2020

What Does it Mean to be White: Investigating White Culture, White Privilege and Allyship Through the Lens of Aspiring White Allies

Brett Kirkpatrick
University of Kentucky, brettk79@gmail.com
Author ORCID Identifier:
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1452-2638
Digital Object Identifier: https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2020.262

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statement(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to UKnowledge as Additional File.

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless an embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Brett Kirkpatrick, Student

Dr. Danelle Stevens-Watkins, Major Professor

Dr. Michael Toland, Director of Graduate Studies

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE: INVESTIGATING WHITE CULTURE, WHITE PRIVILEGE AND ALLYSHIP THROUGH THE LENS OF ASPIRING WHITE ALLIES

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By

Brett Kirkpatrick

Lexington, Kentucky

Co- Directors: Dr. Danelle Stevens-Watkins, Professor of Counseling Psychology

and Dr. Candice Hargons, Professor of Counseling Psychology

Lexington, Kentucky

2020

https://orcid.org/000-0003-1452-2638

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE: INVESTIGATING WHITE CULTURE, WHITE PRIVILEGE AND ALLYSHIP THROUGH THE LENS OF ASPIRING WHITE ALLIES

In 2017, prominent counseling psychologists stressed the need to make Whiteness and allyship a focus of future research. In particular, they noted that a comprehensive definition of what it means to be White was missing from the extant literature within counseling psychology. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), the present study recruited 10 White individuals, who self-identified as an ally, and asked them to describe how they experienced being White and an ally in their everyday lives. Findings revealed that White culture and White privilege have components that are visible and invisible to White individuals. The more visible component of White privilege was outgroup disadvantage, as only one participant recognized ingroup advantage. The visible portion of White culture entailed a belief in the ideology that hard work yields societal rewards. The invisible portion of White culture entailed a belief in White superiority and the corresponding belief in the inferiority of people of color. Results also revealed that lack of awareness of and fear of losing White privilege impeded the actions of aspiring allies. Whereas, letting people of color lead and educating other Whites were strategies used that attempted to minimize the use of White privilege in allyship. Findings from this dissertation may help counseling psychologists understand White culture and White privilege in greater depth, which should inform how graduate training programs train clinicians and aspiring allies. Findings may also help counseling psychologists develop a comprehensive definition of Whiteness, which has been absent from the extant empirical literature.

KEYWORDS: Whiteness, White Privilege, White Culture, Allyship, Qualitative Research, Counseling Psychology

Brett Kirkpatrick

(Name of Student)

05/12/2020

Date

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE: INVESTIGATING WHITE CULTURE, WHITE PRIVILEGE AND ALLYSHIP THROUGH THE LENS OF ASPIRING WHITE ALLIES

By
Brett Kirkpatrick

Danelle Stevens-Watkins, PhD
Co-Director of Dissertation

Candice Hargons, PhD
Co-Director of Dissertation

Michael Toland, PhD
Director of Graduate Studies

05/12/2020
Date

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following dissertation, while an individual work, benefited from the insights and direction of several people. First, my Dissertation Chairs, Danelle Stevens-Watkins and Candice Hargons, exemplify the high quality scholarship to which I aspire. Next, I wish to thank the complete John Wilson, and Christia Brown. Each individual provided insights that guided and challenged my thinking, substantially improving the finished product.

In addition to the technical and instrumental assistance above, I received equally important assistance from my research team, including Jardin Dogan, Paris Wheeler, and Dominqueca Lewis. Additionally, my wife, Emily Kirkpatrick, provided on-going support throughout the dissertation process. Lastly, my brother and my mother deserve a lot of credit for guiding me throughout my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

In 1915, Takao Ozawa filed for United States (U.S.) citizenship based on the claim that he was White. The rule of law at that time only allowed White individuals and persons of African descent to naturalize. Ozawa was born in Japan but had lived in the U.S. for 20 years. His request for citizenship was eventually denied, as the supreme court of the U.S. ruled that being White meant being classified within the Caucasian race and that Ozawa was a race other than Caucasian (Ichioka, 1977). One year after the court's ruling in *Ozawa vs. The United States*, a similar case emerged that also challenged the court to decide what it meant to be White. Bhagat Singh Thind emigrated to the U.S. from India and had served in the U.S. army during World War I. He accurately argued that he was Caucasian, which would make him eligible for citizenship based on the ruling in *Ozawa vs The United States* (Sacks, 1997). However, the supreme court of the U.S. denied Thind's citizenship and ruled that he was not White either (Sacks, 1997). The court ruled that despite Thind's status as Caucasian, the "average man" would know that he was not White (Sacks, 1997, p. 397). In over 100 years since *Ozawa vs The United States* and *The United States vs. Bhagat Singh Thind*, the question of who is White continues to be asked within the U.S. courts and the courts still do not have a clear and precise definition of it (Wright, Jr., 1997). The question and answer to who is actually White is profoundly significant in U.S. society, as it is associated with access to resources, wealth, and power (Roberts, 1997).

In order to investigate the question of what it means to be White, social scientists from disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, law, labor, and history have made Whiteness a topic of research and inquiry over the last three decades (Hughey, 2010).

Counseling psychologists have contributed by providing models of White racial identity development (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Sue & Sue, 2008), which have attempted to describe the trajectory of how White individuals develop awareness of racism and their racial identity (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Sue & Sue, 2008). In the more developed White identities, which are characterized by having assumed an antiracist worldview, it is hypothesized that Whites develop a critical consciousness of their race as well as a new worldview that is not grounded in White superiority (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Scott & Robinson, 2001; Spanierman & Soble, 2010; Sue and Sue, 1999). However, a clear and distinct definition of the critical consciousness of Whiteness is not provided by the five models. Whiteness may be difficult to ascertain as being White may be meant to remain invisible to Whites (Helms; 2017; McIntosh, 1997; Sue, 2011). It may also be difficult to ascertain due to paradoxical elements that exist between Whiteness and antiracism, as Whites reinforce Whiteness and its corresponding position of societal power when they utilize White privilege in attempts to combat racism and systems of oppression (Case, 2012; DiAngelo, 2016; Howard, 2004; Leonardo, 2009; Malott, Paone, Schaefle, Cates, & Haizlop, 2015). This dissertation investigated the phenomenon of being White by recruiting participants who identified as White and aspiring allies and asking them about their everyday experiences. Based on the trajectories outlined by models of White racial identity development (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Scott & Robinson, 2001; Sue and Sue, 1999), aspiring White allies are expected to have gained some awareness and understanding of their racial identity, which is why they were chosen for recruitment.

This chapter will attempt to help readers better understand the theoretical context of this study. First, a prologue is shared that describes the rationale for studying Whiteness. After the prologue, definitions of key terms such as racism, ally, anti-racist, socialization, and culture will be provided. After reviewing key terms, the two theories which undergird this study will be discussed. The first theory states that Whiteness is represented by both an ideology and by White people who inhabit White bodies (Leonardo, 2009). As an ideology, Whiteness is comprised of a belief in White supremacy, White culture, and White privilege. The second theory states that Whiteness is typically invisible to White individuals (DiAngelo, 2016; Helms, 2017; Sue, 2017) and that current practices of racism are also typically invisible to Whites (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1995; Trepagnier; 2006). Current racism suggests that White individuals who lack a clear understanding of their racial identity, including aspiring allies, may commit acts of racism despite being well-intentioned. After describing the underlying theories of this dissertation, the phenomenon of this study, which is being White and an ally, is identified and described. Finally, this chapter concludes by examining the importance of this research in the context of counseling psychology.

1.1 Prologue: The Rationale for Studying Whiteness

Several authors who have written about Whiteness point out that by focusing on Whiteness they are maintaining the cultural norm of White superiority, which positions Whiteness at the center of racial discourse (DiAngelo, 2016; Leonardo, 2007; Trepagnier, 2006). This paper has chosen to focus specifically on what it means to be White, which this author understands inadvertently reinforces Whiteness as a central concept.

However, it is the opinion of this author that focusing on Whiteness is worthy of review since it may help Whiteness gain greater visibility, which will allow more strategies to emerge on how to combat the systems of power and privilege that it entails.

Focusing on what it means to be White is meaningful for several reasons, one of which is not widely publicized. First, lack of a racial identity blinds Whites to the fact that race plays a critical part in their own lives (Dalton, 2005). More importantly, being unaware of their racial identity makes Whites unaware of their role in perpetuating racism. Lacking awareness of Whiteness, however, also hinders Whites from interacting with people of color. Not interacting with people of color limits the friend groups of White individuals and their opportunities for romantic partnerships (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016). However, lacking awareness of Whiteness also prevents Whites from understanding how they are really viewed by people of color. bell hooks (1995) disclosed that Blacks do not view Whites as positively as Whites may think. Rather, hooks (1995) stated that Whites "do not imagine that the way Whiteness makes its presence felt in Black life, most often as terrorizing imposition, a power that wounds, hurts, tortures, is a reality that disrupts the fantasy of Whiteness as representing goodness" (p. 37). The strength of hooks' words cannot be denied. Her words describe a type of racism perpetuated by Whites that is not commonly discussed. Based on her description, any White person can make a Black person feel terrorized solely due to their presence. Not having awareness of what Whiteness truly represents to people of color is unfortunate for both Whites and people of color. If more Whites understood what it means to be White, including the terrorization of people of color, they may be more motivated to transform their racial identity.

1.2 Definition of Key Terms

This section will focus on defining key terms, including certain forms racism, White privilege, and socialization and culture. The forms of racism that are discussed in this section are individual racism, institutional racism, overt racism, and covert racism. Other forms of racism, such as color-blind racism, silent racism, and aversive racism, are defined in a later section of this chapter, as they pertain to the underlying theory of this dissertation. Likewise, other terms that are central to this dissertation, such as Whiteness and White culture will be defined in forthcoming sections of this chapter as well.

1.2.1 Racism: From Individual and Overt to Institutional and Covert

In 2012, Neville, Spanierman, and Lewis provided a review of different forms of racism, as they noted that little consistency existed within the extant literature. They mapped their review of definitions of racism onto a historical timeline, which helped to display the evolution of how racism in the U.S. has changed and evolved over the years. In their article they provide definitions for individual racism, also referred to as overt racism, institutional racism, structural racism, systemic racism, color-blind racism, and aversive racism. Color-blind racism and aversive racism will be discussed in a later section of this chapter due to their particular relevance to this dissertation. In their review, Neville, Spanierman, and Lewis (2012) define overt/individual racism as individual acts of racism, which include hate crimes, the use of racial slurs, and any blatant discriminatory act. As racism has evolved over the years, overt racism has also evolved to include more subtle forms of racism, such as being followed in a store and other forms of racial profiling (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012).

Around the 1960s, the definition of racism began to evolve. It was no longer confined solely to individual racism but expanded to include the discrimination found within institutions and societal structures. The definition of institutional racism "refers to policies and practices within an institution that create inequitable opportunities on the basis of race" (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012, p. 334-5). Institutional racism is separate and distinct from structural racism and systemic racism. Structural racism refers to the system of social structures that are embedded into societal practices and therefore cut across institutions. They are embedded into the societal fabric of the U.S. due to the "historical legacy of White domination in the United States" (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012, p. 335). Systemic racism also viewed racist acts as being maintained in all of society's major components. It includes an ideology that justified the racist practices that are found within society that work against people of color and provide unjust economic and political gain to White individuals. In addition to provided different definitions of racism, Neville, Spanierman, and Lewis (2012) also provided a definition of White privilege. Their definition described White privilege as consisting of "greater access to resources, normative assumptions of self-worth, and escaping penalties such a being discriminated against on the basis of race (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012, p. 335).

1.2.2 The Ally Identity and The Antiracist Identity

The terms ally and anti-racist both refer generally to White individuals, or individuals of majority identities, who act against racism and other forms of oppression. As both ally and antiracist are terms that appear in the extant literature, and are reviewed

as part of this dissertation, their definitions will be discussed below. Trepagnier (2006), O'Brien (2001), and Bonilla-Silva (2014), have all used the term antiracist in their research. In a 2017 publication of *The Counseling Psychologist*, seven articles were written that used the term ally (Atkins, Fitzpatrick, Poolokasingham, Lebeau, & Spanierman, 2017; Cross & Reinhardt, 2017; Helms, 2017; Spanierman, Poteat, Whittaker, Schlosser, & Avalos, 2017; Smith, Kashubeck-West, Payton, & Adams, 2017; Sue, 2017). The definitions of antiracist and ally will be discussed in the sections below.

Definitions of an ally identity. Two prominent definitions for being an ally will be discussed below. The two definitions were created 22 years apart but demonstrate remarkable consistency. They both refer to the need to use privilege to fight systems of oppression and promote equity for oppressed persons. In the first definition, Ayvazian (1995) defines an ally as someone who fights against the form of oppression that privileges them:

> An ally is a member of a dominant group in our society who works to dismantle any form of oppression from which she or he receives the benefit. Allied behavior means taking personal responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and so often ignore or leave to others to deal with. Allied behavior is intentional, overt, consistent activity that challenges prevailing patterns of oppression, makes privileges that are so often invisible visible, and facilitates that empowerment of persons targeted by oppression (Ayvazian, 1995, p. 6).

Ayvazian's definition is characterized by a call to action and taking personal responsibility. It references the invisibility of societal privileges and the need to make them visible. The definition is not specific to racism in general, which allows it to address all forms of oppression, including Whiteness, which differs slightly from racism. The reference to patterns of oppression appears to be a reference to the covert nature of systemic and institutional racism. Lastly, Ayvazian's (1995) definition highlighted the importance of empowering oppressed people.

Spanierman and Smith (2017) clarify that their definition of being an ally is aspirational, as White individuals cannot divorce themselves completely from racism. Their definition overlaps with Ayvazian's (1995) definition and provides some additional criterion as well. They define allies as:

> Individuals who: a) demonstrate nuanced understanding of institutional racism and White privilege; b) enact a continual self-reflection of their own racism and positionality; c) express a sense of responsibility and commitment to using their racial privilege in ways that promote equity; d) engage in actions to disrupt racism and the status quo on micro and macro levels; e) participate in coalition building and work in solidarity with people of color; f) encounter resistance from other White individuals (Spanierman & Smith, 2017, p. 609)

Similar to the definition provided by Ayvazian (1995), allies are expected to assume personal responsibility for their privilege and need to act against oppression. Allies are expected to recognize their privilege and use it to promote equity. The promotion of equity for people of color is a subtle but powerful acknowledgment that

using privilege in a paternalistic way will not promote equity for people of color. Additional criterion that Spanierman and Smith's (2017) definition provided includes working against the status quo, building coalitions with people of color and expecting resistance from other Whites. They also suggest that allies engage in self-reflection to identify their own biases. Lastly, Spanierman and Smith (2017) specifically highlight the recognition of institutional racism as part of being an ally.

Definitions of the antiracist identity. In comparison to the definitions of allies that were provided in the previous section, the definitions of those who strive to be anti-racist appear more limited. O'Brien (2001) defined anti-racist individuals as "people who have committed themselves, in thought, action, and practice, to dismantling racism" (O'Brien, 2001, p. 4). Trepagnier (2006) provided a similar definition. She stated that anti-racism "refers to taking a committed stand against racism, a stand that translates into action that interrupts racism in all its form whether personal or institutional, blatant or routine, intended or unintended. Anti-racism is active by definition – the opposite of passivity, which colludes with racism" (Trepagnier, 2006, p. 104). The definitions of antiracist overlap with the definitions of allies as they both urge White individuals to act against racism. Trepagnier's (2006) definition of antiracist provides several definitions of racism that she expects the antiracist to understand in order to be able to act against them. However, the antiracist definitions do not provide as much detail as do the definitions of allies provided by Ayvazian (1995) and Spanierman and Smith (2017). Specifically, the ally definitions reference White privilege and the need to dismantle systems that oppress and privilege. Due to their more comprehensive definitions, and their focus on the involvement of privilege within allyship, this dissertation will use the term aspiring ally

to refer to White individuals who have gained awareness of their White privilege and a desire to act against all forms of oppression and racism.

Culture and socialization. DiAngelo (2016) defined culture as everyday characteristics of life that are shared by a group of people, who are bound together in time and place, and are experienced through a shared system of meaning. Certain characteristics of culture are visible, such as dress, food, and language, but the majority of meaning is not visible to those who share a culture (DiAngelo, 2016). Examples of characteristics of culture where meaning is not visible include patterns of non-verbal communication, gender roles, definitions of obscenity, norms of sexuality, concepts of the individual versus the collective, beauty, deviance, family, race, the body, and death (DiAngelo, 2016). Rarely do individuals reflect consciously on these characteristics, yet we know when someone is "crying too loud, acting strange, and not fitting in" (DiAngelo, 2016, p. 28).

Although culture feels commonplace, we are not born knowing the cultural rules and norms that govern our behavior (DiAngelo, 2016). Rather, we are socialized into understanding our culture. DiAngelo (2016) defined socialization as the process that trains an individual into learning their culture. The process of socialization occurs in our childhood and throughout our entire lives (DiAngelo, 2016). We are taught societal norms through a variety of different mediums and by a variety of different people (DiAngelo, 2016). Lastly, a majority of the process of how an individual is socialized into their culture includes non-verbal interactions and observations and interactions with others.

1.3 Whiteness: An Ideology and a Racial Identity

The underlying theory for this dissertation is based on the conceptualization of Whiteness provided by Leonardo (2009). In his conceptualization, Leonardo (2009) stated that Whiteness represents an ideology in addition to the White people who inhabit White bodies (Leonardo, 2009). The conceptualization of Whiteness as an ideology is not as overtly discussed within other definitions of Whiteness. In fact, many times Whiteness is not even defined by authors who are using it in their empirical and theoretical contributions (Atkins, et al., 2017; Spanierman, et al., 2017; Smith, et al., 2017). At other times, Whiteness is used only as a synonym for White privilege (Smith et al., 2017).

