated for each of the categories were then rated by unfamiliar adult judges for physical attractiveness. Further research on the subject of differential expectations (Stephan and Langlois, 1984; Clifford and Walster, 1973; Dion, 1972, as cited in Langlois, 1986), offers examples of the methods used to corroborate the attractiveness and competence hypothesis. Overall, findings are constant regarding differential expectations for both stimulus children who are familiar to adults and peers as well as stimulus children who are unfamiliar to adults and peers.

Mediating variables of behavioral expectations- among children, gender appears to be a very strong mediating variable regarding perceptions of attractiveness and competence. Stated succinctly, attractiveness appears to provide a consistent social advantage for girls but not for boys. However the longevity of this advantage is questionable. Since women are often responded to on the basis of their appearance rather than their competence (Langlois, 1986); both attractive and unattractive women may learn to question their personal impact on their environment. As such, their social advantage may not have great longevity. To illustrate, Dion and Berscheid (1974), concluded from their research that attractive girls were viewed as more popular and as exhibiting more positive

behaviors than their unattractive peers by children who were both familiar and unfamiliar with the female stimulus persons. Conversely, Langlois and Styczynski (1979) found that attractive boys elementary school aged and younger were more frequently associated with antisocial behavior and judged to be less competent than their unattractive male peers. Corroborating this idea are researchers like Sandler (1992) and Miller (1970 cited in Herman et al., 1986) who argue that attractiveness presents a double jeopardy for women in that if they are unattractive, they are much less likely to be able to be perceived as competent in other areas of their lives than if males are perceived as unattractive. Langlois argues that there are two possible explanations for why gender mediates attractiveness and perceptions of competence. Her first argument reiterates the thinking of Miller (1970, as cited in Langlois, 1986) in that boys appear to have other areas of competence to compensate for varying levels of attractiveness. Her other hypothesis suggests that, "attractive boys may be preferred, treated more leniently, and allowed to engage in antisocial behavior by adult socialization agents. (Langlois, 1986, p. 38) " In a study by Dion (1974, as cited in Langlois, 1986), adult females monitored childrens' performances on a picture-matching task and administered penalties to those children who provided incorrect responses. The adults behaved more leniently toward attractive boys than they did with attractive girls or unattractive children in general. In other words, attractive boys bad behavior may be reinforced, because they are attractive and adults may excuse some of their seemingly aberrant behavior. This author posits a possible

addendum to this aspect of Langlois' theory namely, perception of self. It is this author's hypothesis that individuals who view themselves positively may be less likely to make varying judgments about others' competence. This hypothesis is based on the results of Langlois' research in attractiveness and competence, specifically the portion that deals with individual behavior resulting from the treatment of others.

Second, although Langlois includes cognitive mediators in her theory, she does not provide enough empirical evidence to warrant a discussion in this project. However, she does articulate the fact that stereotyping may be a mediating variable with regard to physical attractiveness and competence. To corroborate this point she cites a study conducted by Touhey (1979) in which college-aged subjects were asked to assess their degree of traditional sex-role stereotyping as well as the degree to which they thought they would like an attractive or unattractive person. The results of this study indicated that there was a positive correlation between the degree to which a subject engaged in sex-role stereotyping and the degree to which he or she indicated liking for attractive individuals. As it relates to adolescents' perceptions of competence, research has demonstrated that gender is a strong mediating variable in determinations of competence. Indeed, "targets (*i.e.stimulus adolescents*) were viewed stereotypically, and were rated higher on liking, similarity, and trait favorability"... by same sex subjects (Powlishta, 1995).

According to Langlois, similarity is a third mediating variable in behavioral expectations. She cites an abundance of empirical data that

suggests that attractive individuals are more likely to affiliate themselves with equally attractive others and to expect more positive behaviors of those similar in attractiveness to themselves. One such study, conducted by Berscheid et al., (1971 as cited in Langlois, 1986), found that individuals who are similar in attractiveness tend to affiliate with each other. In another study, Murstein (1972 as cited in Langlois, 1986) found that dating partners usually exhibit similar levels of attractiveness. On the other hand, those individuals who are dissimilar in attractiveness appear to demonstrate jealous tendencies towards their counterparts. Dermer and Thiel (1975, as cited in Langlois, 1986) discovered that whereas average and attractive women rated attractive female stimuli as having more socially desirable traits, their unattractive counterparts did not.

The final mediating variable regarding behavioral expectations that Langlois cites in her research is termed contrast effects. This variable is defined as the idea that parents and peers may judge individuals based on standards that they have obtained from the environment. Suppose, for example, an individual has been socialized in an environment that places a high value on obesity as a factor of physical attractiveness. He or she may have been inundated with this notion through television, film, or any of the major forms of media. As such, it is very likely that he or she may begin to associate obesity with physical attractiveness. Should this individual become a parent, he or she may likely retain this view of attractiveness and subsequently seek the obesity trait in his or her children. If he or she were to bear a

child that was not obese, his or her perception of that child's level of attractiveness would likely vary significantly depending on the child's weight. In other words, individual perceptions of attractiveness are determined by *contrasting* stimulus individuals against others to whom the perceivers have been previously exposed.

The third variable in Langlois's model posits that people exhibit differential treatment toward stimulus individuals based on their level of attractiveness. She argues that this process is automatic and therefore unconscious for the individuals doing the judging. Referring to the aforementioned example, a parent who has been socialized to associate obesity with attractiveness will have different expectations and treatment for his or her children based on this trait. Keep in mind however that these differentials will be unconscious and automatic, so the parent in question may not be aware that he or she is making any distinctions. Langlois bases this aspect of her theory on Nisbett and Wilson's (1977 as cited in Langlois, 1986) work in apriori implicit causal theories and Bem's (1970 as cited in Langlois, 1986) work in unconscious primitive beliefs. The following study demonstrates Nisbett and Wilson's theory. Berkowitz and Frodi (1979, as cited in Langlois, 1986) conducted a study in which college aged women were asked to discipline various attractive and unattractive children in a parental role playing situation. Their results indicated that the women punished unattractive children much more severely than their attractive counterparts. Further, the researchers found that if they deliberately provoked some of the subjects by making disparaging

remarks about the children's intelligence and personality, then the women were even more harsh in punishing the children.

Finally, as a result of the aforementioned variables, stimulus individuals learn to behave according to how they are treated by parents, other adults like teachers, and peers. This aspect of the model is very similar to Joseph Berger and his colleague's (1966;1967, as cited in Langlois, 1986) work in status characteristics which states that individuals base their behavior on the cues they consistently receive from others. In a study conducted by Mazur et al., (1984) West Point cadets' facial appearance was ranked on a seven point scale of facial dominance (which, according to the researchers is correlated with handsomeness). The researchers found a positive correlation between facial dominance and cadet rank while at West Point and rank in military service over the next thirty years. Therefore, it appears that if an attractive individual constantly receives cues indicating that he or she is competent, he or she will internalize that belief and behave accordingly.