When Whiteness has been defined by academic scholars, the definitions have not been consistent (DiAngelo, 2016; Helms, 2017; Sue, 2006). Leonardo's (2009) conceptualization of Whiteness was selected as the underlying theory for this dissertation because it is broad enough to include an integration of different definitions of Whiteness and because it distinguishes between ideology and the White people who inhabit White bodies. The differentiation between White ideology and the White people who inhabit White people allows for Whiteness, oppression, and racism to be considered bad and appalling, while suggesting that White people may be redeemable (hooks, 1995). The underlying theory of this dissertation will attempt to define the ideology of Whiteness by integrating the definitions of Whiteness that were developed by DiAngelo (2016), Helms (2017), Sue (2006) and others. The integrated definition of Whiteness that will serve as one of this dissertation's underlying theories states that Whiteness is represented by

White supremacy, White privilege, and the socialization process that creates White culture.

1.3.1 White Supremacy

The term White supremacy, as used in this dissertation, does not solely refer to the popular understanding of it, which typically limits its affiliation to hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (DiAngelo, 2016). Rather, White Supremacy refers to a system that includes the political, economic, and social accumulation of power, currently and historically, which has privileged White people and oppressed people of color (hooks, 1995; Leonardo, 2009; Sue, 2006). In addition to representing a system of empowerment and oppression, White supremacy also entails an ideological assumption of White superiority and Black inferiority that is intended to legitimize and justify its accumulation of power and the subjugation of people of color (DiAngelo, 2016; Leonard, 2009; Sue, 2006). The ideological assumption works by assigning positive qualities and characteristics to White individuals and negative qualities and characteristics to persons of color (Sue and Sue, 2008). In addition to a system of domination, White supremacy also represents imperialism and colonialism (hooks, 1995). Imperialism and colonialism helped create systems of oppression, but also remain fixtures of contemporary Whiteness (hooks, 1995). hooks (1995) favors using terms such as colonialism and imperialism over other terms like Jim Crow and Uncle Tom, which she stated are more representative of personal racism (hooks, 1995).

A brief history of the origin of White supremacy. As an ideology, White supremacy began with a purpose. The purpose was to justify the enslavement of Africans

in the United States (U.S.) at a time when the newly established American republic proclaimed that all men were created equal and were entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (Campbell & Oaks, 1997; Roberts, 1997). To be clear, societal hierarchies had existed prior to the American revolution and continue to exist to this day, but none of them had utilized race as the basis for stratification until they were utilized by the United States (Campbell and Oaks, 1997). As a juxtaposition, the English who went into West Africa to enslave Africans described the Africans as "uncivilized" and "lacking religion" but never described them as being of a different race (Campbell and Oaks, 1997; DiAngelo, 2016). Inventing race and Whiteness in America did more than provide a justification for slavery, however, it started a process of subordinating Blacks and empowering Whites that continued after slavery was abolished and into the present day (Wright, Jr., 1997).

To help justify the enslavement of Africans, significant scientific endeavors were undertaken after American independence that attempted to prove that people of color were biologically different and intellectually inferior to White people (Hovenkamp, 1997; Jones, 1997). The efforts to establish a biological connection to race proved unfruitful. Despite the lack of a biological connection to race, the belief that slaves and people of color are inferior to White individuals was, and still is, commonly accepted (DiAngelo, 2016; Mahoney, 1997). For example, in *Notes on the State of Virginia,* Thomas Jefferson shared his belief that people of color were physically and mentally subordinate to White people (Jones, 1997). Jefferson's beliefs about people of color is culturally relevant, as it appears to contradict the current popular belief that he and other founding fathers were morally opposed to slavery (Jones, 1997). However, Jefferson, as well as others,

believed that race was biologically determined, and that people of color were inferior to Whites based on this biology.

After the abolition of slavery, another overt act of oppression came in the form of legalized segregation through the ruling in the case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (Ross, 1997). The ruling allowed Whites access to resources and correspondingly denied resources to people of color (Hayman Jr. & Levit, 1997). The access to resources that accompanied being White maintained privilege for Whites, which created a "property value" associated with being White (D'Angelo, 2016; Roberts, 1997). As a property value, the Plessy ruling allowed Whiteness to be upheld and protect by law (Patton & Bondi, 2015). The ruling was elevated beyond a mere racial classification, as it also allowed Whites to be "imbued with legal, political, economic, and social rights and privileges that are denied to others" (DiAngelo, 2016, p. 105). With the creation of White privilege and a property value associated with being White, laws were enacted that attempted to define and limit who was able to identify as White, which preserved resources and influence for Whites (Mahoney, 1997; Roberts, 1997; Van Tassel, 1997; Wright, Jr., 1997). An additional privilege, therefore, included the ability to decide who is White and who is not (Wildman & Davis, 1997). In general, the legal history of the U.S. has contributed to the genesis of White privilege, as it is suggested that White privilege is the "daily cognate of White supremacy" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 88) and cannot exist outside of White supremacy (Sue, 2011).

After the passing of the civil rights acts of the 1960's, White supremacy began to evolve (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). With the termination of legalized segregation, well-

documented discrimination in housing, education, and mortgage lending continued to maintain privilege and resources for Whites. (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016). The more covert racism that emerged after the Civil Rights movement depicted people of color as inferior, which was based less on the concept of biological differences and more on the concept of cultural differences. The continued discrimination helped maintain de jure segregation and the access to resources that it provided to White individuals (Bell, Higgins, & Suh, 1997; DiAngelo, 2016). De jure segregation has systematically denied people of color the opportunity to build equity and others forms of wealth, whereas it has empowered White people to retain wealth, resources, and power (Campbell & Oaks, 1997; DiAngelo, 2016; Ross, 1997). For example, as of 2015 the median net worth for White families equated to $265,000, whereas the median net worth for families of color equated to $28,500 (DiAngelo, 2016). The disparity in familial net worth is the greatest it has been in the last 25 years despite the enactment of federal laws that prohibit discrimination (DiAngelo, 2016). In order to explain the wealth disparities in a way that is not challenging to their identity, Whites need to deny that race and racism are the predominant reasons for the differences (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

White culture and socialization. Leonardo (2009) has argued that the critical analysis of Whiteness should focus more on the process by which domination and privilege are secured and less on the state of being privileged. He references skin color, facial features, and culture as defining characteristics of being White that are markers for receiving privilege through White supremacy. However, with much of the discourse regarding Whiteness focused on White privilege, the process that historically created it

and presently re-creates it is often overlooked. Helms (2017) included the process of socialization as a predominant characteristic of her definition of Whiteness.

Helms (2017) defined Whiteness as a socialization process that is both visible and invisible. She stated that it includes laws, practices, privileges, and power structures designed to favor individuals who are White. Socialization processes yield cultural norms and traditions (DiAngelo, 2016). Therefore, culture is a significant component of Whiteness. Helms is not the only theorist to incorporate culture into definitions of Whiteness and White supremacy. Sue and Sue (2008) shared their belief that through mass media, school, significant others, family, friends, and church, Whites learn what it means to be White. Additionally, through media and culture "a sense of superiority is instilled in the concept of Whiteness and the inferiority of all other groups and their heritage" (Sue & Sue, 2008, p. 278). Whites learn cultural values which define Whiteness as the norm and ingrain stereotypes that depict Whites positively and people of color negatively (DiAngelo, 2016; Sue and Sue, 2008). The negative stereotypes of people of color have helped justify overt acts of subjugation committed by Whites against people of color. For example, stereotypes of slaves depicted them as lazy, simple-minded, and incapable of caring for themselves due to mental and biological inferiority. The stereotypes worked to justify the enslavement of those who were depicted as incapable of caring for themselves (Frederickson, 1997). Current stereotypes also depict people of color as lazy and culturally deficient, which helps to justify and rationalize the current racial disparities in health care, education, employment, incarceration, and familial net worth (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016; Sue, 2004).

In her definition of Whiteness, Robin DiAngelo (2016) provided additional context about how White culture supports the belief in White superiority. By defining Whiteness as the norm and standard for society, Whiteness positions people of color as an inferior deviation from that norm. DiAngelo (2016) defined Whiteness below:

> We might think of Whiteness as all of the aspects of being White that go beyond mere skin color and which are related to the meaning and resultant material advantage of being White in society…Whiteness refers to the basic rights, resources, privileges, and experiences that are assumed to be shared by all, but in practice are actually only available to White people…Whiteness is not simply the idea that Whites are superior to people of color, but a deeper premise that supports this idea – the definition of Whites as the norm or standard for human, and people of color as a deviation from that norm. Whiteness remains invisible in all contexts except when we are specifically referring to people of color. (DiAngelo, 2016, p. 147-148).

DiAngelo (2016) suggests that in our society Whiteness represents the norm, which positions Black people as a deviation from that norm. As the societal norm, Whites have the privilege not to think about their race, and therefore do not see themselves as part of a distinct racial group (Flagg, 1997). Having the privilege not to identify racially allows Whites to view themselves as individuals. As individuals, Whites attribute their achievements and failures to their unique individual characteristics, such as intelligence, diligence, and perseverance (DiAngelo, 2016).

Other individual characteristics that Whites identify with are based on the Protestant characteristics that the U.S. was founded upon (Brookhiser, 1997). The six Protestant characteristics consist of conscience, industry, success, use, and civic-mindedness (Brookhiser, 1997). By positioning themselves as the society norm and as individuals that adhere to the Protestant characteristics, Whites also position people of color as the opposite of the Protestant characteristics (Jones, 1997). The opposite of the Protestant characteristics appears to fit common stereotypes of Black people. The opposite of use and conscience could be lazy and immoral (Jones, 1997). The opposite of anti-sensuality could be hypersexual, whereas the opposite of success could be low-income, which are common stereotypes of Black people.

In conclusion, many authors have used the term Whiteness in their empirical and theoretical works without providing a definition for it (Atkins, et al., 2017; Spanierman, 2017; Spanierman, Poteat, Whittaker, Schlosser, & Avalos, 2017; Smith et al. 2017). When it is defined by scholarly authors, the definitions are inconsistent and tend to vary (DiAngelo, 2016, Helms, 2017). At times, authors appear to focus on only one component of Whiteness, such as White privilege, without recognizing the other components (Smith et al., 2017). Likewise, many authors have also recently referred to the socialization process of Whiteness, but none have explicated it (Helms, 2017; Spanierman & Smith, 2017; Smith et al., 2017). Without a clear definition of Whiteness, it is difficult to understand it and ultimately examine it. This dissertation chose to use Leonardo's (2009) conceptualization of Whiteness because as an ideology it allowed for the inclusion of White supremacy and White culture. White culture and White supremacy are not typically named in the extant research literature. In fact, Leonardo

(2009) opines that many authors erroneously miss focusing on White supremacy, as they tend to focus on White privilege (Leonardo, 2009, p. 88). Likewise, Leonardo's (2009) conceptualization also allowed for the inclusion of Helms' (2017) definition of Whiteness, which included a socialization process. The result of that socialization process appears to yield White culture. By including the processes and mechanisms of Whiteness in its underlying theory, this dissertation will attempt to study them as well as their outcomes. This study hopes that by providing a clear and comprehensive definition of Whiteness as part of its theory, it will also be able to investigate it in greater depth.

1.4 The Invisibility of Whiteness

Dalton (2005) said it best: "most White people, in my experience, tend not to think of themselves in racial terms" (p. 15). Instead, many Whites prefer to see themselves as unique individuals, who are exempt from the trappings of racial identification (Dalton, 2005; DiAngelo, 2016; Dyer, 2005; Sue, 2004). Additionally, some Whites prefer to identify based on their ethnicity, such that a person who was born in the U.S. may not choose to identify as White but as Irish, Italian, or British, despite having little connection to these countries and their values and customs (Helms, 1984; Sue & Sue, 2008). Whites who eventually recognize their White identity assign little personal meaning to it, and typically understand it only as a method for indicating they are not a person of color (Dalton, 2005; DiAngelo, 2016; Sue and Sue; 2008). Other Whites, including those who are more knowledgeable about racial issues, have demonstrated defensiveness, irritation, and even anger after being asked about their

Whiteness (hooks, 1995; Sue and Sue, 2008). Instead of recognizing Whiteness, Whites typically view each other based on their class standing (DiAngelo, 2016; Flagg, 1997).

In addition to lacking awareness of their racial identity, White individuals also lack awareness of the different ideological components of Whiteness, as they are typically unaware of their belief in White supremacy (Leonard, 2009), their adherence to White cultural values (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016), and their race-based privilege (McIntosh; 1997). Invisibility, or lack of awareness, is a critical component to Whiteness, as denying race and racism provides Whites the freedom to avoid having to think about their race-based privilege and their own adherence to White supremacy (DiAngelo, 2016). Invisibility also allows White individuals to deny the history of oppression that has occurred within the U.S. and its current manifestations today (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

1.4.1 Invisibility and New Racism

Both Helms (2017) and Sue (2011) have called for the need to make Whiteness visible. Their call to make Whiteness visible is not only an indication that Whiteness remains invisible, but of the importance of its invisibility. Making Whiteness visible is important, as new forms of racism are predicated on a lack of awareness of race and racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). By recruiting White participants who aspire to be allies, this dissertation seeks to understand what aspects of Whiteness participants have gained visibility of and which aspects remain invisible. For instance, if a participant has gained visibility of White privilege, have they also gained visibility of White culture and White supremacy? Having a comprehensive definition of Whiteness as part of the underlying

theory of this dissertation will allow researchers to further understand what aspects of Whiteness participants have succeeded in gaining visibility.

1.4.2 Definitions of New Racism

Three forms of new racism, color-blind racism, silent racism, and aversive racism, share a common characteristic in that they operate without the awareness of White individuals. New racism represents an adaptation of old school racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014), as it endeavors to maintain the racial disparities that were created by the system of White supremacy without appearing explicitly racist (DiAngelo, 2016). The historical system that was established at the time of the American revolution continues to benefit White individuals in the present day, which Whites desperately want to maintain (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). However, after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the overt racism characterized by racial slurs and a belief in the biological inferiority of people of color became less socially acceptable (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Therefore, new racism emerged as a form of racism that seeks to maintain the status quo by appearing subtle and not as explicitly racial (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). New racism is found in institutions as well as policies and societal norms (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016). In many ways, the new racism that has emerged is as invisible to Whites as are their racial identities. However, with the power that is ascribed to Whites through White supremacy, Whites are capable of acting oppressively if they do not recognize their power and the system that empowers them. The three forms of new racism that will be discussed in this section are color-blind racism, silent racism, and aversive racism.

The definition of color-blind racism. DiAngelo (2016) stated that being White in America means denying the historical context of race and racism. White people typically state that they "do not see race" and that they strive to judge a person by the quality of their character and not the color of their skin; in essence they are blind to color (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Bonilla-Silva (2014) has labelled the denial of racism, as well as the minimization of race in the current U.S. society, as color-blind racism. The purpose of color-blind racism is to maintain the status quo, or in other words, the current system of White supremacy. Bonilla-Silva (2014) stated that most Whites view racism as prejudice, whereas most Blacks view racism as systemic, or institutional. Not understanding the differences between prejudice and systemic racism allows Whites to feel as though discrimination is not significantly affecting the lives of Black people, even when Whites are presented with data detailing society's racial inequalities (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Color-blind racism, therefore, is not represented solely by Whites who feel prejudice or bigotry towards Blacks, but rather by all Whites who benefit from their race-based privilege.

Bonilla-Silva (2014) contended that color-blind racism is instilled through White American cultural values. As such, the manifestations of color-blind racism are found in how Whites absorb and interpret information, as well as in the language they use and stories they tell. Bonilla-Silva's research (2014) identified four frames of color-blind racism, which serve as the lens through which Whites interpret information. The four frames of color-blind racism are abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and the minimization of racism.

Abstract liberalism is based on the belief that America is egalitarian and meritocratic and therefore everyone should be treated the same. Abstract liberalism is ideologically opposed to affirmative action and does not acknowledge institutional racism as a factor that created an uneven playing field in the U.S. Naturalization is a form of reasoning that explains the persistence of segregation as a product of personal preference. Naturalization suggests it is natural for blacks and Whites to live in different neighborhoods because it is their preference to do so. Cultural racism is the rhetoric and language which replaced old school racism. As old school racism became culturally unacceptable, cultural racism delivers the same messages but in a more covert fashion. An example of cultural racism states, "Blacks have too many babies" (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 76). Lastly, the minimization of racism refers to the frame of mind that discrimination no longer affects Blacks or people of color. An example is a statement such as "it's better now than in the past" (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 76).

The definition of silent racism. Trepagnier (2006) expanded on Bonilla-Silva's (2014) conceptualization of color-blind racism and theorized a new type of racism, which she named silent racism. Silent racism is a form of color-blind racism practiced by well-intentioned Whites, who have a cognitive understanding of society's race-based inequalities. She defined silent racism as the "unspoken negative thoughts, emotions, and assumptions about Black Americans that dwell in the minds of White Americans, including well-meaning Whites that care about racial equality" (p. 15). The participants in this study, who are aspiring allies, fit the definition of well-meaning Whites.