Another prevalent explanation for why physical attractiveness affects perceptions comes from Chaiken's work in social influence. Chaiken argues for a simplistic heuristic processing model which states that the reason people assume more competence on the part of attractive individuals is that, "people generally agree with people they like (Chaiken, 1986 as cited in Zanna et al., 1986). In a 1979 study, Chaiken found that if an attractive expert communicator presented a subject with a weak (vs. strong) argument regarding a topic, that the

weak argument had no effect on the attractive communicator's persuasiveness. Conversely, a weak argument presented by an unattractive expert communicator was significantly inhibitory to the communicator's persuasiveness with a subject. Given this empirical evidence, it is not far fetched to assume that since people are bombarded with images of attractive people through the socialization process, primarily via the media, they come to see attractive individuals as more likable which in turn affects how they judge individual levels of competence since people like people who are similar to themselves. In a 1980 study, Kenrick and Gutierres demonstrated that adults who had been exposed to television programs featuring attractive women (like Charlie's Angels) rated stimulus females as significantly less attractive than individuals who had not been exposed to such shows.

Most Americans place great value on appearance and likewise associate certain characteristics with individuals based on appearance. Research has found, "rather strong evidence for a physical attractiveness stereotype that generalizes across differing samples, contexts and settings which reflect varying life span stage experiences", (Adams, 1978 as cited in Herman, et al., 1986, p. 8). The literature strongly indicates that individuals who are seen as more attractive, "often receive more help and cooperation from others; when applying for jobs, they may be more likely to be hired; and when in legal difficulty they may be more likely to be treated leniently (Chaiken, 1986). The Oprah Winfrey show recently broadcast a program with this

subject as the topic. In the study they juxtaposed an attractive woman against an unattractive woman in a variety of situations including being stranded on the highway with a flat tire. In the flat tire scenario, they monitored the amount of time it took for an individual to stop to assist each of the women. The time frame was significantly lower for the attractive woman than the unattractive woman. This example, along with the aforementioned studies of Berscheid and Walster (1972) and Stephan and Langlois (1984) further reiterate the point that, the more attractive an individual is, the more likely he or she is to be attributed positive characteristics.

Many researchers have speculated that, " physical attractiveness stereotyping may... occur in a stronger form in societies that value a more differentiated and distinctive identity for the individual (Dion, 1986, cited in Zanna et al., 1986, p. 15). The aforementioned theories take this idea into account and provide a comprehensive description of how appearance/attractiveness mediates perceptions of competence.

Following is a model that demonstrates the manner in which the researcher believes skin tone affects perceptions of competence.

Figure 1
Breland Model of Skin Tone, Level of Attractiveness and Perceptions of Competence
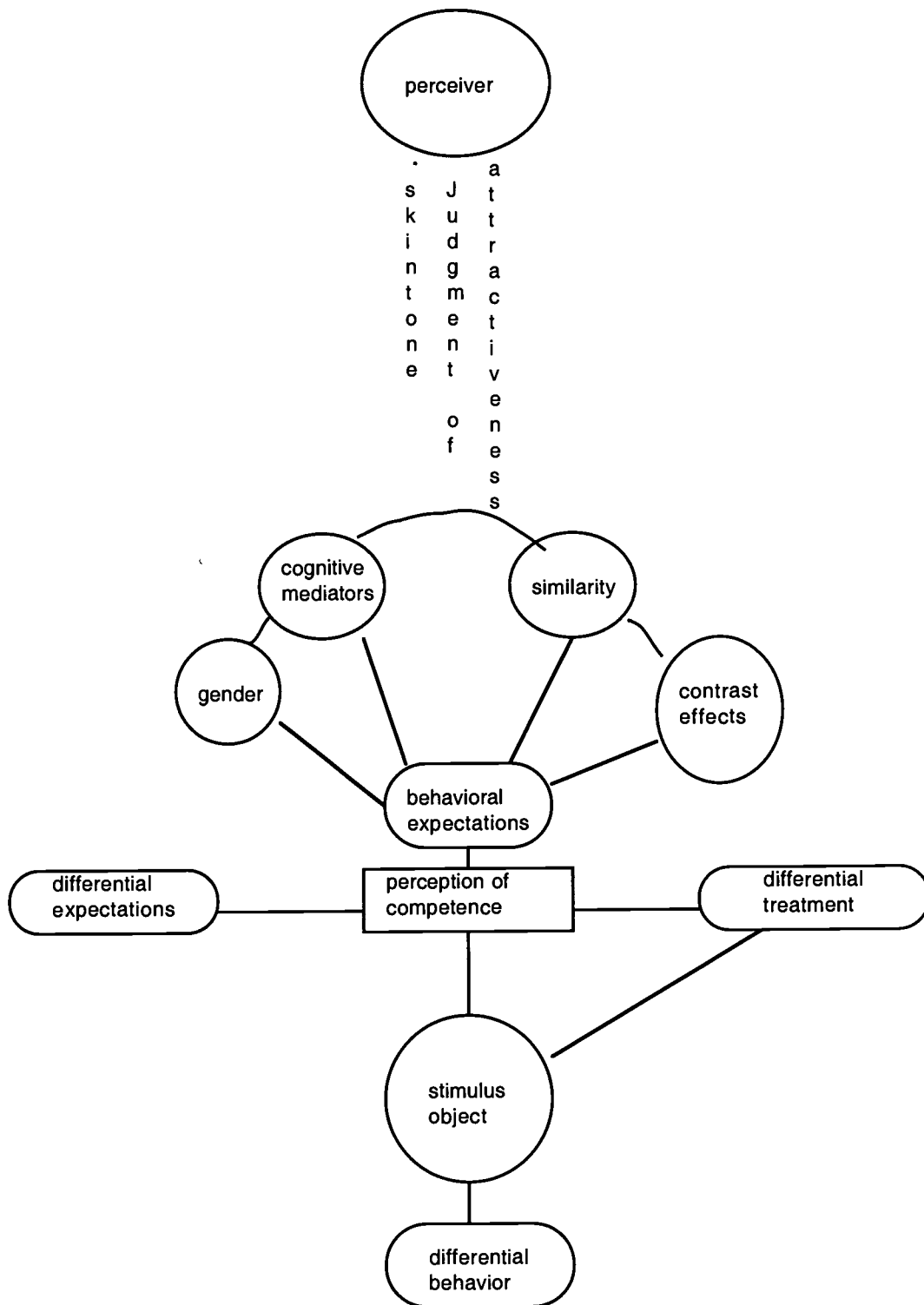
In the Breland model of perceptions of competence, attractiveness, and skin tone, individuals make judgments about others competence based on the interaction of multiple factors. Some of those factors include contrast effects and similarity to others. The instruments described earlier were used to determine if a relationship existed between adolescents' regard for personal ethnic/racial identity and perceptions of African Americans' competence as a function of skin tone. The STPT was used as a method of directly testing African Americans' perceptions of competence as a function of skin tone. Another possible contrast effect is hypothesized to be self-esteem. The RSES was used as a measure of self ratings of competence to determine if perceptions of personal competence were related to perceptions of others' competence.

Limitations of Previous Research

The literature thus far can be categorized in two areas, skin tone and competence. Prior to this study, few, if any, researchers combined the idea of skin tone as a variable associated with competence in African Americans. This fact begs two questions, a) exactly how pervasive is skin tone discrimination and b) does skin tone discrimination offer evidence of affecting perceptions of competence? These two questions provide an adequate prelude to the main hypothesis which is, what are the reasons and processes by which skin tone variations continue to affect stratification outcomes among African Americans?

Previous research has been limited to attempts to ascertain if

appropriate for a given scenario. Her results indicated that the children most preferred the skin tones honey Brown and very light Yellow with the least preferred skin tones being very dark Brown and dark Brown.

In addition to assessing stratification outcomes among African Americans, many researchers have attempted to assess the affect of multiple measures of physical appearance on African Americans' perceptions. Neal (1988) and Berry (1988) attempted to address facial features such as hair texture, nose shape, and lip size with regard to perceptions of attractiveness and competence. Problems with these studies emanate from a number of important points. First, the primary subjects of most studies were either children under the age of 12 or college aged adults. Research suggests that such young children are much more likely to either, a) not understand the objectives described to them as study participants; b) provide socially desirable answers; c) be heavily influenced by the researcher who presents them with stimulus material or d) be presented with stimulus material that is in itself, confounding. The Porter (1991) study described earlier reiterates this point in that it was found that agreement rates among children regarding what constituted the most desirable skin tone declined as the children's ages increased. This researcher believes that this decline was present because the children at the higher end of this age spectrum may have been much more likely to provide socially desirable answers. At the other end of the subject spectrum are college aged individuals who, when presented with stimuli that vary in skin

tone and asked to make judgments about these individuals, are much more likely to ascertain the purpose of the study and hence provide socially desirable answers in an attempt to not be perceived as color conscious.

Another problem with many of the studies that have sought to assess skin tone, is the confound introduced when the stimulus presenter is unfamiliar, and consequently influential, to child subjects. In a study by Spencer (1973), children clearly responded to the author's prompts which strongly indicated a bias toward choosing lighter stimulus objects. Finally, the work of Clark and Clark (1947 as cited in Newcombe & Hartley), in which they used Black and White dolls for stimulus objects with a wide age range of children, although seminal in its impact and innovation, has been heavily criticized for the lack of diversity in skin tone among the stimulus objects. For many of the African American children that the Clarks' studied, the stimulus object that represented the Black child was considerably darker than the children themselves which consequently made it difficult for lighter skinned children to identify with it.

In addition to the aforementioned confounds, what all of these studies have failed to address is *why* African Americans exhibit color consciousness.

Given this variety of confounds, this investigator attempted to use a methodology that would circumvent them. In addition, the investigator sought to address the question of why color consciousness exists and persists among African Americans.

Stated succinctly, the literature demonstrates that European Americans view African Americans differently based on their skin tone and that these differences are rooted in slavery. As a result, African Americans differ in their perceptions of each other in part based on their internalization of cues from European Americans. In addition there is strong evidence to suggest that in a society dominated by European American standards, including heavy emphasis on individuality and attractiveness, a higher value is placed on attractiveness and that attractiveness is correlated positively with perceptions of competence. As such, the author believes that perceptions of attractiveness within the African American community are positively correlated with perceptions of skin tone and that this correlation explains African American bias with regard to perceptions of skin tone and competence. Finally, the author believes that these perceptions are affected by self-esteem, ethnic identity strength and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity. Therefore, the researcher expects to find the following results to the subsequently mentioned hypotheses.

Research Hypotheses

The researcher expected to find that:

1) African Americans will demonstrate light skin tone bias as measured by perceptions of competence.

2) The degree of an African American's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity is likely to affect that individual's skin tone bias.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

This chapter delineates the methods used in collecting data for this study. The sections included are: setting, subjects, instrumentation, experimental design, sampling procedures, and data collection.

Setting

The study was conducted in a mid-sized southeastern city of Virginia and a small city in central Illinois and involved enlisting the assistance of the public school districts.

Subjects

The total sample of 145 subjects included 86.9% (n=126) African American and 13.1% (n=19) biracial (with at least one African American parent) students from two schools in a large southeastern urban/suburban site and one school in a mid-sized Midwestern suburban/rural site. Fifty one percent (n=74) of the subjects were male and forty nine percent (n=71) were female. Subjects ranged in age from 12 to 15 and were in grades 7 and 8. The subjects' mean age was 13.2 and the mean grade was 7.5. Summary information pertaining to the subjects' age and grade is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Research Participant Characteristics

	M	SD	range
age in years	13.2	.83	12-15
grade	7.5	.50	7-8

The appropriateness of this age group for the study was
determined by a pilot study coordinated by the author. In the pilot
study, approximately 12 girls (11 African American and 1 Biracial) were
given a collection of the African American periodicals Ebony and Jet.
They were then asked to peruse these magazines and find pictures of
the men they considered to be most attractive. Upon completion of
this task, the researcher compiled all of the pictures selected and
subsequently asked the girls to describe why each of the men was
deemed attractive. The same procedure was done to ascertain
unattractive men. Among these 12 girls, there was a clear bias toward
lighter skinned men being seen as more attractive and darker skinned
men as more unattractive. Some of the reasons the girls gave for why
the lighter skinned men were more attractive included that they were
"bright-skinded"; they had pretty hair; and they just looked better.
Some of the reasons why darker skinned men were seen as
unattractive included, they were just too Black; they were too dark to
see clearly in the picture; they had nappy hair; and they looked mean.

This informal study corroborates the findings of other researchers who have found adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15 to be old enough and cognitively sophisticated enough to participate in a study such as this, yet not at the developmental stage where they are very likely to provide socially desirable answers. According to Northcraft and Hastorf (1986, as cited in Herman et al., 1986, p. 231), "basic physical development may be exacerbated by adolescents' being less emotionally mature and socially tactful in dealing with (and talking about) ...changes both in the self and others."