Trepagnier (2006) stated that she supports the views held by Bonilla-Silva (2014), which declare that all Whites are somewhat racist due to their defense, or acquiescence, to the racial status quo and White privilege. However, she extended the theory of how Whites view racism. Trepagnier (2006) suggested that most Whites conceive of racism as two oppositional categories, one being "racist" and the other being "not-racist" (p. 5). The not-racist category is problematic as it only recognizes blatant forms of racism, such as the use of racial slurs and acts of prejudice. Therefore, many Whites assign themselves to the not-racist category, if they do not deem themselves prejudiced. She contended that a better conceptualization would place racism on a continuum. The continuum would range from "more racist" on one end, to "less racist" on the other end. Shifting the structure of racism from oppositional categories to a continuum will force Whites to ask themselves, "how am I racist?" instead of "am I racist?" (Trepagnier, 2006). Silent racism has one other distinguishing factor from color-blind racism. Silent racism is performed passively and unintentionally, whereas color-blind racism is a deliberate defense of White privilege, although Bonilla-Silva (2014) stated that intentionality of the racist actor is not consequential.

The definition of aversive racism. Aversive racism depicts a form of racism that is less conscious and therefore more subtle than overt racism. Gaertner and Dovidio (200) defined aversive racism as characterized by "the racial attitudes of many Whites who endorse egalitarian values, who regard themselves as nonprejudiced, but who discriminate in subtle, rationalizable ways" (p. 315). Aversive racists possess negative biases and feelings that are typically unconscious to them. Being unaware of their biases

and negative feelings allows more subtle forms of racism and discrimination to manifest in the actions of the person who may unknowingly practice aversive racism.

1.5 Defining a Phenomenon: Being White and an Ally

As Whiteness studies strive to figure out what to do with Whiteness, the stated goal of many theorists is for White individuals to develop a positive, confident, empathic, healthy, antiracist White identity (Helms, 1984; Leonardo, 2009). However, some scholars wonder if a positive and antiracist White identity and a positive and antiracist ideology of Whiteness have the potential to exist (Frankenberg, 1997; Leonard, 2009; Roediger, 1999). It is theorized that the ideology of Whiteness cannot attain a positive status due to its historical embodiment of nothing but White privilege and empowerment for White people and oppression for people of color (Leonardo, 2009). Likewise, most of White culture appears defined by capitalism and racism, which also makes defining a positive White culture elusive (Frankenberg, 1997). Therefore, figuring out how to redefine Whiteness as anything other than oppressive seems particularly difficult, if that is all it has ever represented (Leonardo, 2009).

White privilege also provides an impediment to the pursuit of a positive White identity. White allies risk losing their privilege and societal status if they attempt to challenge racism and Whiteness (Leonard, 2009). As many White individuals are invested in their privilege, and do not want to risk losing it, they may be less inclined to act in a way that would challenge it (Leonard, 2009). For the White individuals who are motivated to challenge racism and oppression, they typically invoke their privilege, which is an action that simultaneously reinforces the ideology of Whiteness and its

corresponding position of societal power (Case, 2012; DiAngelo, 2016; Howard, 2004; Leonardo, 2006; Malott, Paone, Schaefle, Cates, & Haizlop, 2015). As an example, antiracist White abolitionists who used their privilege to help eradicate slavery simultaneously invoked their privilege to "edge out Black abolitionists in discursive and institutional positions of leadership" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 95). Additionally, White individuals who want to fight racism are not able to monitor all aspects of their privilege all of the time, and therefore run the risk of inadvertently and unconsciously invoking their privilege when acting as an ally (Leonardo, 2009). White privilege, therefore, serves as a vexing construct that has the power to curtail an ally's supportive actions in the fight against racism.

To be White and an ally, therefore, is a phenomenon in that it is almost an antithetical existence. As Sue (2017) noted, it takes a lot for a White person to garner awareness of their Whiteness and want to become an ally. As they gain awareness and understanding, aspiring White allies need to move toward action in a way that does not reinforce their privilege and thereby reinforce the White supremacy that created and maintained that privilege. It is the phenomenon of being White and an ally that this dissertation seeks to investigate in the hope of deconstructing Whiteness in an effort to more clearly understand it and its underlying mechanisms of action. Additionally, this dissertation aims to focus on White privilege in particular and the awareness that aspiring White allies have of their race-based privilege when acting as an ally.

1.6 Whiteness and Counseling Psychology

In 2017, *The Counseling Psychologist* published a Major Contribution that examined Whiteness and allies. Three articles were written by White authors who examined being White and an ally in the context of research, teaching, and clinical work (Atkins et al., 2017; Spanierman et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2017). In turn, four counseling psychologists, who are persons of color, offered their reactions (the reactants) to the three articles written by the White authors (Cross & Reinhardt, 2017; Helms, 2017; Sue, 2017). The reactants also offered recommendations for future research. This section will focus on the critique and responses provided by the reactants. The three articles written by the White authors will be analyzed in the second chapter of this dissertation, which reviews extant literature pertaining to Whiteness and allyship.

Helms (2017) observed that the White authors' articles did not provide a theoretical conceptualization of the origins of Whiteness and its socialization process. Counseling psychology's lack of attention to Whiteness and the ideology of White supremacy is highlighted by the fact that a consistent and agreed upon definition of Whiteness is not provided by articles which were meant to examine it (Helms, 2017). Helms (2017) suggested that future research should "move beyond discovering Whiteness" and focus on deconstructing it in order to make the invisible visible (Helms, 2017, p. 724). This dissertation has heeded the call of Helms (2017), as one of its main goals is to deconstruct Whiteness and illuminate its different components.

Helms (2017) advocated for using her theory of White racial identity development (Helms, 1984) as a theoretical framework for deconstructing Whiteness. Although this

dissertation recognizes the importance of Helms' (1984) theory, it utilized a combination of theories developed primarily by Leonardo (2009) and DiAngelo (2016) as the underlying theories of this dissertation. The combination of theories allowed this dissertation to utilize a more comprehensive view of Whiteness, which included an understanding of the historical origins of Whiteness as discussed in the book *Critical White Studies* (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). The combination of theories of Whiteness also allowed this dissertation to borrow from other fields within the social sciences, such as history, law, philosophy, and sociology. Incorporating theory and research from other fields has been identified as another goal of future counseling psychology research into Whiteness (Spanierman & Smith, 2017). It is important to recognize and include the work of other social science fields, as they have made Whiteness more of a focus for investigation than has counseling psychology.

D.W. Sue (2017)'s response to the White authors' articles within the Major Contribution focused primarily on how we prepare allies to fight for social justice. Sue (2017) began his response by revealing his endorsement of the definition of being an ally that Spanierman and Smith (2017) devised. In particular, Sue (2017) emphasized the White ally's requirement to gain awareness of Whiteness and White privilege. However, he stipulates that allyship is not solely about gaining awareness of Whiteness and White privilege but about overcoming barriers and moving toward action as an ally. This dissertation attempts to examine the factors that allow aspiring White allies to move toward action and overcome any barriers that might prevent them from doing so. Similarly, this dissertation follows Sue's (2017) guidance to examine the role of Whiteness and White privilege as factors that influence the ability of allies to move to

action. Lastly, Sue (2017) recommends that more training is needed within graduate programs to help allies understand how to move toward action. Specifically, training programs need to help allies navigate the risks to their privilege that they will encounter and the lack of support they will receive from friends and family (Sue, 2017).

Similar to points made by Helms (2017) and Sue (2017), Cross and Reinhardt (2017) wondered if counseling psychology programs are reinforcing color-blind ideology. He also wondered if culture was only an adjunct concept that was taught as an "add on" and not explicated throughout coursework (Cross & Reinhardt, 2017, p. 700). Cross and Reinhardt (2017) advocated for the inclusion of culture into multicultural training to help White students understand the connection between their individual personality traits, and attachment styles, with their cultural beliefs. He stated that an emphasis on culture within training programs may help White students avoid becoming overwhelmed with the realization that they are privileged, and others are oppressed. This dissertation seeks to understand how culture is understood by White allies, per the suggestion of Cross and Reinhardt.

This dissertation hopes to advance the current research in the examination of Whiteness by heeding the recommendations of Helms (2017), Sue (2017), and Cross and Reinhardt (2017) by attempting to deconstruct Whiteness by investigating how aspiring White allies understand their Whiteness, White privilege, White culture, as well as their allyship. It is the hope of this dissertation that its results will inform for how counseling psychologists train clinicians, researchers, and teachers, with an emphasis on counseling psychology's core values (Packard, 2009).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The extant empirical literature has focused on individual components of Whiteness, including White privilege, color-blind racism, and allyship. Additionally, the extant literature has focused on describing how White individuals progress through their racial identity development by moving from an identity characterized by a lack of awareness of their race to an identity with a deep understanding of what it means to be White. In general, a common theme in Whiteness studies has been examining what is visible to White individuals when it comes to their recognition of racism, being White, and having White privilege. For White individuals who gain awareness of White privilege and their racial identity, they may aspire to be an ally for racism and social justice. As an aspiring ally, they must navigate the societal power and privilege that has been bestowed on them by the historical and systemic construction of U.S. society that was outlined in the first chapter of this dissertation. This chapter explores the extant literature that has theorized and investigated different components of Whiteness, with an emphasis on how the two underlying theories of this dissertation, White supremacy and invisibility, impact being White. To conclude this chapter, research questions for this dissertation will be provided.

2.1 White Racial Identity Development Models

Models of how White individuals gain awareness and visibility of what it means to be White have been developed by counseling psychologists over the past 30 years. The models outline the evolution of how Whites understand their racial identity and are typically comprised of stages, also called statuses and phases. Helms' model (1984)

separated the first three stages of White racial identity development from the latter three. She characterized the first three stages of White racial identity development as entailing a lack of awareness of race, racism, and White privilege (Helms, 1984). The latter three stages represent a shift to a White identity characterized by a recognition of White privilege, institutional racism, and an aspiration for an antiracist identity (Helms, 1984). White individuals also gain a critical consciousness of race and a desire to work against race-based entitlements within the latter three stages (Hardiman, 1982; Spanierman & Soble, 2010). Although there are several models of White racial identity development, this paper will focus on those formulated by Helms (1984), Hardiman (1982), Scott and Robinson (2001), Rowe, Bennet, and Atkinson (1994), and Sue and Sue (2008). For purposes of this paper, they will be referred to as the five models going forward. The two groupings of stages will be discussed below.

2.1.1 The First Three Stages: Gaining Awareness of Race and Abandoning Racism

Four of the five models all describe a preliminary stage characterized by a lack of awareness of being White (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Scott & Robinson, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2008). Without an awareness of race and racial identity, Whites remain oblivious and impartial to race and desire to maintain the status quo (Rowe, Bennet, & Atkinson, 1994; Scott & Robinson, 2001). The status quo serves to benefit Whites, as it maintains White privilege (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016). In this stage, Whites also believe that American society is a meritocracy, and everyone is capable of achievement if they work hard (Hardiman, 1982, Sue & Sue, 2008). As Whites progress through life, however, they experience events called critical incidents that challenge the belief system

they have acquired through society and the dominant culture. Critical incidents prove negative stereotypes of people of color to be erroneous. For instance, a White person who has presumed that Black people are uneducated may experience dissonance after being treated by a doctor who is Black.

Dissonance-inducing events are endorsed by the five models as a critical factor for generating awareness of being White (Spanierman & Soble, 2010). Dissonance also makes Whites aware of racist beliefs, biases, and prejudices they may have developed throughout their lives. Therefore, it also creates strong emotional reactions for Whites. Hardiman (1982) and Scott and Robinson (2001) suggested that Whites may feel guilt and anger after realizing they have participated unwillingly in a racist system. Helms (1984) suggested that Whites may experience feelings of depression and guilt after realizing they conform to the "White racial norm" and have potentially "denied the humanity of Blacks" (p. 156). Sue and Sue (2008) also theorized that Whites experience guilt and anger, as well as shame, after realizing the discrepancies in their belief system. The ability of Whites to manager their emotional reactions to critical incidents may dictate the future course of their racial identity. The five models state that most Whites will not successfully resolve their cognitive and emotional reactions to critical incidents, which may halt their racial identity development. If their racial identity development is stunted, Whites typically retreat to a position of comfort that usually involves identifying with White culture and avoiding issues of race (Helms, 1984). Whites who successfully manage their emotional reactions typically continue to progress in their racial identity development.

The five models do not universally agree on how Whites develop awareness of White privilege or institutional racism. Scott and Robinson (2001) hypothesized that dissonance-inducing events also challenge the pre-existing belief system about White privilege, which may help make White privilege visible. They provided an example of a White employee listening to a Black employee recount a story of workplace discrimination. Similarly, Rowe and colleagues (1994) also suggest that dissonance plays a part in making White privilege visible. As their model focuses mostly on the cognitive aspects of racial identity development, they believe that dissonance-inducing events are critical to forcing growth throughout all phases of White racial identity development. If cognitive dissonance was all that was required to make privilege visible, though, it stands to reason that more people would see their privilege if they gain exposure to persons of color.

White privilege may be made visible by factors other than dissonance-inducing critical incidents. Helms (1984) stated that Whites utilize an intellectualized approach after they have resolved their dissonance. An intellectualized approach may signify ways to make privilege visible through education, selected readings, or having friends of color explain it (Helms, 1984; Sue and Sue, 2008). Sue and Sue (2008) stated that, "struggling with racial identity and issues of race requires a historical perspective" (p. 277). It would seem rare or atypical for a dissonance-inducing event to generate the historical perspective of racism, as history is usually transferred though education. Without a historical perspective, Whites struggle to connect individual critical incidents to a larger system of oppression. Although the five models do not all view dissonance-inducing events as the catalyst for generating awareness of White privilege and institutional

racism, the five models all concur that generating awareness of White privilege and institutional racism is critical to transforming White racial identity from racist to antiracist (Spanierman & Soble, 2010).

2.1.2 The Latter Three Stages: Moving Toward an Antiracist Identity

In latter stages of White racial identity development, it is hypothesized that Whites develop a critical consciousness of their race, as well as a new worldview that is not grounded in White superiority (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Scott & Robinson, 2001; Spanierman & Soble, 2010; Sue and Sue, 1999). Many White racial identity models describe the latter stages of development as characterized by a focus inward (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984, Scott & Robinsons, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2008). In these more advanced stages of White racial identity development Whites are no longer focused on helping and changing Black people, as they are now more focused on changing themselves (Sue & Sue, 2008). They have gained acceptance of their cognitive and emotional responses to the realization that their White privilege and internal biases have contributed to the oppression of others, and they look to build coalitions with people of color to help guide their antiracist actions (Spanierman & Soble, 2010).

In models developed by Helms (1984) and Hardiman (1982), White individuals in latter stages develop a positive and healthy White racial identity. However, a clear and distinct definition of a healthy and positive White racial identity is not explicated by the five models. Likewise, the descriptions of the more evolved stages of White racial identity do not provide clear and distinct definitions of their newly developed worldview either. In general, the more evolved stages of the five models provide descriptions of

Whites in distinct stages, but not the detail and process of racial identity transformation associated with these stages. For example, the fourth stage of Hardiman's (1982) model is titled "re-definition" (p. 195). In the re-definition stage, White people "begin to re-focus or re-direct their energy to define Whiteness in a way that is not dependent on racism or on the existence of perceived deficiencies in other groups" (p. 195). Hardiman's (1982) description of the re-definition stage only suggests that Whites develop a new definition of Whiteness, but it does not suggest what a new definition of Whiteness would entail. The five models do not provide guidance on how antiracist Whites take action within this new identity, they only suggest that Whites work against institutional racism. Some theorists have questioned whether it is possible to re-define Whiteness in a positive way due to its oppressive history and nature (Leonard, 2009; Roediger, 1999).

Malott and colleagues (2015) conducted a phenomenological study that investigated Whites who identified as antiracist in order to determine the characteristics of an antiracist White identity. In particular, the investigators wanted to know if Whites who identified as antiracists could identify and list any positive attributes of being White. Their results indicated that White participants identified Whiteness as being representative of oppression and inclusive of White supremacist ideology. However, participants also described a reconstruction of their White identities into a "redeemed" or "new Whiteness" that included practicing antiracism while also maintaining an oppressive identity (Malott et al., 2015, p. 338). However, the White participants in their study also realized that their actions as both White and an antiracist reinforced the hegemonic nature of Whiteness. The White participants described struggling with

making decisions about acting in a way that supported their antiracist beliefs. One participant stated that she struggled to find a racially integrated neighborhood and understood that she risked sparking the negative aspects of gentrification when she moved into a non-White neighborhood. This real-world example may suggest that a positive and healthy White identity does not exist as long as the power imbalances caused by White supremacist ideology exist as well. Other theorists have stated that Whiteness cannot be reconstructed due to its oppressive nature and therefore must be destroyed altogether (Leonardo, 2009; Ignatiev, 1997; Roediger, 1999).

This dissertation can build on the findings of Malott and colleagues (2015) by assuming a more critical approach to defining Whiteness by utilizing a constructivist and interpretivist research paradigm. The constructivist and interpretivist research paradigm will allow the researchers to understand whether a positive and healthy White identity exists despite whether or not participants state that it exists. Additionally, this dissertation can build on the findings of Malott et al. (2015) by examining how aspiring allies understand their use of White privilege in their antiracist actions and beliefs. Lastly, this dissertation can investigate how the cultural norms of the U.S., which were identified by participants in the Malott et al. (2015) study, and the models of White racial identity development impact being White and White supremacy.

2.2 White Privilege: How Invisible Is It?

In her seminal article describing White privilege, McIntosh (1997) not only provided a list of tangible items that make up White privilege but also provided a theory about White privilege. McIntosh (1997) suggested that White privilege is meant to

remain invisible to White individuals and that Whites are taught not to see their privilege. Other scholars have agreed with McIntosh (1997) and suggest that White privilege is not visible to Whites (Johnson, 2005; Wildman & Davis, 2005). They suggest that Whites may not see their privilege if they are comparing their status to other Whites who may have more privilege (Johnson, 2005; Wildman & Davis, 2005). As noted in the previous section, models of White racial identity development also adhere to the belief that White privilege is invisible to Whites at first. Empirical support has been provided to the theoretical descriptions of White privilege through quantitative and qualitative research (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012). In particular, findings have suggested that increased awareness of White privilege is associated with increased awareness of racial discrimination (Pinterits, Poteat, & Spanierman, 2009).