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study included the following (please see Appendix A for a copy of each instrument):

Recall that the researcher supposes an existent relationship between an African American's degree of ethnic identity strength and his or her perceptions of other African Americans' competence. To test this relationship, the <u>Multi-Construct African American Identity Questionnaire</u> (MCAIQ) (Smith & Brookins, 1996) was used. This test was designed to, "measure ethnic identity as operationalized by racial preference, in addition to assessing young people's attitudes toward African Americans as a group. (Smith and Brookins, 1996, p. 16)". The test consists of 25 items used to measure socialization preferences; appearance preferences, attitudes regarding stereotypes of African Americans; and cooperative values. Subjects were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 representing strong agreement and 1 representing strong disagreement. Tools were scored by adding the

numerical values of all answers. According to the test developers, "higher scores on the MCAIQ are received by participants who responded to items endorsing in group preferences, rejecting group stereotypes; accepting positive portrayals of African Americans as a group; and espousing cooperative values" (Smith and Brookins, 1996, p. 17).

The measure used to assess the behavioral components of ethnic identity was the <u>Cultural Diversity Coping Scale</u> (CCDS) (Coleman, Casali, & Wampold, 1996). This scale was selected as a means for measuring the strategies adolescents use for coping with cultural diversity. This scale is a 54 item scale that seeks to measure how likely an adolescent is to use the four strategies for coping with cultural diversity articulated by Coleman (1995). In the 4 subscale version, these strategies are acculturation, alternation, integration, and separation.

The <u>Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale</u> (RSES) is a 10 item scale that is designed to the assess self acceptance aspects of self-esteem. Each item allows subjects to provide an answer in the range of 1 to 4 with 1 representing strong disagreement and 4 representing strong agreement. "One point is scored for each item answered in the keyed direction, yielding a range from 4 (lowest self-esteem) to 40 (highest self esteem)" (Westaway & Wolmarans, 1992).

Finally, the author administered the <u>Breland Skin Tone and Perceptions Scale</u> (STPT) (Breland, 1997). This is a scale designed by the author specifically for the purpose of this study. It is a 12 item scale that seeks to measure skin tone bias in the assessment of competence.

As this is a new scale, an explanation of its development and scoring procedures follows.

The first 11 of the 12 questions on the scale describe various situations that represent ability and affiliation, two major aspects of competence. Subjects are asked to select the picture of the person who most closely fits the item and write the corresponding number on the blank line next to the item. The two aspects of competence that comprise the test, ability and affiliation, were selected as the areas that most adolescents use to make judgments about each others' competence (Powlishta, 1995; Maharaj & Connolly, 1994). Research has determined that adolescents use variables like gender and other within and between group similarities to make judgments of competence about each other. Affiliation is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary as "...[associating] oneself as a subordinate, subsidiary or member with" and ability is defined as the, "quality of being able to do something [physical or mental]". The author developed the scenarios used in the instrument from knowledge obtained via public school experiences. As stated earlier, the scale is accompanied by 12 (individually numbered) pictures of evenly matched males and females who vary according to skin tone and level of attractiveness (mechanisms used to validate this portion of the study are discussed later). Each of the first 11 questions describes a situation that an adolescent might find him or herself in in the educational setting. The questions request that subjects indicate what person they believe to be most appropriate for each scenario and write in the number of that

picture beside the question. Question 12 seeks to assess subject's self-ratings of skin tone by asking subjects to select the picture of the person who most closely resembles him or her.

To determine the content validity of the scale, the first 11 items were presented to a panel of 5 untrained adult raters who assessed each question for its relevance to affiliation or ability. An inter-rater reliability of minimum .50 was obtained for all questions except 9 and 11. Table 1 is a copy of the scale.

Table 1

Skin Tone and Perceptions Tool

1. Pretend that today is the first day of school. Which person would most students want to sit by in class?_____

2. If someone were having trouble with his or her math homework, which person would be best able to help?_____

3. Which person would be most likely to make the honor roll?_____

4. If these students were in your class, which person would be voted best looking?_____

5. Pretend that it the first week of school and it is time to eat lunch. Which one of these people would most people ask to eat lunch with them?_____

6. Pretend that everyone in your grade rides the bus to school everyday. Which one of these people would no one would want to sit with on the bus?_____

7. Which one of these people would raise his or her hand the most to answer questions in class?_____

8. Pretend there is a school dance. With which person would most people want to dance?_____

9. If these people were in your class, which one would "get in trouble" the most?_____

10. If these people were in your class, which one would get bad grades?_____

11. Pretend that students are being selected for a gifted program. Which person would be most likely to be chosen to participate?_____

12. Now, select the picture of the person that you think looks most like you. _____

The scale employed the use of 12 stimulus pictures that were judged as being the same level of attractiveness so that the confound of subjects choosing the more attractive stimuli was avoided. This allowed variations in perceptions of competence to be attributed to the skin tone of the stimulus picture. The stimulus pictures included in the scale were selected based on the ratings of 5 trained adult raters who first rated the pictures on the basis of attractiveness (i.e. attractive or unattractive). The confound of skin tone was controlled by making the skin tones of all stimulus pictures the same medium skin tone. Only those pictures for which an inter-rater agreement of .50 or better on the dimension of attractiveness were used with the scale. After raters grouped the pictures according to level of attractiveness, the pictures were then altered to their original skin tone and grouped by skin tone (i.e., one category each for light, medium, and dark skin). Only those pictures for which an inter-rater agreement of .75 or better was obtained were used to place the pictures in groups based on light, medium, and dark skin. In addition, the confound of gender was controlled for by providing equal numbers of male and female stimuli. The resulting 12 pictures included the following: 6 males and 6 females including 1 light skinned attractive and 1 light skinned unattractive adolescent; 1 medium skinned attractive and 1 medium skinned unattractive adolescent; and 1 dark skinned attractive and 1 dark skinned unattractive adolescent. It is important to note that multiple attempts were necessary to obtain statistically significant agreement on

an unattractive light skinned male and an attractive dark-skinned female.

The following procedures were used to score the scale. This scoring procedure was developed using the Pre-School Racial Attitude Measure (PRAM II) (Williams, Best, & Boswell, 1975) as a model. Subjects were given 1 point for each time they associated a dark skinned person with a positive trait or a light skinned person with a negative trait and were given -1 point for each time they associated a light skinned person with a positive trait or a dark skinned person with a negative trait. Subjects received 0 points for associating medium skinned persons with any traits. At the conclusion of scale administration, subjects were given overall scale scores by summing the total number of points earned. In addition, because the questions judged the affiliation and ability aspects of competence, there are ability and affiliation subscales scored by summing the responses for each of these areas. The overall totals ranged from a possible score of -11 to +11.

In addition, the researcher developed a method for use in scoring this tool to determine if attractiveness bias was present. This variable was assessed by giving respondents -1 point each time they selected an attractive person for a positive question or an unattractive person for a negative question. Subjects received +1 point each time they associated an attractive person with a negative question or an unattractive person with a positive question. Scores were tallied by simply adding the total points earned. Subjects with lower scores were

judged to demonstrate more bias toward attractive persons.

Experimental Design, Sampling Procedures, and Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in the adolescent subjects' school classrooms. Teachers and three research assistants were trained to administer the questionnaires.

The design of this study was a quasi experimental single group, passive-observational design, with the researcher and assistants administered the instruments. A volunteer sampling procedure was used. First, school districts were solicited via their required procedures to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study. When approval was granted, multiple middle and jr. high schools were contacted to determine their willingness to participate in the study. After the schools were contacted, the researcher sent written informed consent letters soliciting participation to randomly selected parents. Only those students for whom consent was given, were assessed with the aforementioned tools by their respective teachers and the author's research assistants. Teachers and research assistants were provided with a brief training regarding the administration of the various measures. In addition, they used a written protocol to assist in the actual test administration. The tools were administered during a single class period on one day, in the same sequential order.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed using the following procedures. Reliability estimates were calculated for each instrument. For the STPT, scale reliability on the skin tone variable was assessed by calculating coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The reliability estimate was .42. For the attractiveness variable of the STPT, reliability estimates yielded a score of .62. For the CCDS, the reliability estimate was Cronbach's alpha of .73. Regarding the RSES, the reliability estimate was .44 (Cronbach's alpha). The reliability estimate for the MCAIQ was .56 (Cronbach's alpha).

Regarding the first hypothesis, the African American sample did demonstrate skin tone bias (in this case, toward lighter skin) as measured by perceptions of competence.

The data were analyzed by using a one sample t-test which yielded a significant effect for skin tone bias on perceptions of competence, ($\underline{M}$ = -.28, $\underline{SD}$ = .28, $\underline{MSE}$ = .26). For this test, n = 141 and the effect size was 1.01. With regard to the supposition that the level of attractiveness affects perceptions of competence, the sample again demonstrated that such is the case, (M=-.17, $\underline{SD}$ = .32, $\underline{MSE}$= .30. For this test n = 141 and the effect size was .53.

The degree of an African American's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity did not

appear to affect that individual's skin tone bias based on the correlation

coefficient results following in table 2.

Table 2

Intercorrelations Between MCAIQ, RSES, and CCDS-Alternation, -Integration, -Separation, -Acculturation, and STPT-Ability and -Affiliation

Scales

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Ability		-.03	.09	-.04	.09	-.14	-.06	.11
2. Acculturation			.17*	.61**	.22**	.65**	.34**	.29**
3. Affiliation				.18*	.03	.08	-.05	-.03
4. Alternation					.22**	.71**	.07	.22**
5. MCAIQ						.14	.03	.22**
6. Integration							.16	.12
7. Separation								.14
8. RSES								--

* p ≤ .05

** p ≤ .01

The ability and affiliation subscales were analyzed using a paired sample t-test. For the ability and affiliation subscales of the STPT, subjects demonstrated a slightly significant bias toward lighter skin. For the ability subscale, the mean, with standard deviation and mean standard error in parentheses was -.19 (.36, .18). For affiliation, the mean with standard deviation and mean standard error in parentheses was -.39 (2.01, .17). The t value was 3.29, $p=.001$. Effect sizes were calculated for both the skin tone and attractiveness measures of the STPT. For the skin tone measurement of the STPT the effect size was 1.01 and for the attractiveness measure, .53. Finally, the frequency with which subject's selected a picture to complete the self-assessment portion of the instrument, yielded results that did not allow for inclusion in this study, due to the great number of subjects who did not answer this question (26.9% missing answers) and to the non-significant correlation of responses to this item with both STPT subscales and with the other instruments. Table 3 presents the frequency of responses to STPT items.

Table 3

Table of Endorsements on STPT

Stimulus Pictures ▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Items ↓												
1	59	2	2	11	12	2	27	9	3	5	6	6
2	15	4	2	31	9	12	7	27	1	5	5	26
3	9	1	6	33	5	1	2	47	4	5	2	29
4	64	1	5	10	6	3	40	5	-	3	5	2
5	48	8	5	17	14	5	20	7	5	7	6	2
6	5	19	4	2	6	6	7	11	34	12	13	23
7	11	4	7	22	3	5	2	31	3	10	7	39
8	70	-	1	5	6	8	41	3	2	3	5	-
9	7	29	4	-	9	19	19	2	7	3	42	2
10	6	35	5	2	5	17	9	1	9	8	39	6
11	12	1	3	22	9	6	5	32	7	6	6	34
12	15	7	8	13	15	4	24	4	2	4	8	2

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Recall that this study sought to address two major questions including: do African Americans demonstrate skin tone bias as measured by perceptions of competence? and does the degree of skin tone bias demonstrated by an African American affect that individual's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of strategies for coping with cultural diversity?

Discussion of the research results will include, major findings as relevant to the main hypotheses; limitations of the study; implications for the field of counseling psychology and African Americans; future research questions; and a concluding remarks.

Major Findings

Recall that one of the major hypotheses asserted that African Americans are likely to demonstrate skin tone bias toward light skin as measured by perceptions of competence. As demonstrated by the data from the STPT one sample t-test by skin tone variable, it is highly likely that African Americans do indeed continue to notice the variance in skin tone within the group and to make judgments of positive ability and affiliation for lighter skinned African Americans. Also recall that the second major hypothesis purported that the degree of skin tone bias demonstrated by an African American is likely to be predictive of that individual's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of coping strategies. Overall, the results seem to indicate that there is no significant correlation between the scores on the measures of

ethnic identity; coping strategies; and self esteem. However, there appeared to be a slightly significant positively correlated relationship between the STPT affiliation subscale and the CCDS acculturation subscale. Given that Coleman's (1995, p.729) theory on second culture acquisition hypothesizes that, "...certain groups are never perceived as full members of the second culture, either by themselves or the members of the host culture", and the previously mentioned definition of affiliation that implies a hierarchy of sorts, it seems reasonable to assume that there may be some relationship between affiliating with a lighter skinned African American and assuming some values of the dominant European American culture. Further, it seems plausible that for an adolescent, there can be an assumed status inherent in associating with a lighter skinned individual that does not consciously translate into better feelings about oneself. In other words, an African American adolescent may see the benefits that arise from associating with a lighter skinned African American, which when coupled with an external locus of control, prevent him or her from internalizing self-worth based on his or her own merit. This hypothesis might explain the lack of a positively correlated relationship between skin tone bias and ethnic identity strength in this sample.