Leonardo (2009), however, does not agree with McIntosh's notion that White privilege is invisible. He takes exception with McIntosh's passivity and opines that she distances herself from taking responsibility for her White privilege by stating that she was taught to remain oblivious to it. Rather, Leonardo hypothesized that White individuals may be more aware of their privilege than McIntosh (1997) believed, as he stated that "White racist teachings, life lessons, and values are depicted as actions done or passed on to a White subject, almost unbeknownst to him, rather than something in which he invests" (p. 82). Leonardo (2009) argued that when Whites invest in their White privilege, it provides an indication that they have greater awareness of it than previously theorized. It would make sense that Whites are invested in maintaining privilege, because Whites stand to lose assets and resources if they act against their privilege (Feagin & Vera, 2005; Leonardo, 2009). The common belief that White individuals are

taught not to see their privilege, or that they generally lack awareness of it, is important to ally development as it may allow Whites to decrease the amount of personal responsibility they assume for their privilege (Leonardo, 2009).

Jensen (2005) provided an example of how White individuals distance themselves from their personal responsibility for White privilege. In Jensen's (2005) example, a White student came to see him to discuss affirmative action, which the student opposed due to his belief that it prevented a level playing field for everyone. In the story, Jensen asked the student if either of them had benefited from being White in America, which the student answered by confirming that being White had benefited them. Jensen followed up by asking how benefiting from being White affected the student's view of a level playing field. The student responded, "it really doesn't matter" (Jensen, 2005, p. 115). The story relayed by Jensen (2005) displayed the student's varying degrees of awareness of White privilege. The student understood that being White had benefited him, although the term White privilege was not explicitly used. However, the student distanced himself from his White privilege by stating being White did not matter, which also depicted the student as having assumed zero personal responsibility for it. The student's retreat from his personal responsibility for his White privilege also depicted decreased visibility, or potentially invisibility, of his privilege.

The distinction between visibility and invisibility of White privilege may be explained by a study conducted by Powell, Branscombe, and Schmitt (2005). Results from their study revealed that how White individuals framed White privilege effected their prejudicial attitudes and emotional responses. Whites who framed their privilege as

associated with avoiding the disadvantages of being in the outgroup (e.g. outgroup disadvantage; i.e. persons of color) experienced less guilt and supported prejudicial attitudes. Whereas, White individuals who viewed their privilege as associated with their ingroup advantage (i.e. being White) felt more guilt and personal association with White privilege. Ingroup advantage can be understood as the social capital that is part of being White, which entails trading and sharing White privilege with other Whites. In a separate study, Todd and Abrams (2011) discovered that White individuals who viewed White privilege as solely associated with outgroup disadvantage had a lower awareness of their White privilege. Whereas, Whites who viewed their White privilege as entailing ingroup advantage were believed to have greater awareness of their White privilege. Results from the studies conducted by Powell, Branscombe, and Schmitt (2005) and Todd and Abrams (2011) provide context on the visibility of White privilege by bifurcating it into two conceptualizations of privilege, ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage.

As noted by models of White racial identity development, making White privilege visible to White individuals is key to transforming their identities from those characterized by racism to antiracism. However, the different types of White privilege, ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage, are never discussed in the models. It may be that certain critical incidents reveal ingroup advantage and others reveal outgroup disadvantage. It also may be that a White individual may gain visibility of one type of privilege and never gain visibility of the other type, whilst believing that they have gained complete awareness of their White privilege. Having only a partial understanding of White privilege may impact how White individuals progress in their racial identity development and how to understand the use and non-use of their privilege within acts of

allyship. This dissertation will attempt to add to the extant literature by investigating the extent to which White individuals have visibility of their privilege and how that visibility impacts their actions as allies.

2.3 Color-blind Racism and The White Habitus

The manifestation of how color-blind racism is practiced on a daily basis was revealed in the research conducted by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2014). Bonilla-Silva's (2014) research also led to the discovery of the White habitus, which is essentially the incubator where color-blind racism is grown, nurtured, and protected. The research conducted by Lisa Spanierman between 2010 and 2016 and by Barbara Trepagnier (2006) built on Bonilla-Silva's (2014) work by providing evidence that corroborates Bonilla-Silva's (2014) findings and that further explored color-blind racism and the White habitus.

2.3.1 Enacting Color-blind Racism

The frames of color-blind racism reveal themselves in the rhetoric and language that Whites use when discussing race. Bonilla-Silva (2014) contended that after the civil-rights movement of the 1960s it became unpopular to use racial language. Therefore, Whites developed strategies which are "slippery" and "subtle" in their attempt to navigate the topic of race (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 101). Examples of linguistic styles used by Whites include phrases such as "I'm not racist, but…", "I'm a little opposed to affirmative action", "some of my best friends are Black", and "I'm not racist, they are" (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 105). Bonilla-Silva (2016) also displayed evidence that Whites

may resort to stammering when they are overwhelmed talking about race. Whites use testimonials that are designed to provide evidence that supports their color-blind views (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). An example of a popular testimonial is a statement that racism is in the past and that current Whites are not responsible for slavery.

Bonilla-Silva (2014) observed through his research that Whites use the frames, style, stories, and testimonials of color-blind racism with specific purposes. The frames of color-blind racism are pliable, which allows them to be used in coordination with each other to counter apparent contradictions in color-blind racist ideology, such as the existence of stark racial inequalities in healthcare, housing, and net worth with the perception that our country is egalitarian. Linguistic style and rhetoric are used to cover up any possible mistakes that are made by Whites in their defense of the contradictions found in color-blind racism. Bonilla-Silva (2014) opines that actions to cover contradictions and mistakes are performed unconsciously, and therefore trying to understand the intent of color-blind individuals is irrelevant.

As Bonilla-Silva (2014) revealed, denying the existence of racism is a fundamental concept of color-blind racism. Two qualitative studies investigated the existence and manifestation of color-blind racism on college campuses. Results indicated that when asked if a racialized college mascot should be removed from a college campus, over a third of White students denied that the mascot appeared racist (Clark, Spanierman, Reed, Soble, & Cabana, 2011; Neville, Yeung, Todd, Spanierman, & Reed, 2011). The qualitative nature of the two studies allowed Whites to generate their own responses,

which provided unsolicited evidence that Whites actively deny racism. The studies provided support for the findings highlighted by Bonilla-Silva's research (2014).

2.3.2 The White Habitus

The underlying process that generates color-blindness in Whites is what Bonilla-Silva (2014) labeled the White habitus. The White habitus is "a racialized, uninterrupted socialization process that conditions and creates Whites' racial taste, perceptions, feelings, and emotions and their view on racial matters" (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 152). Being a socialization process, as Bonilla-Silva (2014) defined it, the White habitus may play an important role in forming White culture. The White habitus is produced by residential racial segregation, which created a sense of group solidarity amongst Whites and includes the fostering of negative views of non-Whites (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Bonilla-Silva (2014) cited survey research which revealed that Whites endorsed a desire to make Black friends and an openness to date interracially, but when Whites attended desegregated high schools and diverse colleges their interracial friendships and dating did not increase significantly. The survey results that Bonilla-Silva (2014) cited suggest that the White habitus is a process and status which is firmly ingrained in Whites and is strong enough to resist desegregation and interaction with people of color.

The White habitus and color-blind racism. Entering a college campus allows Whites who come from segregated areas to interact with diverse individuals, which has the potential to challenge color-blind racism learned in the White habitus. Empirical results indicated that challenging the White habitus through diversity courses, diversity experiences, and making Black friends at college can lower color-blind racial ideology

over the course of four years of college (Lewis, Neville, & Spanierman, 2012; Neville, Poteat, Lewis, & Spanierman, 2014; Todd, Spanierman, & Aber, 2010; Todd, Spanierman, & Poteat, 2011). In another study, a brief video intervention, which documented the history of White privilege and institutional racism in the U.S., also lowered color-blind racism amongst White college students (Clark et al., 2011). Their results identified several factors which challenge color-blind racism. However, the specific details of how coursework, video intervention, and the development of interracial friendships works to decrease color-blind racism were not investigated. Likewise, it remains unclear if challenges to the White habitus remain after students leave college campuses and return to more segregated environments.

The White habitus and silent racism. In her study, Trepagnier (2006) recruited well-meaning Whites using a flyer which read "Women Against Racism" and found that many of her participants made statements that revealed both stereotypical images and paternalistic assumptions. Likewise, other qualitative research also found that well-meaning Whites students, who had taken multicultural courses and performed service-learning work, endorsed negative stereotypes and paternalistic assumptions despite their desire to perform social justice work (Houshmand et al., 2014). Trepagnier's (2006) research revealed that stereotypical images and paternalistic assumptions were evidence of silent racism. Stereotypical images are not stereotypes created by individuals but the images and stereotypes that are shared by society as a whole (Trepagnier, 2006). Therefore, when stereotypical images emerged in her qualitative research, they revealed the socialization of a person and not their individual prejudices. Examples of paternalistic assumptions emerged within interracial friendships as statements or actions

that suggest Blacks are inferior to Whites and therefore need protection (Trepagnier, 2006).

Well-meaning Whites produce institutional racism through what Trepagnier (2006) calls racist practice. Racist practice means action that is taken without thought (Trepagnier, 2006). According to results from Trepagnier's (2006) study, for well-meaning Whites, their constant immersion in the White habitus embeds stereotypes and other negative images of Black people in their minds. The constant of the White habitus requires a tremendous amount of mental energy to interrupt these embedded stereotypes. Therefore, even well-intentioned Whites are likely to articulate negative stereotypes and paternalistic assumptions, as they operate within their daily lives. At times, Trepagnier (2006) found that well-meaning Whites were both aware, and unaware, of their adherence to their use of stereotypes. Trepagnier (2006) opined that well-meaning Whites remain passive when observing racist practice and everyday racism in the White habitus. Even though much of the White habitus is devoid of people of color, Whites do not challenge the color-blind, silent, and everyday racism which they observe. The passivity of well-meaning Whites allows racism to continue, but it also emboldens the person who is exhibiting racism and racist practice to continue their racist practice.

Trepagnier (2006) hypothesized that combating the negative stereotypes that are generated and maintained by the White habitus is not best accomplished through suppressing them or trying to monitor them vigilantly. She stated the best way to challenge racist practice is to alter the White habitus. Since the White habitus is not solely reflective of residential housing and segregation, Trepagnier (2006) meant that

altering the White habitus involved altering the thinking that is produced by the White habitus. In order to alter the thinking produced by the White habitus, Trepagnier (2006) argued that Whites should focus on increasing their race awareness. Race awareness requires knowledge of the U.S.'s history of racism, including the culture which supported slavery and segregation (Trepagnier, 2006). Race awareness also requires knowledge of Whites' contemporary societal advantage, White privilege, as well as insight concerning one's own silent racism. Based on the data attained from the focus groups in her study, Trepagnier (2006) hesitantly stated that well-meaning Whites, who are high in race awareness, are less likely to perform racist practice and are more likely to interrupt the racist practice of others. Therefore, increasing race awareness, which muffles the ingrained ideology of the White habitus, may have the power to transform racist practice and redirect it to antiracist practice. Like Bonilla-Silva (2014), Trepagnier (2006) suggested that non-allies perpetuate a form of racism that is mostly done without consciousness and is the product of socialization that occurs within the White habitus.

2.4 Allyship

In their article that introduced the *Counseling Psychologist's* 2017 major contribution on Whiteness, Spanierman and Smith (2017) outlined the potential pitfalls that await aspiring White allies. One of the primary pitfalls described by Spanierman and Smith (2017) is the potential for aspiring White allies to act paternalistically; as they referenced the potential for allies to fall victim to the paternalistic assumptions delineated by Trepagnier (2006). More specifically, they call our attention to the fact that allies who act paternalistically risk causing harm, maintaining the status quo, and recreating the

superiority and privilege that is indicative of White supremacy. The risk of causing harm and invoking White privilege is a significant risk that may derail potential allies from moving to action. As much of the extant literature has examined the factors and critical incidents that have helped Whites aspire to allyship (Malott et al., 2015; O'Brien, 2001), this literature review will examine how, and if, aspiring White allies are considering their use of privilege within their aspirations for allyship.

2.4.1 The Intersection of White Privilege of Allyship

Within the intersection of White privilege and allyship, the extant literature appears to describe three different phases of understanding that aspiring White allies have of their White privilege. The first phase connotes simply a need to gain understanding and awareness of White privilege. The second phase connotes a more developed understanding that White privilege may be used to intercept other Whites, but it fails to mention how invoking privilege reinforces White supremacy. The third phase recognizes the use of White privilege and describes how it can be used in a way that helps to mitigate the reinforcement of White supremacy.

The first phase: awareness of White privilege. As part of the 2017 Major Contribution to the *Counseling Psychologist*, Atkins and colleagues (2017) conducted qualitative research that sought to investigate the multicultural awareness of White clinicians. All of the participants were nominated by others for this study based on their perceived multicultural competence. Participants revealed that they had to gain awareness of their privilege, and the power imbalances it may produce with clients of minority identities. Participants also recognized that having a marginalized identity of

their own provided a genesis for seeing power imbalances that also led them to see their race-based privilege. Other than sharing the need to gain awareness and acceptance of their privilege, their research did not discuss how clinicians worked to temper their White privilege in session or working with supervisors who may not have as much awareness of racial privilege.

Munin and Speight (2010) recognized that ally development is complex because allies "seek justice for groups oppressed by the very privilege that allies enjoy" (p. 249). In their study, they investigated the ally development of students at a religiously affiliated university. Two questions that they asked participants included "How, if at all, do you struggle in being an ally today?" and "What personal qualities have assisted your development as an ally?" (Munin & Speight, 2010, p. 251). Other questions included asking when participants first recognized their privilege and how they understood changes in their privilege over the years. Themes they uncovered included participants recognizing their faith and family as having influenced the initiation of their allyship. Participants only referred to their privilege as having been revealed in situations where they were no longer surrounded by a majority of White people. The participants of this study, as well as the researchers, failed to recognize how participants incorporated White privilege into their allyship despite having cognitive awareness of White privilege. Additionally, the participants and authors discussed the influence that faith, religion, and God had with prompting their ally development by instilling values and morals of equality and justice in them (Munin & Speight, 2010). However, neither authors nor participants recognized the color-blind nature of church doctrine and the racial segregation that occurs in most Church congregations.

The studies conducted by Munin & Speight (2010) and Atkins and colleagues (2017) both demonstrate an intellectual understanding of the need to make White privilege visible to White allies. However, they appear to lack awareness of how White privilege reinforces systems of oppression when it is used paternalistically. Simply acknowledging the existence of White privilege is not enough when it comes to aspiring to be a White ally.

The second phase: using White privilege to intercept other Whites. Smith and colleagues (2017) reflected on their experiences as White professors who had taught courses that covered issues pertaining to race, racism, and White privilege. They identified the power they had as White individuals, and how they could use that power to model allyship to other aspiring White allies. However, their study rarely departed from the intellectual recognition of their privileged statuses to describe the practical, daily experience of their privilege. Participants never provided real life examples from their vast experience. For instance, they recognized that as a White professor they may fail to recognize their White privilege in the moment and can model discussing their failure openly in class after the fact. However, they never provided the actual example of what the failure entailed, how they processed it with the class, and the outcome of the processing. Indeed, the lack of real-world examples of how their privilege manifested within their roles feels surreptitious, which may be the product of the fact that their power as teachers, as well as their power as White teachers, may make their privilege even less visible to them.

The one real-world example one participant provided entailed spending significant mental energy worrying about a group of White students who were disengaged with the course material and denied the existence of racism (Smith et al., 2017). The teacher felt guilty about the amount of mental energy she spent worrying about the White students and wondered if it detracted from the energy she provided to the rest of the class. The teacher was unsure of what to do as an ally, due to the sometimes-antithetical phenomenon of being White and an ally. If the teacher were to focus on the White students, she would be privileging them as she would be making them a greater priority than all of the other students, including students of color. However, if she were to disregard them and focus on all of the other students in class who were engaging thoughtfully with the material, she would be allowing racism to go undeterred. It is this antithetical phenomenon that White allies need to figure out and navigate and that this dissertation attempted to investigate. It is also worth noting that the study conducted by Smith, Kashubeck-West, Payton, and Adams (2017) may have explored their own privileges and blind spots in greater depth if they somehow incorporated researchers of color into their methodology. Researchers of color are able to help White researchers identify blind spots and biases that Whites are mostly unable to uncover on their own.

In another article that was part of the Major Contribution, Spanierman, Poteat, Whitaker, Schlosser, and Avalos (2017) examined the experiences of White allies who were multicultural researchers. Critical incidents were described that helped the participants learn about their race and White privilege. In general, a definition of Whiteness was not provided, as it appeared to be used solely to mean White privilege. The authors advocated for using their White privilege to reach out to other Whites and

help other Whites learn about their racial privilege. Participants advocated for using their White privilege to call out instances of racial injustice that they witnessed and to lobby for the inclusion of a multicultural viewpoint when one was absent. Other studies have also suggested that aspiring White allies use their privilege to help other White individuals learn about racism (Case, 2012; Smith & Reddington; 2010). In a 2012 study, Case also discovered that White allies were cognizant of their use of White privilege to forward their antiracist agenda. However, the participants in Case's (2012) study did not appear to understand that their use of White privilege to advance their antiracist efforts also reinforced the hegemonic nature of Whiteness. This is a critical finding because it seems that results generated by Malott et al. (2015) and Case (2012) suggest that Whites are agreeable to fighting racism with their White privilege without awareness that the greater system of power is reinforced when they choose this strategy.