As demonstrated by Keith and Herring (1991) and Hughes and Hertel (1990), this study appears to corroborate some of their conclusions and argues that the issue of skin tone bias is a very important aspect of the African American community. It appears that

African Americans may make judgments about who they perceive to be best able to complete various tasks. Further there seems to be adequate information to suggest that lighter skinned African Americans are the beneficiaries of this bias. It is quite possible that the behavioral observations and personal experiences of African Americans throughout development may affect ideas about who receives advantages and excels. In addition, recall that the sociohistorical literature has demonstrated that African Americans with lighter skin have received "favored status" since the advent of enslavement here in the United States (Keith & Herring, 1991; Okazawa-Rey et al., 1986; Sandler 1994; Scales-Trent; 1995). In general, it appears that within the cultural group, skin tone is still a very conspicuous concern that may dictate opportunities and advantages or at the very least perceptions of both. It appears that African Americans may indeed continue to use skin tone as a factor to assess competence or assign traits to others within the group. It may be that there are very clear demarcations regarding what traits and behaviors are associated with both darker skinned and lighter skinned African Americans in this society.

The second hypothesis purported that the degree of skin tone bias demonstrated by an African American is likely to be predictive of that individual's self-esteem, ethnic identity strength, and use of coping strategies. As stated earlier, these variables were measured via a widely used and validated self esteem scale and both internal and behavioral measures of ethnic identity. The results indicate that there

is no significant relationship between skin tone bias, internal measures of ethnic identity; behavioral components of ethnic identity; and self esteem. The purpose of this hypothesis test was to determine possible mechanisms that influence skin tone bias and perceptions (i.e. the reasons and processes mentioned in the title). As the results were inconclusive, it is possible that there are other mechanisms that remain untapped that might explain what drives skin tone bias.

Recall that ability and affiliation were the two measures of competence used in this study. Based on the results it appears that there is a stronger bias toward light skin for affiliation than for ability. Among adolescents, popularity (affiliation) is a primary concern (Langlois, 1986). Further, among African Americans, community is of prime importance (Sue & Sue, 1990). Therefore a strong desire may exist for African American adolescents to be associated with individuals who can bring them status among peers. Ability, on the other hand, is often seen as a variable associated with European Americans (e.g. "acting white") and may not be as important within this age group (Kunjufu, 1989). So the fact that a stronger effect was seen for affiliation than ability may have its origins in the deeper layers of African American cultural context. Regarding the researcher's speculation that attractiveness might be a mediating variable for perceptions of competence, the results seem to indicate that level of attractiveness does affect perceptions of competence. For this sample, attractive individuals were seen as more competent than their unattractive counterparts. In addition, given that all subjects were

African American, it appears that there may indeed be some validity to the hypothesis that attractiveness is a contributing factor to perceptions of competence along with skin tone. Given that the effect size for the skin tone by competence measure was twice that of the attractiveness by competence measure, it appears that skin tone is indeed a major factor in perceptions of competence among African Americans.

It is important to note that the aforementioned effects of gender were controlled for in the study and as such, are not included as part of the analysis.

Finally, self-perceptions of skin tone did not yield significant effects on either perceptions of competence/self-esteem, ethnic identity or coping strategies. It is possible that as in other studies it is difficult to ascertain African Americans perceptions of their own skin tones. In addition, it is often difficult for African Americans to discuss such an issue or to get agreement on what constitutes light, medium, and dark skin.

As was the case in other studies that sought to understand this phenomenon, it appears that this study has corroborated the existence of a pervasive aspect of the African American community yet has not defined the mechanism by which it occurs.

Limitations of the Study

There are any number of reasons for the aforementioned results that support the existence of the phenomenon, yet do not explain the reasons that drive it. First, it is possible that the measure of self-esteem employed taps a different component of self-esteem than that which

affects perceptions of others' competence. It is possible that the way a child views him or herself globally is quite different from how he or she might view others with respect to their ability competence or in the degree to which they might affiliate with that person. It may be that there are life experiences and observations that African Americans make that enculturate them to notice skin tone variation and associate competence to those variations. There may indeed be some aspects of Langlois' model of attractiveness, treatment by others, and the associated internalized self-regard/self-efficacy that operates in skin tone perceptions. With regard to ethnic identity, it is quite possible that the two constructs used, behavioral components and internal beliefs, are too far removed from the construct of perceptions of competence based on skin tone to demonstrate any relationship. In other words, there may be a relationship that is not tapped by correlating behaviors and beliefs about oneself with observations of other's abilities.

It is also possible that the limited reliability and validity of the skin tone perception measure may have affected its correlational possibilities with the other more reliable and valid measures. There are varied limitations of the study based on the STPT. The novelty of it, coupled with the fact that it was developed specifically for use in this study is a consideration. The stimulus objects in the pictures were not dressed in a uniform manner and therefore may have influenced subject's via style of dress. For example, it is possible that stimulus objects wearing glasses may have influenced subjects' decision to select

them for academic ability questions. In addition, there may be differences in perceptions of skin tone and level of attractiveness between the adults (who acted as raters to select the pictures) and adolescents (who served as subjects). Also the arrangement and size of the pictures may have influenced subjects also (e.g. the upper torso of some stimuli were presented while others were presented with only the head and a small portion of the shoulders). In addition, the poor reliability coefficient obtained for the STPT may be of relevance with regard to how data obtained from it are interpreted. It appears to have tapped the global purpose for which it was designed, namely to observe skin tone variance bias, yet further work is required to determine more appropriate questions for use in measuring ability and affiliation. It is quite possible that as the STPT becomes more empirically validated, its ability to demonstrate a relationship with the other measures will grow and allow for an increased likelihood of demonstrating a relationship.

It is also possible that the scope of the study was too broad to yield any significant results on the questions asked. Further evaluation and a reductive approach may be in order for future projects.

Implications and Future Research Questions

The author believes that the aforementioned findings have important implications and raise important questions for both the field of counseling psychology and the African American community. First, if it is possible that African Americans continue to notice the skin tone

variance within the group and demonstrate a tendency toward favoring the lighter skinned individuals within the group, what are the negative implications for the darker skinned members of the group? In addition, if lighter skinned individuals are more often associated with positive behaviors and are the desired affiliation partners, what implications might this have on darker skinned African Americans' self-efficacy and self-esteem?

Second, it appears that these findings give support to the notion that skin tone variance and color consciousness within the community are important and prevalent issues affecting group members. As such, it may be important for psychologists to be aware of these issues when working with African American clients and to possibly even explore these areas as a theme in treatment (Harvey, 1995; Okazawa-Rey et al., 1986). More importantly, given that these discoveries occurred within a middle-school aged group, what implications might they have for adolescent development? It is possible that within this age group African Americans have already formed quite rigid ideas and stenotypes about each other that may affect their growth and development. Finally, as the results of the present study were derived from an adolescent sample, their generalizability is limited.

As stated earlier, future research may require a more limited scope and seek to answer one aspect of skin tone bias. In addition, it may be helpful to ascertain, via qualitative study, exactly what prompts African American adolescents judgments of competence based on skin tone. Future studies should also seek to address the prevalence of this

phenomenon in other cultural groups. Finally, it may be beneficial to note the prevalence and degree of this concern in interactions between African Americans and European Americans.

Concluding Remarks

The question of color consciousness arose for the author from personal experience. The desire to study the phenomenon arose from the seminal 1991 work by Keith and Herring in which they argued that even though skin tone stratification is a pervasive aspect of the African American community, further research is needed to ascertain the reasons and processes by which it occurs. The aforementioned research study with important, yet limited, results begins the quest to answer Keith and Herring's question and ultimately pave the way for more research and adequate answers that can assist the African American community in first understanding, then eradicating, the painful and detrimental effects of color consciousness.

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Appendix A

Instruments

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

4=strongly agree, 3=agree somewhat, 2=disagree somewhat, 1=strongly disagree

1.   ___I feel that I'm a person of worth at least on an equal
         basis with others.

2.   ___I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

3.   ___All in all, I'm inclined to feel that I am a failure.

4.   ___I am able to do things as well as others.

5.   ___I feel I'do not have as much to be proud of.

6.   ___I take a positive attitude towards myself.

7.   ___On the whole I am satisfied with myself.

8.   ___I wish I could have more respect for myself.

9.   ___I certainly feel useless at times.

10.   ___At times I think I'm no good at all.

Alfiee M. Breland, 1996

Instructions: First, look at the pictures of the students on the sheet attached. Next, read each of the following statements on this paper. Select the number next to the picture of the person that you think is best for that statement. Write the number in the blank space next to the statement. We'll start with a practice statement.

EXAMPLE: _____Which person would you be most likely to share your lunch with if they didn't have any?

Understand? Ask the adult who is helping you with this scale any questions you have now. Now let's begin with the first question.

1.   Pretend that today is the first day of school. Which person would most students want to sit by in class?_____

2.   If someone were having trouble with his or her math homework, which person would be best able to help?_____

3.   Which person would be most likely to make the honor roll?_____

4.   If these students were in your class, which person would be voted best looking?_____

5.   Pretend that it the first week of school and it is time to eat lunch. Which one of these people would most people ask to eat lunch with them?_____

6.   Pretend that everyone in your grade rides the bus to school everyday. Which one of these people would no one would want to sit with on the bus?_____

7.   Which one of these people would raise his or her hand the most to answer questions in class?_____

8.   Pretend there is a school dance. With which person would most people want to dance?_____

9.   If these people were in your class, which one would "get in trouble" the most?_____

10.   If these people were in your class, which one would get bad grades?_____

11.   Pretend that students are being selected for a gifted program. Which person would be most likely to be chosen to participate?_____

12.   Now, select the picture of the person that you think looks most like you. _____

      Thank you for answering these questions for me. You may now give this paper to the adult in your class.

Pictures and Key

1) Attractive light skinned female

2) Attractive dark skinned male

3) Attractive light skinned male

4) Attractive medium skinned female

5) Unattractive medium skinned female

6) Unattractive dark skinned male

7) Attractive medium skinned male

8) Unattractive light skinned female

9) Unattractive dark skinned female

10) Attractive dark skinned female

11) Unattractive light skinned male

12) Unattractive medium skinned male

Cultural Diversity Coping Scale
Adolescent Form

INSTRUCTIONS:

Every day we meet people from different races and cultures. We want to know what you do when you meet people from different races and cultures. Below are 10 situations that have happened to people like you. After each situation, are six different responses. Please let us know, on a scale of 0 to 6, how likely you are to choose each response.

Rating Scale:

Not at all likely To Do			Likely To Do			Definitely Would Do	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	

EXAMPLE

If a person from another race or culture asked you to sit with him or her at lunch, how likely are you to...

1) sit with people from his or her
   race or culture?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) try to sit in a corner of the lunchroom   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) sit with his or her friends?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) sit at a table with people from different   0 1 2 3 4 5 6
   races and cultures?

5) say no?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) sit with whoever was at the table?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

If you have any questions about how to answer the questions, please ask now.

Rating Scale:

Not at all likely To Do		Likely To Do			Definitely Would Do	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

SITUATION 1

If a people from other races or cultures call you names or put you down, how likely are you to...

1) tell them to leave you alone?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) tell them that we are all more alike
   than different?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) tell them that they should respect you for
   who you are?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) just laugh it off   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) avoid people from other races or cultures?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) try to be nice to them anyway?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

SITUATION 2

If a people from your racial or cultural group make fun of individuals from other groups, how likely are you to...

1) let those who are making fun
   of others know that you do not
   like that humor?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) change the topic?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) make a joke along with the others?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) laugh along with them?i   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) just be quiet?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) stop hanging out with those who
   make fun of others?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

<u>Rating Scale:</u>

Not at all likely To Do			Likely To Do			Definitely Would Do
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

SITUATION 3

If you were at a school dance where they were playing music that was mostly from a different cultural or racial group than you, how likely are you to......

1) ask the dj to play music from many different
races or cultures?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) ask the dj to play music that everyone
at the dance liked?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) leave?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) just dance like everyone else?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) spend time watching other people dance?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) dance for a while and then go to
a party with people from my own
race or culture?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

SITUATION 4

If you were with someone from a different race or culture than you, and someone from your race or culture started to bother both of you for being together, how likely are you to...

1) stop hanging out with the person from the other
race or culture?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) just laugh it off?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) pretend not to hear them?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) ask the person who is bothering you what
their problem is?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) ask him or her to leave the two of you
alone?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) tell the person bothering you that she or
he is wrong?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

<u>Rating Scale:</u>

Not at all likely To Do			Likely To Do			Definitely Would Do	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	

SITUATION 5

If you were one of the few people from your race or culture in a classroom and the teacher treated you differently from the other students, how likely are you to......

1) do anything I could to get out of class? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) learn to act just like the other students? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) transfer to a class where racial
   and cultural differences are respected? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) try not to be noticed by the teacher? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) focus on what is being taught? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) ask the teacher why he or she treated
   you differently? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

SITUATION 6

If you were doing a group project in class with individuals who were mostly from a different race or culture than you, how likely are you to.....