The third phase: White privilege and its reinforcement of White supremacy. Two studies attempted to provide a more in depth and nuanced understanding of how Whites may approach taking action as an aspiring ally (Patton & Bondi, 2015; Smith and Redington, 2010). Explicitly and implicitly, the role of White privilege within allyship was described by participants in a study conducted by Smith and Redington (2010). Participants described a balance between taking personal responsibility to learn about racism and being receptive and accountable to the leadership of people of color while taking antiracist action. The implicit message shared by participants in this study is that they did not invoke their White privilege to usurp the power of people of color, but rather mitigated it by being accountable and subordinate to people of color. Other implicit descriptions of the role of White privilege within aspiring to be an ally included risking

White privilege, as one participant acknowledged his fear of standing out, saying something unpopular, and losing his "position" (Smith and Redington, 2010, p. 546). Although the word privilege is not explicitly stated, fearing of losing one's position is a fear of losing some form of privilege. Likewise, the connection to a feeling of moral fulfillment that participants in their study described does not explicitly name the fulfillment as a form of White privilege, but the ability to feel righteous in doing ally work is a benefit that Whites receive for being an ally. In general, the rewards and risks of aspiring to allyship are all related to privilege. White individuals also described feeling challenged to find the time to do ally work, which implicitly invokes the privilege to be able to delay ally work. Lastly, the authors opined that figuring out how to navigate the risks and rewards of attempting to act as an ally may "immobilize" Whites from taking action (Smith & Redington, 2010, p. 547).

Participants also described the White ally's responsibility to engage other White individuals to teach them about racism (Smith & Redington, 2010). They described seeking out opportunities to engage other Whites and not letting other Whites off of the hook but being persistent in trying to communicate their antiracist message. They shared that White allies need to be respectful of the different levels of awareness of the Whites they approach and act with a sense of urgency. Although the word privilege is not explicitly stated, aspiring White allies within this study are using their privilege as Whites to educate other White individuals (Smith & Redington, 2010).

Participants of another study, conducted in 2015 by Patton and Bondi, also revealed their perceptions of the risk in performing ally work. Ironically, the participants

in this study noted that they had not experienced any actual negative consequences in their work as aspiring allies and therefore experienced minimal risk in real life. One participant noted that he probably needed to speak out more, as he was not receiving any negative feedback and was not creating any tension. The realization that their fear of losing privilege never materialized may suggest a significant imbalance between the amount of privilege a White person believes they have and how much they are actually risking as an ally. Due to White privilege's status as invisible, a White person may have significantly more privilege than they realize; or said in reverse they may feel they have less privilege than they really do and therefore fear losing it more significantly and thereby risk it more cautiously. The authors note that although participants mentioned their race-based privilege, they failed to disclose their own involvement in oppressive behaviors, which may connote a degree of invisibility that participants had of their White privilege. Only one participant explicitly connected the intersection of his privilege and his work as an ally, as he stated that assuming the moniker of an ally only reinforced his privilege, which pushed him further from being an ally (Patton & Bondi, 2015). Paradoxically, participants reflected that they received rewards in the form of recognition and appreciation for their work as allies.

2.5 Research Questions and Aims

The research questions and aims developed within Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology focus on participant's "experiences and/or understanding of a particular phenomenon" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 46). The phenomenon under investigation for this dissertation is being White and

identifying as an aspiring ally. IPA research questions need to be exploratory in general, as they are focused on participant's understanding of their experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The primary research question for this dissertation is how do White individuals who are aspiring to be allies understand what it means to be White in their day-to-day lived experience? Additional questions include:

- How do participants understand what their White privilege looks like on an everyday basis?
- How do participants understand what White culture looks like on an everyday basis?
- How do participants understand what it means to be White and an ally in their daily lived experience?
- How do participants understand the intersection of their White privilege and their identity as an aspiring ally?

CHAPTER 3. METHODS

Constructivist-interpretivist was the paradigm utilized as the methodological foundation for this dissertation. The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm assumes that meaning is typically hidden and therefore needs to be brought to the surface through reflection (Ponterotto, 2005), which makes it an ideal paradigm for studying Whiteness since most White individuals are unaware of their racial identity and any meaning associated with it (Helms, 2017; McIntosh, 1993; Sue, 2004). Another important tenet of the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm is the belief that the researcher is a co-creator of findings along with the research participant (Ponterotto, 2005). Indeed, the interaction between researcher and participant is highlighted as a potential catalyst to help the participant self-reflect and find deeper meaning about the research topic (Ponterotto, 2005). As such, the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm adopts the discipline that the researcher's lived experiences "cannot be divorced from the research process" (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 131). Being that the principal investigator of this dissertation identifies as White and is attempting to study what it means to be White, recognizing the joint co-creation of meaning and data is appropriate for this research.

The two forms of research methods that were used in this dissertation, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT), complemented the underlying constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm. IPA, CGT, and the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm all believe that the researcher aids in helping participants achieve greater understanding of the topic of study (Charmaz, 2014; Ponterotto, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). All three actively attempt to

understand how the phenomenon of interest is embedded in larger networks, cultures, systems, structures, and relationships (Charmaz, 2014; Ponterotto, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). As race is a social construct and racism is systemic in nature, the use of IPA and CGT methods was appropriate and advantageous to help understand how participants' experience of being White fit in the context of larger cultures and systems. Lastly, both IPA and the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm are inductive, idiographic, and hermeneutic (Ponterotto, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). The three prominent constructs of IPA, including experience, hermeneutics, and idiography, will be discussed in the next section. As IPA was the primary research method used in this study, whereas CGT methods were used solely in the coding process, its appropriateness for this dissertation will be described in greater detail in the following section.

3.1 Appropriateness of IPA

Phenomenological research methods, which are based on the writings of the philosopher Edmund Husserl, strive to describe a phenomenon as it is experienced in daily living (Wertz, 2005). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) emerged in the mid 1990s as an approach that grew out of phenomenological qualitative research methods, but with a more dedicated psychological focus (Eatough & Smith, 2017). As such, IPA shares phenomenology's focus on understanding the phenomenon as it is experienced in daily living but diverges from phenomenology as IPA views the researcher as an active interpreter of data. Additionally, while traditional phenomenological research is neither inductive nor deductive in its attempt to provide an unbiased description of the phenomenon (Wertz, 2005), IPA is inductive, iterative, and

hermeneutic (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). It has also recently been used by notable counseling psychologists Derald Wing Sue and Lisa Spanierman in qualitative research studies published in 2007 and 2011 (Beer, Greene, Spanierman & Todd, 2011; Constantine & Sue, 2007). To further describe the appropriateness of using IPA to answer this study's research questions, the following paragraphs provide detail about the three main constructs of IPA, which are experience, hermeneutics, and idiography.

3.1.1 Experience

IPA focuses on understanding how participants experience the phenomena in question in their everyday lives and day-to-day experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). IPA assumes that most of the time we are unaware of our experiences because we are immersed in them (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). As we become aware of what is happening on a day-to-day basis, it becomes an experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Therefore, IPA describes its focus on a phenomenological experience as, "when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 1). For the participants in this study, being White becomes an experience when they gain awareness of their Whiteness in different settings and circumstances. Similarly, being White and an ally becomes a phenomenological experience as White individuals gain awareness of their allyship and the intersection of being White and wanting to be an ally.

The meaning that the person makes of their experience is the primary focus of IPA, rather than the structure of the experience itself. In order to understand the meaning a person makes of their experience requires understanding that experiences are "socially

and historically contingent and contextually bound" (Eatough & Smith, 2017 p. 194). Lastly, the experience and the person are living in a world influenced by history, language, culture, and an infinite number of other factors (Eatough & Smith, 2017). It is the recognition of these factors, in addition to the socio-historical perspective of IPA that also make it an ideal fit for studying being White, as Whiteness and race are socially invented constructs (DiAngelo, 2016).

3.1.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is a method of interpretation (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). IPA attempts to achieve a double hermeneutic, as the participant makes meaning of their experience and the researcher is making meaning of what the participant is sharing. The double hermeneutic works in another way as well. The researcher is actively trying to empathize with the participant by trying to understand the participant's lived experience as best as possible, while also questioning and interpreting the participant's experience.

The overarching method of hermeneutics in IPA is interpretative and iterative. It is iterative in the sense that the researcher is constantly returning to the data to interpret it. The purpose of returning to the data is to interpret it again after the uncovering of hidden biases or preconceptions. According to Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012), "one will not necessarily be aware of all of one's preconceptions in advance…so reflective practices are required" (p. 35). Indeed, the IPA researcher understands that biases, preoccupations, and assumptions are inevitable (Eatough & Smith, 2017). After identifying biases or preconceptions, this researcher reflected on how his biases shaped the research questions for this dissertation, wrote memos about any insights he may have

gained, and reflected on his biases before returning to the data to interpret it again. The iterative and interpretative aspects of IPA's hermeneutics are ideal for studying being White, Whiteness, and allyship, as participants are likely to be at different levels of their racial identity development (Helms, 1984). Likewise, self-reflection is a key component for White individuals to uncover their hidden biases and work towards gaining greater awareness of their racial identity and identity as an anti-racist (Feagin & Vera, 2005; hooks, 1995; Kivel, 2005; Leonardo, 2009; Trepagnier, 2006).

Lastly, IPA ascribes to the hermeneutic circle. The hermeneutic circle posits that to understand the part one must examine the whole, and to understand the whole one must examine the parts (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). The hermeneutic circle is an important theoretical underpinning for studying what it means to be White and Whiteness, as they are made up of subparts including White privilege, skin color, and White culture (DiAngelo, 2016; McIntosh, 1997). The hermeneutic approach of IPA will allow this study to examine how the different components of being White, Whiteness, and being antiracist overlap and are distinct from each other.

3.1.3 Idiography

Idiography is concerned with what is concrete and what is particular (Eatough & Smith, 2017; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). In this sense, IPA focused on the particulars of the person, the context, the process, and the relationship that is part of the phenomenon of interest. IPA is also concerned with the particulars of the researcher's depth of analysis and attention to detail within their examination of the data. As Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) describe, "the analytic process here begins with the detailed

examination of each case, but then cautiously moves to an examination of similarities and differences across cases, producing fine grained accounts of patterns of meaning for participants reflecting upon a shared experience (p. 38). It is the attention to detail, focus on the particular factors of the phenomenon, and the depth of analysis that IPA researchers believe will allow it to make a scientific contribution to psychology (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012).

3.2 Positionality of the Researchers

Both the research paradigm and the methodology of this study understand that the perspective of the researcher is included in the data analytic process (Ponterotto, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). As such, reflective practices are required to identify, manage, and uncover the researcher's own beliefs, biases, and preconceived notions. Reflective practices must continue throughout data analysis as the researcher will gain new perspectives and subconscious beliefs will be made conscious as the researcher interacts with participants and analyzes the data (Eatough & Smith, 2017). As a researcher who identifies as White and wants to study Whiteness, the principal investigator reflected on his own processes of racial identity development to develop a critical understanding of how his experience will be similar to, and different from, the participants of this study. Reflecting on his own processes of learning about being White is especially important as this author is still learning about his own Whiteness. I believe my understanding of being White and Whiteness can be divided into four distinct categories: 1) early childhood exposure to race; 2) gaining awareness of systemic racism; 3) understanding allyship; and 4) gaining awareness of Whiteness. The four distinct

categories that made up the process for my understanding of what it means to be White may also represent the process that other White individuals go through in their learning about what it means to be White.

3.2.1 Early Childhood Exposure to Race

Growing up in Brooklyn, NY provided me with exposure to people of many different races and cultural identities. In my elementary school there were as many, if not more, children of color than White children. Many children also held various religious and ethnic identities. The exposure helped provide me with evidence that countered the negative stereotypes that depicted people of color in society and the media. The exposure also made me confront my own biases that may have come from the internalization of those stereotypes. As an example, at age 12 I was walking through a large park in Brooklyn to go to baseball practice. As I came to an intersection, I noticed a Black male approaching the intersection from a perpendicular direction. He was much taller than me and was dressed in purple camouflage fatigues and had a backpack that appeared empty. As we approached the intersection, I slowed down to keep what I deemed to be a safe distance in case he was a hardman. I was cautious of him for no other reason than what I could see. As it turned out, this young man was headed to the same baseball practice as me. Coming from a tougher neighborhood in Brooklyn, he wore his sweat pants for practice under his fatigues and carried his glove in the backpack. We became friends, and I learned how he was essentially the opposite of how I originally judged him based on my own internal prejudice and bias. He was smart, thoughtful, and empathic.

The start to our friendship taught me that not only were society's stereotypes inaccurate and dangerous, but that I held internal biases that were also wrong and hurtful. In fact, I came away recognizing that I had the potential to hold my inaccurate thoughts and beliefs and that I needed to make sure I was not wrong about how I judged people again. In order to do so, I recognized that I needed to figure out what was going on inside of me that I was unaware of that would allow me to be so wrong. A few years later when I was a freshman in high school, a White man named William Coffin came to speak at my school. He had marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. during the civil rights movement and told the audience that everyone holds biases and that we need to confront them in order to manage them. His words meant so much to me because it validated my own thoughts that we should not be afraid of our biases. Rather, we need to search for them and find them in order to regain control of them.

In addition to gaining awareness of my biases and society's inaccurate stereotypes of people of color, growing up in Brooklyn also allowed me to gain awareness of my own racial identity. When I was in the 6th grade, at a middle school where most of the students were of color, I was called a White "bitch" by a Black female student who was in the 7th grade. She also "mushed" (or "snuffed") me, which entailed putting her hand on my head and nudging it, a common practice in the school and throughout Brooklyn at the time. Mushes were not acts of physical aggression, as the physical component of the mush was not overly forceful. They were not meant to cause physical pain or even discomfort, rather they served as an act of disrespect. I had never met or encountered this student before, as the 6th and 7th grades were located on different floors of the building. My feeling and belief at the time was that our interaction was about race, in particular the

fact that I was White. Not only did this interaction force my Whiteness to emerge, but it also suggested that being White was something to be rebuked, which also ran counter to society's stereotypes that being White is associated with being good. I came away from that interaction thinking that there is something real and serious about being White that has been hurtful to her.

After the incident in middle school, however, I did not spend a significant amount of time thinking about being White. I believe my thought process at the time included, "she has experienced racism, which is real, and I can try to empathize to the best of my ability with her about that, but I'm not racist so what more can I do other than continue to work on my own internal biases." My thoughts were based on the common definition of racism that most Whites use (Bonilla-Silva, 2014), which is that racism pertains to individual and overt acts of prejudice, bias, and discrimination. Therefore, I did not view myself as racist. Systemic racism was a concept that I had never heard about in school, the media, or at home. When I learned about the systemic nature of racism and oppression, my worldview changed. It allowed me to see that in fact I was a racist, as a member of a racist society that provided me privilege and subjugated non-Whites.

3.2.2 Gaining Awareness of Systemic Racism

How I defined racism began to change for me at age 25. I wanted to pursue graduate school and was torn between psychology and social work. To gain a better understanding of social work, I enrolled as a non-matriculated student in a master's in social work course entitled *Ethnocultural Issues in Social Work*. In one of our final classes of the semester, we watched the movie *The Color of Fear* and my understanding

of racism and the meritocracy shifted. For the first time I heard the unadulterated experiences of people of color and how they viewed their place in U.S. society. I recognized that my friends of color may have felt this same way, but it was not something we had discussed. I wondered what that meant for the depth and quality of our friendships. I wondered if I thought we were closer friends than we actually were.

Despite the shift in how I viewed racism, there was still much I did not understand about racism and Whiteness. I waited another eight years before deciding to pursue graduate school in psychology. When I entered graduate school, my desire was to study suicide and pursue a career working with suicidal clients. My focus was not on antiracism. I am not sure why the social work course did not make me fully commit to focus on antiracism. It may be that I was steeped in Whiteness to such an extent that it would take a while to fully see it.

Eight years later, during my first year as a matriculated master's student, I took another course entitled *Diversity Issues in Psychology*. This was my first introduction to Helms' (1984) model of White racial identity development and McIntosh's (1997) "invisible knapsack". Even though I agreed with everything McIntosh (1997) wrote, I was irked by the term White privilege. Unearned privilege ran counter to the ideals I learned throughout my life. At first, I thought there must be a better word to describe the current and historical racial advantages, but after looking in the dictionary I could not find one and my irritation subsided. I became impassioned to study White privilege and White racial identity development, as I believed Helms' (1984) model completely and accurately outlined my own White racial identity development and that of the White people I knew. We watched *The Color of Fear* again and I gained a deeper

understanding of my own reactions to the movie. I was left wanting to know what the next steps were to try and correct the errs of the racist identity that is entangled with being White. I felt that as a White, cisgender, heterosexual, Catholic, male my voice within White racial identity research could be helpful and was needed.

3.2.3 Trying to Understand Allyship

My desire to be an ally really became important to me when I moved to Baltimore, MD at age 33. Prior to moving, my view of allyship was maybe correcting a friend who used the "N" word by voicing my disapproval. When I moved to Baltimore, I was shaken to see the extent of crime and poverty that existed in the city. Brooklyn had a reputation for being a tough city when I was growing up, but it did not compare to Baltimore. In Baltimore, through my graduate assistantship, I bore witness to people living in third world-like conditions, who struggled to have enough food to eat, who were addicted to drugs, robbed for their welfare checks, slept in vacant buildings or on friend's couches, were arrested for crimes college students commit with impunity, and were the victims of crimes the police were not there to prevent or solve, to name a just few. Although I worked with both Black and White individuals, I learned that many of the issues I listed above impacted Black individuals disproportionately. Prior to moving to Baltimore, I thought I knew what it meant to be poor, but upon seeing poverty in Baltimore through my work on a mobile crisis team, I realized my perspective was limited. As it expanded, I learned what being poor really looked like and I learned what being poor and Black really looked like. I learned that the system I thought was designed to allow anyone to succeed had failed, and that it oppressed too many people. In

juxtaposition, I gained greater understanding of what White privilege looked like, and that basic necessities like food and physical safety were actual privileges that should not be taken for granted.