1) make friends with someone in the
   group who would help you? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) get the group to understand what you think
   about the material? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) just work with the individuals in my group who are
   from my own race or culture? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) do what it takes to get along? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) make sure everyone was involved
   in the group? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) say only what you had to in order to get
   your grade? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Rating Scale:

Not at all likely To Do			Likely To Do			Definitely Would Do	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	

SITUATION 7

Sometimes when you are with people from another race or culture they get nervous. If that happened to you, how likely are you to...

1) do something to make them feel comfortable?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) just hang out with people from that race or culture
   with whom you feel comfortable?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) explain to them what it means to be a
   member of your race or culture?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) try to get them to understand what you
   have in common?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5 tend not to notice it?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) leave or avoid the situation?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

SITUATION 8

You have been accepted into the peer mediation program and people start saying you got in because of your race or culture, how likely are you to...

1) say that everyone got picked because
   of their ability?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) say that it is important to have
   people from different races and
   cultures be peer mediators?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) say that it is good to have many
   different points of view in
   the peer mediation program?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) say that it is good that people
   from your race or culture are
   peer mediation program?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) tell them that you got picked because
   you get along well with people from
   different races or cultures?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) feel uncomfortable about being picked?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Rating Scale:

Not at all likely To Do			Likely To Do		Definitely Would Do	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

SITUATION 9

You are with a group of people who speak a language you do not know very well, how likely are you to...

1) teach the others how to say
   things in your language?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) get one of the others to help you learn
   his or her language?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) try to learn the language so
   that you can fit in?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) try to learn the language because
   it will help you in school?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) leave the group?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6) help the group focus on common interests?   0 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Thank you very much for answering these questions. Before you hand the
survey in, please let us know a little more about you..**

AGE_____   GENDER (circle one)   M   F

ETHNICITY_____

WHAT GRADE ARE YOU IN?_____

EMPLOYMENT

1.   When working, what type of job
        does your mother have?   _____

2.   When working, what type of job
        does your father have?   _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

ID #_____   SITE #_____

    c. Hardin L.K. Coleman and Sherry Casali (1994)

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire looks at your feelings specifically toward Black people or African Americans. There are no right or wrong answers. Please respond to them as if you were talking to someone about what you think. Please be honest because your answers will be kept confidential. Please put an "X" in the box to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Black people should be proud of their race	1	2	3	4	5
2. Black people can do anything if they try	1	2	3	4	5
3. I think White people do better in school than Black people	1	2	3	4	5
4. Black people do not do well in business.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Black people are good at other things besides sports.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I prefer to go to a school with mostly white students.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I like working together better than trying to be the winner.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I think most Black people have bad hair.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I think short hair is as nice as long hair.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I like working with other people better than working alone.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. Black people do not speak as well as White people.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I prefer to have mostly white friends.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I believe I can do well without help from anybody else.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Black people are not good at math.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I do not like being around Black people.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I think that most Black people cannot be trusted.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I prefer to live in a Black neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe that "Black is Beautiful."	1	2	3	4	5
19. I do not need help from others to do well.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I like doing things by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I prefer to live in a White neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I believe that White people speak better than Black people.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Black people are very smart.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. I wish my skin was lighter.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I think people of other races look better than Black people.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B
Consent Form

University of Wisconsin-Madison
The School of Education
Department of Counseling Psychology

321 Education Building   Phone (608) 262-0461
1000 Bascom Mall   Fax (608) 265-3347
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1398   email:abreland@students.wisc.edu
Alfiee M. Breland, M.A. (Ph.D. candidate)   email:abreland@acpub.duke.edu

March 19, 1997

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am a researcher in the Department of Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison supervised by Hardin L.K. Coleman, Ph.D. I am also a pre-doctoral psychology intern at Duke University. I am interested in studying how African American adolescents interact with each other in academic and social settings. I am requesting your help as I would like your permission to solicit the participation of your child. Specifically, I would like to ask you to allow me to administer four short questionnaires to your child. They will take approximately 65 minutes to complete and will be administered by Mattie M. Breland, Alfiee M. Breland, or Detella McLeod-McCann.

The study has been reviewed and approved as safe for your child by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Counseling Psychology Department's Institutional Review Board. In addition, **(name of coordinator for research in the school system)** of the Department of Research Testing, and Statistics of Norfolk Public Schools has approved the study as safe. Finally, **(name of school principal)**, has also approved this study.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and there are no consequences for students who choose not to participate. In addition, you or your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

I would like to inform you and your child of any potential risks and benefits associated with being involved in the study. The potential risks to the children involved are emotional distress due to the familiarity of the subject matter. To alleviate this potential for distress, I will provide you and your child with a list of affordable, private, regionally accessible mental health professionals. The children involved in this study will be encouraged to seek the assistance of one of these individuals, or their school guidance counselor, to further discuss those topics covered in the short debriefing session that I or my research coordinator **(insert name)**, will conduct with the students subsequent to administering the tests.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and I will seek to maintain it by not identifying any child who takes the tests by name. In addition, no students will be identified by name in any research report

connected to this study. My goal is to have students complete the various questionnaires in April of 1997.

The information that your child will be providing as a participant in this project is extremely important to the field of Counseling Psychology, particularly as it relates to people of color. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (800) 991-8628 and leave a voice message so that I may return your call.

Sincerely,

Alfiee M. Breland

AMB:ab

University of Wisconsin-Madison
The School of Education
Department of Counseling Psychology

321 Education Building   Phone (608) 262-0461
1000 Bascom Mall   Fax (608) 265-3347
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1398   email:abreland@students.wisc.edu
Alfiee M. Breland, M.A. (Ph.D. candidate)   email:abreland@acpub.duke.edu

Consent for Participation in
the Breland Study (to occur in 1997)

I have read the attached description of the proposed study to be conducted by Alfiee M. Breland, a researcher with the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

By signing this form, I give my consent for my child to complete 4 questionnaires for use in this study.

In addition, I understand that I may request that my child withdraw from participation in this study at any time without consequence.

_____   _____   _____

Parent or Guardian Signature   Child's Full Name   Date
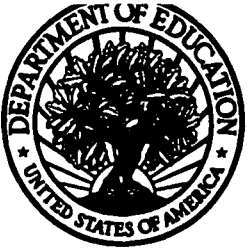
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Author(s): Alfiee M. Breland

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Signature: Alfiee M. Breland

Printed Name/Position/Title: Alfiee M. Breland, ASST. PROFESSOR

Organization/Address: 444 ERICKSON HALL E. LANSING, MI 48824

Telephone: 517 432-1524
FAX: 517 353-6393

E-Mail Address: brleond@msu.edu
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