Also, when I moved to Baltimore to start my master's I attained an assistantship at community outreach not-for-profit. My boss asked me to investigate a neighborhood defined as a food desert. Looking back with the benefit of hindsight, I realized that when I started working in the food desert I wanted to be a White savior. I did not see it that way at the time, as I was blinded by my desire to help and the uplifting feeling I would get as a "do gooder." I was eager to use my White privilege, my maleness, and my ability to communicate with other White males to help the residents of the neighborhood. By the end of my time in the neighborhood I realized that I was more of a problem and that the problems were historical, deep rooted, and systemic. In order to help, I learned that being a savior would do more harm than good. Instead, I needed to help try to clear barriers enacted by White people and Whiteness.

My experience in the food desert also provoked a desire to learn about qualitative research. Although my research was survey based, I found myself learning so much about myself and the neighborhood residents in the brief moments we had as they completed the survey. I noticed many wanted to share their story and something personal, in addition to completing the survey. I found myself learning and wanting to know more about their stories. The power of hearing about their unique lives allowed me to have visceral cognitive and emotional reactions to their experience. When I embarked on doctoral studies, I joined the RISE^2 Research Team (Relationships, Intimacy, and Sexual Enrichment | Race, Intersectionality, and Social justice Engagement) to learn how

to conduct qualitative research. The RISE^2 team employed qualitative methodology and techniques, including narrative inquiry and constructivist grounded theory. My time with RISE^2 exposed me to the requirements of rigor and trustworthiness in qualitative research, as well as the power of its ability to change the perspective of the researcher, participant, and those who consume the research.

Currently, I still struggle with my allyship. I recently moved back to Baltimore and struggled with deciding where to live. I feared the gentrification that I would represent, and the potential for displacing people from their longtime homes, if I moved into a low-income and racially-diverse neighborhood. I also feared moving into a mostly White neighborhood, as that would only support the de facto segregation that persists to this day. In general, being an ally for daily events does not feel like enough and being an ally to combat systemic issues seems difficult to figure out. Therefore, most days you feel as though you are a pretty crummy ally, if you feel as though you could even call yourself an ally at all.

3.2.4 Awareness of Whiteness

My awareness of Whiteness as an ideology, distinct from a racial identity, was nonexistent prior to one year before proposing this dissertation. When my committee proposed the concept of studying Whiteness, I thought we were off topic as I wanted to discuss race as a potential research topic. I was unable to see how race fit with Whiteness, and I initially thought Whiteness was too abstract. I did not readily understand its practical application to antiracism work. Terms like White culture were also difficult for me to define tangibly. I almost removed the term from my interview

protocol because I felt as though it was insignificant. However, at this juncture in my doctoral training I understood that my committee knew much more than me, on several different levels, and I should trust their expertise as professional researchers with doctoral training and as thoughtful persons of color who experience Whiteness on a daily basis. I am grateful for their guidance on a personal and professional level, as I would have never known to look for Whiteness as a topic to study on my own.

My original hypothesis was that research participants would not have answers for the research questions. I thought participants might be able to provide examples of how they experience White privilege in their daily lives, but that they would lack concrete examples of how they experienced being White, having White culture, and Whiteness. I definitely believed that participants would not have considered how their efforts to be antiracist would be affected by Whiteness, as it certainly was not something I had considered previously.

3.2.5 Dissertation Committee and Research Team

White researchers who attempt to investigate issues pertaining to race without the involvement of persons of color risk inadvertently failing to identify their own biases, which may eventually emerge within their analysis and write up. Hallewood (1997) described the risk that White researchers assume, and the approach that they should adopt, when studying topics regarding race:

> Many progressive men seem to think that the entire matter is answered by attitude or intention: that once they have adopted a feminist of antiracist "stance" and proceed with good intention, then their analysis – corrective and objective –

> simply flows from their intentions. Such an argument is fundamentally flawed, both as an analytic point of departure and a basis for conducting scholarship. I think a very different approach must be taken. Adopting a "bottom up" epistemological analysis means that White male scholars must engage in scholarship on oppression by "looking to the bottom" – learning by careful and respectful study, a perspective on the particular form of subordination one wishes to study from those who actually live that perspective rather than attempting to master it in the abstract. This means adopting a whole new theory of the relation of experience to knowledge and rejecting the notion of "authoritative" interpretation. It means rejecting conventional models of mastery and expertise for something more partial. Above all it means restructuring one's understanding of objectivity, recognizing both the partiality of one's own perspective and the authenticity of the plurality of perspectives "from below." This transformation entails adopting a different view of one's scholarly role; one should strive to become less the prevailing neutral expert or master theoretician than an interpretivist, promoting the exploration of someone else's (duly attributed) perspective and insights in one's scholarship (pp. 628).

Hallewood (1997) advocated for an interpretivist frame, which aligns with the methodological paradigm of this study. He also highlighted the impartiality of the White male perspective and, therefore, the necessity to engage oppressed persons to challenge the White male in his analysis. Additionally, recognizing persons of color as authorities on race and within the research process challenges the systems that have worked to subjugate the personal voices and professional acumen of persons of color. As a White

male who intended to study being White, Whiteness, and antiracism, Hallewood's (1997) outline provided a strict guideline for my approach. The dissertation committee and research team for this dissertation, which were made up predominantly of persons of color, provided guidance, direction, and oversight that allowed the principal investigator to investigate being White and Whiteness without allowing his blind spots and biases to adulterate the data analysis and write up.

Dissertation committee. The dissertation committee that supervised this research was comprised of three persons of color, one male and two female, and one White male. In fact, the research questions pertaining to Whiteness would not have been asked without the guidance of the dissertation committee, as the principal investigator was not aware of Whiteness as an ideology prior to their explication of it. Rather, this researcher wanted to study White racial identity development and the factors that led to a positive, antiracist identity, without first asking what a positive antiracist identity actually looked like and if it even existed.

The dissertation committee assigned required readings that helped the principal investigator learn about the phenomenon of interest prior to proposing this dissertation. They also challenged the researcher to self-reflect through the use of written assignments that were part of his qualifying exam. The self-reflection helped the principal investigator integrate extant theory with his own lived experiences. The professional qualifications of the dissertation committee also provided invaluable support to this researcher, as they are all psychologists with doctorates. One of the chairs of this committee has significant experience with qualitative research as well, and the other three have mentored a countless number of doctoral students. One of the committee's

recommendations was for this researcher to assemble a research team comprised of doctoral students of color to assist with data analysis. The contributions of the doctoral students of color was paramount to this dissertation. I do not believe, in fact I know, I could not have done any of this research without the tutelage, guidance, direction, and assistance of the dissertation committee and the research team.

Research team. The research team was comprised of four counseling psychology doctoral students. Three students were females of color, while the primary investigator was a student who identified as a White, cisgender, and male. The analysis and interpretation of the students of color expanded the principal investigator's own perspective and greatly enhanced the overall analysis and understanding of the phenomenon of interest. For example, the concept that Whiteness and being White is harmful to persons of color was not readily apparent to the principal investigator until the team members of color pointed it out in the data. Several other instances occurred where the research team expanded the analysis beyond the capabilities of the principal investigator due to his limited perspective as a White male who perpetuates Whiteness and racism but does not experience it. The positionalities of two research team members of color are described below. One research team member did not provide a description of their positionalities.

JARDIN DOGAN. Jardin Dogan is a Black, cisgender female, who is a second-year doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Kentucky. Her research interests connect to race-related trauma, and drug and sexual health-related disparities. Jardin hopes to explore coping strategies to combat the impact of racism, substance abuse, and incarceration on the functioning of Black couples and families. She

currently has written several research studies using various types of qualitative methodology and data analyses. Since this dissertation focuses on the qualitative experiences of Whiteness, Jardin was eager to join its qualitative coding team. The topic of Whiteness informs Jardin's work about how ideology and the systems that perpetuate White supremacy and racism directly affect the research populations she studies and the clients she serves at her clinical practicum sites. Black people must understand Whiteness to protect themselves, often at the expense of their own self-understanding and self-definition. However, as an advocate, Jardin recognizes it is important to unveil Whiteness in order to resist structures in place that dehumanize persons of Color, and Black individuals specifically. This dissertation presents an opportunity to truly learn what White people are both thinking and doing to check their biases in their allyship development.

Paris Wheeler. Paris Wheeler is a second-year doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program. Her research interests include substance abuse, health disparities, race-related stress, and racial identity development among Black Americans. She personally identifies as a Black cisgender woman and is personally invested in achieving Black liberation, as it has a personal impact for herself and for many of her family and loved ones. She came to the project with an awareness that liberation for her is different from liberation for a Black person of a different gender identity and, thus, was interested in exploring what liberation means across the spectrum of Blackness. Due to her background and research interests, Paris brought a focus of coping skills and strategies to the research team.

3.3 Participants

Participants were purposefully selected, as is recommended in IPA, to allow for the examination of a shared experience (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2012). Participant recruitment within IPA methodology can take the form of referrals from various gatekeepers, opportunities through the researcher's own contacts, and snowballing, which entails referrals from participants (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2012). The participants of this study were recruited using all three methods of recruitment delineated by IPA. Gatekeeper referrals came from reaching out to the local chapter of Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and the Sociology department at the University of Kentucky. Pseudonyms will be used to maintain the confidentiality of participants. Gatekeeper referrals accounted for four total participants (Casey, George, Hannah, and Frank). Opportunities yielded three participants (Debbie, Erica, and Jack) and snowball sampling accounted for the remaining three participants (Anthony, Betty, and Ian). Personal contacts and gatekeepers were sent the recruitment flyer (see appendix A), which was approved by the University of Kentucky's IRB, and an email (see appendix B) asking them to distribute it to anyone they believed would be interested in participating in this dissertation. The email and flyer directed any interested parties to contact the principal investigator directly.

In total, 10 participants were recruited. Five participants identified as male and five as female. Four participants were located in Baltimore, MD, while six were located in Lexington, KY. The age of participants ranged from 27 to 66. All participants identified as either Christian or Agnostic, with those who identified as Agnostic stating that they were raised Christian. One participant identified as gay with the remaining

participants identifying as heterosexual. One participant identified as White and Latino. She shared that she did not always think of herself as White while growing up due to her Guatemalan heritage. Based on her current self-identification as White and the definition provided by the U.S. census bureau, which states that any person who identifies as Latino "may be of any race" (https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html, para. 10), this individual was allowed to participate. A summary of participant identities is provided in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 *Participant Demographic Information: Age, Race/Ethnicity, Geographic Location, and Gender*

Name	Age	Location	Race/Ethnicity	Gender
Andrew	31	Baltimore, MD	White	Cis male
Betty	66	Baltimore, MD	White	Cis female
Casey	27	Lexington, KY	White	Cis female
Debbie	33	Baltimore, MD	White/Latina	Cis female
Frank	35	Lexington, KY	White	Cis male
George	63	Lexington, KY	White	Cis male
Hannah	60	Lexington, KY	White	Cis female
Ian	47	Lexington, KY	White	Cis male
Jack	38	Lexington, KY	White	Cis male

After participants emailed the principal investigator to express their desire to participate, a phone call was scheduled to review the study's consent form (see appendix C). After verbally providing consent to participate, the principal investigator asked participants to electronically sign the consent form even though the university of Kentucky's internal review board (IRB) waived the requirement to obtain written

consent. Also, during the initial phone call, the principal investigator asked participants to confirm that they were White. As previously stated, the participants self-identification of their racial identity sufficed to confirm they were White. The issues with determining the racial identity of participants will be addressed in the discussion section of this dissertation.

To identify whether or not participants assumed an antiracist identity, two assessment measures were sent to the participants by the principal investigator. The first assessment was the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale-Short Form (CoBRAS-SF; Neville, Low, Liao, Walters, & Landrum-Brown, 2007). The CoBRAS-SF is a 14-item scale, which is designed to assess an individual's awareness of racial privilege, awareness of institutional discrimination, and awareness of Blatant Racial Issues. The 14 items are rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale. The CoBRAS has been empirically validated (Neville et al., 2007) and has appeared in numerous research studies. The second assessment was the 35-item Activism Orientation Scale (AOS; Corning & Myers, 2002). The AOS measures the propensity for action from a general perspective across a range of different behaviors. The AOS is comprised of two subscales, one for conventional activism, and the second for high risk activism. Items are measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale, which ranges from "extremely unlikely" to "extremely likely". One example of conventional activism asked, "How likely is it that you will display a poster or a bumper sticker with a political message?" An example of high risk activism asked, "How likely is it that you will engage in an illegal act as part of a political protest?"

IPA methodology posits that a correct number for what constitutes an ideal sample size does not exist, and that between three and six participants is ideal for "student projects" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 51). Between three and six participants provides sufficient data to compare the similarities and differences within participant's experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). In general, IPA places more value on smaller sample sizes, as they allow for a detailed and in-depth analysis of participant's experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). The sample for this study resulted in 10 participants, with 5 identifying as male and 5 as female. Due to the prospective invisibility of the phenomenon under investigation, Whiteness, it was beneficial to increase the number of participants to ensure for the representation of similar and divergent experiences. For IPA, saturation is not the goal of recruitment and sampling (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012), as IPA is not concerned solely with the emergence of repetitive themes. Rather, IPA is concerned with gaining a "detailed account" of each participant's lived experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 51). Due to the difficulty that White individuals have with consciously recognizing their Whiteness, this study recruited 10 participants to ensure for informational power of the data (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016). The 10 recruited participants of this study provided sufficient data to describe common experiences as well as increased variation in how the phenomenon was experienced on a daily basis.

3.3.1 Data Collection: Modality and Protocol

In-depth interviewing was the primary method for collecting data. According to IPA methods, in-depth interviewing is best suited to invite participants to offer detailed,

first-person accounts of their experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). In order to gather "rich" data, participants should be afforded the opportunity to share their stories freely, encouraged to self-reflect, and allowed to speak freely and at length (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 56). Semi-structured, one-to-one interviews are viewed as the best method for collecting such data. The semi-structured interview for this study was constructed by the principal investigator and piloted on two White doctoral students who were somewhat familiar with Whiteness. Their constructive feedback and edits were incorporated into the final interview protocol (see appendix D).

IPA interviews typically use an interview protocol that is designed to help the interviewer prepare for the interview (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Questions are typically arranged in an order and sequence that the interviewer prefers and believes would be most appropriate for the participant (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2012). For this dissertation, the interview protocol started by asking participants what it means to be White and then moved to asking about White privilege, White culture, allyship, and Whiteness. By asking what it means to be White first, it was expected that participants would be able to more easily share their experiences since it was the title of the recruitment flyer. Interview questions attempted to help participants provide detailed accounts of how phenomena were experienced in their daily lives by inviting participants to share everyday events or situations that described how they experienced these phenomena. The interviewer also focused on asking open-ended follow up questions to help participants probe deeper into their experience and understanding of the study's phenomena. The interviewer also needed to be mindful of the significant overlap between the different phenomena, as some participants answered questions about being

White by describing White privilege or White culture. Therefore, the interviewer allowed the participants to answer questions out of sequence, if that is what occurred organically throughout the interview. IPA methods allow for lengthy descriptions by participants and for the interviewer to ask questions out of order if that makes sense, as the goal of the interview is to create a comfortable interaction that will allow the participant to share a detailed account of their experience (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2012). Throughout the data collection process, the principal investigator observed that White culture became a more salient construct than he had previously realized.

The principal investigator conducted all interviews. Interview length ranged from 45 minutes to 115 minutes. Interviews were conducted in two regions of the country, Baltimore, MD and Lexington, KY. Interviewees were given the option to choose the interview location, with six participants choosing their office as the interview location. The remaining four agreed to be interviewed in a reserved room at the local university library. The principal investigator chose rooms that were more isolated within the library and checked with participants to make sure they felt comfortable in the room to speak openly.

3.3.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis began with sending the audio recorded interviews to an IRB-approved transcription company. The transcription company was compensated through a $1,000 Turner-Thacker grant award that was provided to the principal investigator. Upon receiving the transcribed interviews, the principal investigator read the transcripts while listening to the interviews to ensure for accuracy. Prior to receiving the transcribed

interviews, the principal investigator listened to each transcript twice and wrote memos based on his reactions.

Data analysis for IPA is broken down into six different steps. The first step entailed reading, and then re-reading, the transcribed manuscript prior to coding. By focusing solely on reading the transcript, the reader is able to connect with the data and enter the participant's world without being distracted by trying to develop themes. Step one was also the first step that the research team conducted together. After having read the first transcript, the research team met to discuss their initial reactions to their first reading.

The second step entailed starting the initial coding process. Coding within IPA involves creating a comprehensive set of comments and notes that adopts a phenomenological focus by attending to places, processes, events, values, and the meaning they have for the participant (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). In addition to the IPA coding process, CGT coding methods were also used. CGT coding included "gerund" coding to help reveal the process of communication and how the participants made meaning of their experiences (Charmaz, 2014). The research team practiced coding on Andrew's transcript together, and then finished coding it prior to getting together to discuss the coding process. After completing the first two steps of the data analytic process, research team members were randomly assigned three transcripts that were distinct from each other to read and code. The principal investigator read and coded all 10 transcripts as well. Upon completion of coding all transcripts, the research team used Skype to discuss their reactions to "gems" within the data (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p.

201). The first skype meeting lasted for 90 minutes and also included a preliminary discussion of notes and comments the team made while reading transcripts. Reflections on any "powerful recollections" were also discussed (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 82).

As part of the third step, the research team reviewed the initial codes they made for each transcript to develop emergent themes. The gerund coding that was used in accordance with CGT methods naturally helped to create concise statements that became the themes. The goal for identifying emergent themes in IPA is to capture the psychological essence of the section of data without becoming too far removed from the data itself (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Although the overall focus was on understanding the part within the whole, the third step focuses on making meaning of the crucial part of the text being examined. Step four entailed examining the emergent themes that were identified in step three to find connections across themes. Some techniques that were used to identify connections included numeration, abstraction, and polarization (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Numeration included identifying the frequency by which a theme was supported. Abstraction involved identifying patterns between themes and developing a "super-ordinate theme" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012, p. 96). Polarization involved examining transcripts to identify oppositional relationships (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Step five called for moving on to the next transcript and repeating steps one though four.

After all transcripts were reviewed and coded, the research team moved on to step six. Step six involved looking for patterns across cases. To aid in this process, the

principal investigator compiled all codes into one document. With all initial codes collected in one document, the principal investigator looked for emergent themes. After developing themes, as was part of step four, the principal investigator identified connections across the emergent themes. With connections and emergent themes identified, the principal investigator emailed them to the research team and scheduled another meeting on Skype to review them. Collectively, the research team discussed the themes the principal investigator compiled and edited and amended the themes until a consensus regarding the themes was reached.

3.3.3 Validity and Trustworthiness

Morrow (2005) provided criteria to evaluate the trustworthiness of qualitative research that is based on the specific paradigm of the study as well as criteria that is applicable across different study designs and paradigms. For constructivist-interpretivist paradigms, Morrow (2005) reviewed the literature and identified fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and embracing subjectivity/researcher reflexivity as the predominant domains for evaluating trustworthiness in constructivist-interpretivist paradigms. Additionally, Morrow (2005) advocated for the inclusion of additional evaluative criteria for constructivist-interpretivist paradigms, which included understanding how context, culture, and rapport influenced how participant's constructed meaning. IPA also advocates for building rapport with participants by ensuring the participant is comfortable, which aids in developing validity and truly learning their experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). To aid participants in gaining comfortability in the interview, the principal investigator

adopted a non-judgmental stance based on his own self-evaluation that he was also learning about his Whiteness. The principal investigator also utilized counseling skills attained within his counseling psychology doctoral program to help him build rapport with participants and provide space for participants to answer questions in detail.

When looking more broadly across research designs and paradigms, Morrow (2005) stated that social validity, subjectivity and reflexivity, adequacy of data, and adequacy of interpretation are important criteria to be considered when evaluating trustworthiness in qualitative research. As some of the trustworthiness criteria overlap, the following paragraphs describe the strategies used by this researcher to ensure the trustworthiness of data. Criteria for evaluating trustworthiness that is specific to IPA, which is prescribed by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) is also identified.

3.3.3.1 Reflexivity and Fairness

Reflexivity is specific to the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm and is a criterion that applies across research paradigms (Morrow, 2005). Reflexivity for this researcher began in a structured format during his qualifying exam, which occurred eight months prior to the start of data collection. The first question of the researcher's qualifying exam asked him to integrate the overarching themes from Robin DiAngelo's book *What does it mean to be white: Developing a White Racial Literacy*, Richard Delgado's book *Critical White Studies* and Kimberle Williams Crenshaw's book *On intersectionality: the essential writings of Kimberle Crenwhsaw* with his own personal experiences to discuss what it means to be white. Integrating his own experiences with extant theory was something this researcher continued to do after his qualifying exam and

throughout the entire research process, including the construction of the semi-structured interview, writing memos, data analysis, and the writing of the subjectivity statement that is part of this chapter. This researcher also developed his own hypotheses as part of the subjectivity statement, which Morrow (2005) suggested was a component of trustworthiness as well.

Reflexivity is critical to trustworthiness because identifying preconceived biases and stating hypotheses allowed this researcher to better attain the goal of fairness (Morrow, 2005). Being reflexive is also greatly important when the researcher is an "insider" (Morrow, 2005, p. 254), meaning that the researcher shared the same culture as the study's participants, which occurred in this study. Therefore, this researcher applied his clinical skills as a counseling psychologist to summarize participant statements to ensure for accuracy and adopted a curious approach to interviewing that helped the researcher empathize with participants and learn their experiences in their daily lives.

Securing the services of a research team is also a strategy used to ensure reflexivity and fairness (Morrow, 2005). The research team for this study did not share the same gender and racial identities as the researcher or the participants, which prevented the researcher's bias from overshadowing the data provided by participants. The research team provided tremendously valuable insights into Whiteness, as their analysis illuminated topics that the researcher would not have uncovered on his own. Additionally, the research team was able to respectfully challenge themselves as well as the researcher, which allowed for an in-depth analysis of data. Lastly, the research team was instructed from the beginning to try and empathize with participants to truly

understand the participant's lived experience. Despite the differences in cultural identities, the research team was able to empathize with participants' struggle with allyship and the potential for participants to be ostracized from their families.

3.3.3.2 Adequacy of Interpretation and Ontological Authenticity

The research team's effort also contributed to the overall adequacy of interpretation and the ontological authenticity of participant data. The team performed all of the data analytic steps required of IPA, including the development of themes. Once themes were developed, the team participated in two 90-minute meetings that occurred on Skype. The conversations allowed for additional analysis and for the principal investigator to share his theoretical model of the themes. In ontological authenticity, the participant's individual construction of data and meaning are improved and elaborated on (Morrow, 2005). Asking follow-up questions to clarify meaning and to ask for the participants to describe their experiences in greater detail allowed for the participants' lived experience to be fully understood and verified. Having four different researchers examine the data and discuss it in-depth allowed participants' constructions and meaning to be fully analyzed and not subjected to the bias and interpretation of only one researcher.

Social Validity. In 2017, the *Counseling Psychologist* released an issue that focused on Whiteness and allyship. In total, seven articles encompassed the edition that investigated Whiteness, with four articles written by White allies and three articles written by persons of color. Helms (2017) called for the continued deconstruction of Whiteness and provided examples of how White allies might try to accomplish this

deconstruction. The focus on deconstructing racism and systems of power and oppression fits the social justice component that is a piece of the social validity criterion of trustworthiness (Morrow, 2005). This research attempted to contribute to the investigation and deconstruction of Whiteness and allyship that was highlighted by Cross and Reinhardt (2017), Helms, (2017), and Sue (2017).

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Utilizing IPA and constructivist grounded theory methods to analyze the data, 11 primary themes emerged: 1) the visible part of White culture; 2) the invisible part of White culture: Belief in White supremacy; 3) how to maintain the invisibility of White culture; 4) the impact of being surrounded by all White spaces; 5) the invisible and passive part of White privilege: lacking awareness of being White; 6) partial visibility of White privilege: visibility by comparison; 7) increased visibility of White privilege: activated White privilege; 8) boundaries to White privilege: skin color and aesthetic; 9) the intersection of White privilege and White culture; 10) how White privilege impedes allyship; 11) finding a balance: recognizing White privilege in allyship. The first four themes were specific to White culture, the next five themes were specific to White privilege and the final two themes were specific to allyship. Themes were further delineated into subthemes, and some subthemes were further delineated into categories of those subthemes. The themes, subthemes, and categories reflect a progression in visibility of White culture and White privilege. Although some themes depict deliberate actions, the meaning and purpose that precipitated the action may have been invisible to the participant. Where possible, the research team delineated constructs that appeared apparent to participants during their interview and delineated where the team made meaning of constructs that appeared to remain invisible to participants.

Throughout their responses, participants often conflated what it means to be White with White privilege and White culture. In many ways, this makes sense as these three concepts are all interrelated and interconnected. As such, part of the IPA data

analytic process required the researchers to make meaning of participants' responses. Therefore, at times a participant's response that described White privilege may actually be a better representation of White culture. Frequencies will be utilized to demonstrate the prevalence of themes. However, capturing the participants' understanding in both common and unique ways is the primary focus of IPA methodology and was the primary focus of this dissertation's data analysis.

4.1 White Culture

Seven participants of this study endorsed White culture as embodying a set of shared beliefs that are commonly accepted by most White individuals. Participants described the set of shared beliefs as including the American dream, or the belief that anyone can achieve in U.S through hard work. As the belief in the ability of hard work to yield results is commonly accepted this dissertation categorized it as the visible part of White culture. Participants of this dissertation also described a part of White culture that is not apparent to White individuals in the U.S., which is the belief in White Supremacy (i.e. that being White is superior to that of a person of color). In the following two sections, the visible and invisible parts of White culture are explored. A third section explores the rationale for why White culture works to remain invisible. A fourth section reveals how institutions such as church, school, family and the residential neighborhood cultivate White culture by maintaining an all-White configuration. Lastly, a fifth section reveals the impact of having maintained all-White institutions.

4.1.1 The Visible Part of White Culture

Three participants described White culture in the U.S. as the American dream. Another two participants described White culture as the belief that the American dream is meritocratic, meaning that anyone can achieve through hard work. Lastly, another two participants described the characteristics that White individuals subscribe to in order for their hard work to translate into success. These characteristics are labeled Protestant values and are discussed at the end of this section.

The American Dream. Debbie described White culture as a set of norms and understandings that are best represented by the ideology of the American dream.

> I think it's like a culture. I think to be White it's like a set of norms and understandings. Like, you are White because you have been raised in [and] surrounded by White people, you go to church, you have these traditions, you go to brunch on Sunday, you know what I mean? And so, that's why I say, I'm culturally Catholic and culturally White because I don't know anything different…The color of skin, but a set of values, understandings, and norms. And the best way for me to describe that is: the American dream, and like everything that's associated with the American dream, but the American dream has just been for White people so far.

Debbie described being White as a culture. She also described the socialization process that develops White culture, as she shared that being White entailed learning from being surrounded by other Whites and participating in traditions that permeate important institutions such as church and religion. She described White culture

specifically as a set of values and norms that are understood to represent the American dream. She shared her opinion that part of the White cultural understanding of the American dream is that it is accessible and attainable to all Americans. However, she believed it was only attainable for Whites.

Frank also associated White culture with the American dream. He expanded on Debbie's view that the American dream was only for White people, as he described how White privilege props up White individuals and gives them an "edge" in their pursuit of the American dream.

> I think it calls in some questions of, you know, in this cultural context, what kind of privileges do I have? What kind of ways have I been propped up? Or helped out a little bit. And I think it makes me want to be more empathetic as people that do not have that, lack a better word, I guess, edge, in our system. You know? Yeah. You know, that I grew up with. That I grew up with two parents that are working that feel like they're the dominant population in our area. You know, that don't feel like they're outside. You know? Like, I guess all of the American standards that I guess are implied in the American dream, that they've never felt discriminated against them that way.

Similar to Debbie, Frank also recognized the cultural power of being surrounded by other Whites, as he referenced that being in the majority or dominant group helped his family work toward the American dream. Corroborating Debbie's view that the pursuit of the American dream has favored White individuals, Frank shared that White privilege provided him an edge over individuals who are not White. He believed that discrimination also works against people of color in their pursuit of the American dream.

Lastly, and similar to Debbie's, Frank believed that standards of American life are implied within the American dream. The standards that Frank referred to are most likely implied through socialization and White culture, as standards are typically norms that are agreed upon without debate or disagreement.

Lastly, Erica also described the connection between White culture and the American dream. She provided additional context about what is meant by the American dream. She also elaborated on statements made by Debbie and Frank that the American dream is only for White people.

> And how Whiteness and White culture is – just how much is pushed and linked to the American Dream and the ideology of our country in particular. What I mean by the American dream is pulling oneself up by their bootstraps, regardless of race or class or religion. That would be the dream and yet the White supremacy in our country doesn't allow for that dream for those who are really not White, or do not give up their own non-White culture in order to get on that ladder toward the American Dream.

According to Erica, the meaning of the American dream is that regardless of class, racial identity, or religion, a person can achieve by "pulling oneself up by your bootstraps", an idiom meaning that hard work and determination will be rewarded with social class ascension. However, Erica agreed with Debbie and Frank that the American Dream was not as accessible to people of color. She named White supremacy, which includes the discrimination toward people of color that Frank described, as the cultural ideology that prevents persons of color from attaining success.

Meritocracy. The belief in the American dream and pulling yourself up by your bootstraps is rooted in the principle of hard work. Three participants described their view of White culture as the belief that the amount one works dictates how much they are rewarded. Hannah described the connection between White cultural ideology and hard work.

> [Whiteness] As an ideology? That hard work gets rewards. That, and I'm saying this is the ideology of a lot of White people, that people who are in dire circumstances are lazy. They haven't tried hard enough. They have too many kids they can't take care of. That rich people have what they have because they deserve it.

Hannah connects White ideology with the belief that hard work yields rewards. However, she also revealed the corresponding, hidden belief that those who are in dire circumstance have not worked hard enough to change their circumstances. Believing that those who are in dire circumstances are there due to their own laziness does not consider barriers such as discrimination and White supremacy. Betty echoed the meritocratic belief in hard work and put it concisely, "you work hard, and you get what you get." Based on White cultural beliefs, factors such as racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of discrimination do note supersede the ability to work hard.

Ian demonstrated the infinite power that White culture ascribes to the principle of hard work, as he shared that it allows a person to accomplish anything. He also connects the beliefs that encompass White culture to the messages that are a part of the socialization of a White person as they grow up.

> And it [White culture] has to do with the kind of messages you get growing up – oh, you can do anything. Work hard. These ideas are good. Go to school. We all believe what we believe because we think they're right.

Ian reiterated that cultural beliefs are instilled while growing up, a concept which was originally stated by Debbie. According to Ian, the cultural message that Whites receive at a young age posits that if a person works hard enough they can accomplish anything. Therefore, hard work is held in a very high regard within White culture, as its possibilities are limitless. He concluded by stating that White individuals think they are justified for believing in White culture and hard work, which suggests that there is an air of infallibility that White individuals assign to White culture. It also suggests that there is lack of belief in any alternate cultures or explanations. It is hard work and solely hard work that is to be valued according to how Ian viewed White culture.

Protestant characteristics. Within White culture, certain qualities are valued that prescribe how hard work is best executed. The qualities were described by Andrew and Ian and are somewhat representative of the Protestant values (Brookhiser, 1997). Andrew described the values, ideals, and attributes of White culture below:

> It's part of that White culture piece. I was thinking about attributes and then kind of like modern day cultural things that happen in society. The kind of ideals or values type pieces are like I think the perfectionism, the action-oriented, efficiency, individualism, those sorts of things. Yeah. Being focused on myself as opposed to being community or family or generationally focused. I'm more just thinking about, as a White person, I'm more just thinking about myself and how

> to move myself forward and my own ideas and thoughts, whereas I think other groups are less focused on that, yeah. [Me: Because I mean there's competition in there, do you think?]. Yeah, I would say there's probably a fair amount of competition within White culture. Yeah.

As Andrew revealed, White cultural ideals and values suggest that individual advancement is paramount. Individual advancement is the barometer by which White individuals measure their achievement of the American dream. The individual's characteristics that define hard work entail being efficient, action-oriented, competitive, and perfectionistic. Lastly, the strength of the desire for individual advancement becomes more important than the community as a whole and is put ahead of a person's family. Ian agreed with several of the attributes that Andrew used to describe White culture:

> How can you differentiate, there's so many different cultures. There's mainline, White, American culture, very individualistic, very oriented toward efficiency, very consumeristic…

Ian suggested that there are different cultures within Whiteness, which may pertain to regional differences amongst White individuals. For example, some cultural values may differ between Whites who reside in the south eastern region of the U.S. compared to Whites who reside in the north eastern region of the U.S. However, Ian shared his belief that despite some differences within White culture, it assigns high value to individual traits such as being individualistic, efficient, and consumeristic.

Although this study identified the American dream and the principles of hard work and efficiency as the visible components of White privilege, it is worth noting that the participants of this study did not describe how they experienced the visible components of White privilege in their daily lives. Participants did not describe how their own desires to work hard and ascend impacted their daily experience. It was the belief of participants of this study that the American dream and the belief in the value of hard work were commonly agreed upon principles of White culture, however, the individual awareness of how these principles impacted participants was not disclosed.

4.1.2 The Invisible Part of White Culture: Belief in White Supremacy

In total, six participants of this study connected White culture to an ideological belief in White supremacy, which included White individuals feeling a sense of superiority over people of color. Four of the six participants insinuated the invisibility of White superiority by using words to describe it such as covert, unconscious, not realized, and forgetful. This section will explicate White culture's belief in White superiority by dividing the six participants' responses into two subsections. The first subsection will reveal how the belief in White superiority requires a corresponding belief in the inferiority of people of color to maintain itself. The second subsection will reveal how the purpose of the belief in White supremacy was used as a justification for the harm that White people have caused persons of color.

White supremacy and the need to describe others as inferior. Debbie, a Latina woman who identifies as White, defined White cultural values as the supremacy over

people of color. She also stated that White supremacy requires people of color in order for it to be maintained.

> I mean, I think it [Whiteness] has to do with skin color, but it also has to do with cultural values. And the cultural values of Whiteness are the supremacy over people of color, whether it's realized or not. And I think Whiteness is differentiation by skin tone – because I have a yellower skin tone, I have different-shaped eyes, I have different colored hair, so people know that I'm different, but I have that culture to back me up. So, I think it is appearance because you hear of people of color passing, like black people passing back during segregation, and they had to leave their families. So, there is an aspect of colorism, but there is also an aspect of culture. But like everything is based in White supremacy, and the fact that White skin color and culture is above all else is the norm. But also, actively "othering" people of color. And like that's the only way that Whiteness is upheld.

After linking Whiteness with the belief in White supremacy, Debbie described how skin color and physical features combine with White culture to define what it means to be White. Using her own experience, she described being made to feel "different" due to her skin tone and physical features despite adhering to White culture. Her experience demonstrated how Whiteness uses skin color and physical features to actively "other"

people as she also described. The need to "other" people upholds, maintains, and sustains the culture of White supremacy, as White individuals cannot feel superior unless there is an "other" to be defined as inferior. Debbie also stated that the cultural belief in White supremacy may or may not be fully realized by most Whites, indicating that it may be invisible to them. Likewise, by defining White culture as the norm, and any other culture as different, the cultural beliefs are not questioned and are simply accepted as valid, as Ian alluded to in the previous section.

Frank also associated White culture with White supremacy. He described how White individuals all share an underlying belief in White supremacy even if they come from different socioeconomic statuses. In line with Debbie's viewpoint, he also believed that White supremacy may or may not be visible to White individuals.

> I think the Whiteness ideology, when I think of very general like, almost even geographic-culture perspectives of Whiteness. Like, I think of elite White America, which is much more liberal-leaning and then there's particularly in this context, Appalachia-America, which is very poverty-stricken and then there's maybe just like middle-class, working, white America and each three of those I think would look at them differently. I don't personally have much experience growing up around elite, White, liberal America…So, I would be, my perspective of it, from my very limited perspective of it would be that it's well-intentioned but maybe a little too much into advocacy and does not increase independence. You know, it's trying to do the right thing but it's maybe causing harm and maybe not empowering of black people. You know, kind of what we were talking about where it's like maybe more into advocacy where it's like, how about you let them

speak. You know? And I think it also comes from a position of my perspective, is that people that adhere to that they would say that they know what it's like for African-American people. If that makes sense? I think Appalachian Whiteness would feel bitter maybe, towards African-American people because I think that they perceive, I'm speaking very generally, African-American people to receive more benefits than then do and they feel like they, being White, are deserving of more. Whether or not they would like say that. Does that make sense? Okay. Kind of like, I'm gonna reference two things that I only surface-level know. My wife read *Hillbilly Elegy* so, like related to that or of my understanding from her of that and I haven't seen the movie *Get Out* by Jordan Peele, but I am interested in seeing that and supposedly that's a commentary from African-American perspective of what White, liberal elitism is in relation to racism. I guess, working-class, which is its own thing too, I guess. I don't know what their perspective of Whiteness would be. [Me: Do you see any commonalities between them all where it's just whiteness has one on and maybe it's on a continuum where?] I think there's still a power differential. I think that Whiteness as an ideology, even if it's one side of the political spectrum or the other, there's still that underlying assumption that Whiteness is superior. Whether or not it's overt or covert and neither are better or worse, they're just different.

Frank made a comparison between liberal, elite White culture and poor, Appalachian White culture by comparing their beliefs about their relationships to people of color. The White liberal elite that he described may demonstrate their adherence to White supremacy in their belief that they know what is best for people of color, as they

may believe their culture is superior. Therefore, they do not need to listen to, or understand the viewpoint of, people of color and they thereby limit the independence and autonomy of people of color. The poor White individuals from Appalachia demonstrate their adherence to White supremacy in their perception that they deserve more than people of color. The expectation to be doing better than people of color indicates an expectation to be superior. The expectation to be superior, however, is not made by poor Whites against the liberal White elites, but against people of color according to Frank. His analysis provided examples of how White supremacy and the belief in White superiority may manifest itself differently based on the different social locations of White individuals. However, it also depicted how White individuals manifest their belief in their superiority based on their relationships to people of color and the belief that people of color should be inferior to White individuals.

Although Casey did not use the term White supremacy specifically, she shared that being White included feeling "inherently better" than other races. She suggested that feeling better than other races went beyond having resources and related to something more innate. She also provided a reason for why Whites adhere to a belief in their superiority, as it provides them a rationale for trying to control people of other races.

> I think it is an ideology. It's about control. It's about thinking that White people have the solutions, that we have more knowledge, more understanding, more capabilities. You know, it's not just about having resources or opportunities or things that are kind of like given to us. It's about something like inherently better and feeling the need to control other people of other races who just can't quite take care of themselves. Like, it's really patronizing. Colonialism is the word I

was trying to think of. We tend to go collect places. You know, we were actually talking at the chapter meeting this past Tuesday about cultural appropriation and what kinds of artifacts and objects are appropriate to take from a place that is not your place.

Casey also positioned her depiction of the belief in White superiority as subject to how Whites view people of color. She described White superiority as not solely based on tangible resources, but an inherent feeling that White people are better than people of color and are therefore justified in their desire to control people of color. The need to control people of color provides a justification for colonialism and taking things that did not belong to Whites. Similarly, the belief that one has more knowledge, more capabilities and more solutions, also requires an "other" to have less knowledge, less capability, and less solutions. In the next subsection, the purpose of White supremacy that Casey has introduced is explored in greater depth.

Forgetting harm: the purpose of invisibility and White supremacy. As mentioned by Debbie, Frank, and Casey in the previous section, White supremacy is a part of White culture that may be invisible to White individuals. Also, in the previous section Casey suggested that the purpose of White supremacy was to control people of color. In this section, the purpose of White supremacy is explored further. Due to its harmful qualities and controlling purposes, Betty, Erica, and Ian suggest that White supremacy needs to be made invisible to allow Whites the pleasure of being ignorant of its deleterious nature.

Betty used the term ideology to describe White supremacy, and like Debbie, described how skin color was used to differentiate and other people of color. She also proposed that the purpose of using skin color to differentiate people was done to separate

who is greater than (i.e. superior) from who is less than (i.e. inferior). She shared that othering people of color also had a purpose, which was to help White individuals feel better about and justify slavery.

> I would say Whiteness is only an ideology. It's a social construct that was created intentionally to justify enslavement of brown people. We can treat these people like this because we're White and they're dark and so they're less than us. And we made that up as White people, as part of our history, to make us feel better like it's okay to do that. I mean White isn't a race. The Supreme Court in the early 1900s tried numerous times to try to define it and they couldn't. All they could come up with was what it wasn't. Well, you don't define something real as what it isn't. So, it's not real as a race. But it's very real as a social construct because it has implications, economic and material implications, for both White people and peoples of color.

Betty emphasized how, without a biological basis, race and Whiteness are social constructs. She also suggested that the social construct and ideology of race was invented purposefully and intentionally. Betty highlighted that being White has been defined solely as what it is not, which supports Debbie's belief that Whiteness needs an "other" to be created and upheld. The purpose for constructing race and Whiteness, according to Betty, was to justify the enslavement of people of color and allow White people to feel better about having enslaved people of color in the first place. Protecting the feelings of White individuals is where White culture helps them forget about the harm that White supremacy has caused people of color. For, if White individuals knew that their belief in White supremacy was harming others, they may be less inclined to support

it. The other purpose of Whiteness that is revealed in Betty's explanation is the economic and material implications of this harm. The economic and material implications are that White individuals profited off of the slavery and the harm that befell people of color. The profiting allowed White supremacy to continue and progress.

Erica highlighted the invisibility of White supremacy within White culture and suggested that the invisibility served the purpose of hiding personal racism.

> I think White culture in the sense of White supremacy fits in is unconscious of its own culture. Unconscious of other cultures because they don't feel like they need to learn, or White culture doesn't feel like it needs to learn about other cultures or have an awareness that something else exists. I think that personal racism is real and unconscious in a lot of people. And the unconscious aspects of it are reinforced by culture, are reinforced by institutions, are reinforced by family. And that work has to happen in the home, in the institutions, in the communities.

In the previous paragraph, Betty stated that "othering" people of color is done to make White individuals feel better about the harm they have caused people of color, dating back to slavery. Erica suggested that White supremacy is made invisible by White culture to hide the personal racism that lives within individuals. If we combined their two perspectives, it may be that by making White supremacy and racism invisible it allows Whites to feel better about the White supremacist ideology that lives within White culture. In concert with the depictions of White superiority provided by Betty and Erica, Ian provided a short and simple question that depicted how making White supremacy invisible helps White individuals live their everyday lives without thinking about the harm that White supremacy causes people of color.

> It's more like a culture. I think it's a forgetfulness I don't think most white Americans want to think about their complicity in the harming of brown bodies. [Me: You said they don't wanna think about that?]. Right. Do you want to think about the child that made your shoes?

Ian's question supports Betty's point that White culture helps White individuals feel better about racism. It also supports Erica's belief that White culture makes personal racism and White supremacy invisible. Whereas Erica used the phrase "unconscious of itself", Ian described Whiteness as a culture of forgetfulness. The purpose of the forgetfulness is to not think about the harm that our individualistic and consumeristic culture, as Ian described previously, has on people of color. Finally, Ian's question powerfully depicted how everyday items that are taken for granted, such as a person's shoes, were potentially gained through the harming of "others", which is not something we want to consciously recognize.

4.1.3 How to Maintain the Invisibility of White Culture: All White Spaces

To ensure that White culture remains invisible, participants of this dissertation described how it is kept isolated and distant from anything that might challenge its ideology and thereby force it into visibility. Participants described how White culture lives in institutions such as neighborhoods, families, schools and churches and how those institutions remained racially segregated. At times, participants described how White individuals worked to keep these institutions devoid of people of color. The following sections examine the different institutions such as residential neighborhoods, school, church, and family that maintained all-White spaces.

White culture in the neighborhood. Every participant in this study referenced the racial make-up of the neighborhood where they were raised. Six participants stated that they did not interact with people of color while growing up. Others described minimal interaction with people of color in their neighborhoods and schools. The lack of exposure to people of color is significant, as it allows both the visible and invisible portions of White culture to transpire without interruption. In this section, participants described the segregation that their neighborhoods embodied and the meaning of that segregation.

ALL WHITE TOWNS. Casey stated that by living in a town that was almost all White, she barely interacted with people of color. Looking back, she was able to distinguish how growing up in an all-White space impacted her understanding of racial identity.

> The town I grew up in was pretty much 99 percent White. I hardly ever saw or spoke to or even thought about people that weren't White. So, that was kind of a new space for me to be in the minority of the racial group… I don't think it was until after college that I realized I was White or that I ever really thought about it. I thought about other people as not being White but I never thought about classifying myself. I think it was just a very slow realization. I don't think there was one big moment but the more I met people who weren't White and the more I heard them talk about their experiences the more I realized that me being White wasn't just a default, or normal. It was actually a position of privilege. Like, being White impacted my life. It wasn't just a neutral factor.

After looking back, Casey realized that she understood that others were not White, but she never considered her own racial identity and what it meant. In other words, being White was invisible to her in general, primarily due to being surrounded by other White individuals. The segregation in her town also prevented her from learning the experiences of people of color. As she learned about these experiences, she learned more about her racial identity and that it represented privilege. The segregation of her town prevented her from gaining these insights and allowed her to think of being White as neutral. Hence, she did not think of it as privileged or superior.

Debbie also grew up surrounded by White people and in a White culture that limited her interactions with people of color. If she did interact with people of color it was as a part of service learning, which set a precedent for how she viewed people of color.

> I grew up in a very…in very White, surrounded by White people in White culture. And so, the only situations where I was surrounded by people of color was during those situations where we were serving others. And it wasn't until probably like college, and even high school, it…I went to a predominantly White high school. And so, we were a Catholic high school, so like there was an aspect of serving others that was important. So, growing up, it was like the "otherness", until college when I finally made friends with people of color. And then, now in my career they're the folks who I work with every single day… It was a learning experience, I think of folks of color, like we can be friends. I don't

> think that ever was a thing in my mind. I think in my mind I thought it was always a helping relationship versus a mutual relationship. And so, coming to college and broadening my knowledge of the experience of people of color was really important, but also realizing, as crazy as it sounds, people of color are just like me, you know what I mean?

Her only exposure to people of color depicted them as inferior, as they were in need of "service". Due to how she viewed people of color from her White cultural lens, Debbie did not see them as equals who could be potential friends, but as "others" in need of help. However, when she attended college and gained exposure to people of color under different circumstances, Debbie learned a different narrative. She realized that she had more similarities with people of color than she originally perceived and gained an understanding that she could have an equal, or mutual, relationship. Growing up in a White cultural environment prevented Debbie from learning about the experiences of people of color, until she went to college.

Jack described growing up in all-White "circles", including country clubs, that excluded people of color. The one Black friend that he met at school he considered a "token".

> And again, growing up as a child, I remember kind of being disturbed by hanging out at country clubs where Blacks weren't members, being in circles where…in high school, I remember being a little disturbed by being rich, White, popular people, with a token Black, athlete friend, that we let hang out with us. I

> remember thinking like, "That's just weird. That's not friendship. That's just, he's just cool… to have a…a cool Black friend."

Jack shared that he had one Black friend growing up that he did not actually consider a friend. He depicted the Black friend as a "token" and someone he and his friends let hang out with them, which reveals an inferior view of their Black friend. A token is a representation, and for Jack his Black friend was used as a representation that he was not racist despite feeling disturbed by being in clubs and "circles" that did not allow Black members. His friendship with a Black man helped assuage his feelings, but also made him feel weird because he knew it was not a genuine friendship. Jack's experience shows that having a Black friend is not enough to override White culture, if the friendship is not authentic. Indeed, his experience exemplified how within White culture Whites still strive to use Black individuals to help make themselves feel better about racism and segregation.

Traveling outside of White neighborhoods. Two participants, Betty and Erica, shared their experiences of remembering what they learned when they traveled outside of their all-White neighborhoods. The juxtaposition of leaving their neighborhoods demonstrated to them that something other than Whiteness existed. Betty acknowledged that she grew up in a town that was all White and that limited her exposure to people of color. Her limited exposure allowed her to be influenced by White culture's ideology and belief in White supremacy.

> Like I said, my town was all White. So, I didn't see any people of color there, but my mother was taking me to a piano lesson one day in a neighboring city and the trains were blocking the way and we were running late. So, she turned the car

> around and went into the city in a different direction than usual – literally on the other side of the tracks. And, as we were driving down that road, I'm looking at these houses that looked pretty shabby to me. Anyway, we passed one where there's a colored girl there. She's in a white dress, barefoot, jumping rope, in a dusty yard – which I immediately compared to my two acre yard that's full of lush grass. And she had pigtails sticking out all over her head that looked kind of crazy to me and so I simply somehow associated that in my brain with something less than me and mine. And so poverty kind of got associated with Blackness.

Due to her limited exposure to people of color, Betty did not know anything to challenge the stereotype that people of color are associated with poverty. Without competing information, whether from her parents, society, or having exposure to other people of color, Betty believed that being a person of color was less than what she had, which means she believed herself to be superior. Betty also revealed that her mother typically avoided driving through Black neighborhoods that were poverty-stricken. The avoidance demonstrates an intentionality of not engaging with people of color and potentially trying to forget about them. When Betty is confronted with seeing the young, Black girl she is forced to recognize that their yards are different sizes. If Betty were to continue to question why their yards were different sizes, she might come to an uncomfortable answer.

Erica had a similar experience to Betty. She traveled outside of her neighborhood with her mother as well and noticed the differences between her

neighborhood and one inhabited by people of color. However, Erica's parents were able to explain to her the historical racism that contributed to housing segregation.

> As a kid, I always remember my mom was a public health nurse. And so, in the early '80s she was working at the beginning of the AIDS crisis. And there was this group home in a majority Black neighborhood that she was doing home visiting at. And so, she would take me because she didn't have childcare or whatever. My grandparents were probably at a funeral. Who knows? And I remember early on, and I couldn't have been more than five or six – being like, I don't understand why this neighborhood is all Black. Why does everyone look like this? And why are all these sick people here? And so, I remember specifically having that conversation. I don't remember what she said, I just remember that we talked about how neighborhoods were designed. And I remember talking about how people buy houses and how people have access to money.

Erica's journey at a young age outside of her neighborhood provided her with exposure to the realization that not everyone was White. With this exposure came questions regarding the housing segregation that was occurring at that time, as well as the health disparity between the patients her mother was visiting and what she had grown accustomed to. Whereas Betty never discussed her stereotyping with her mother, Erica's mother is able to provide an explanation of the historical and systemic discrimination that led to housing segregation and contributed to health disparities. However, both Betty's and Erica's experiences with leaving their neighborhoods demonstrated that when White individuals leave all-White neighborhoods, questions are raised. The questions that are

raised may lead to White individuals learning about oppression and White supremacy, as was the case for Erica. Therefore, maintaining all-White spaces works to prevent White individuals from being forced to ask these questions.

LEAVING WHEN THE NEIGHBORHOOD INTEGRATES. Andrew provided detail about how the racial and ethnic dynamic of his neighborhood changed as families of color moved onto his block. First though, he described the friendship he made with a Black female student in his first-grade class and the experience of visiting her home.

> It [his Black friend's house] felt different than the smell of my family, even though my cousins' and my grandmother's house all smelled different. And I just remember thinking that it smelled really beautiful and so it just intrigued me that difference between us. Then also just in being friends and talking about when she would get her hair done, she would talk about over the weekend sitting in a chair for three to six hours and I remember being that young and thinking like – this was before iPads and all that stuff…Yeah, and I just remember thinking like, "How can she sit in a chair and have her hair braided for that long?"…That memory just stands out to me so specifically and I remember understanding in that moment that we were different because of the color of our skin and that we had – I wasn't able to put the words of culture to it, but there were differences in our culture and our family lives.

His experience of having a Black friend early in life taught him that they were different based on skin color and culture. He may not have been old enough to understand the socio-political implications of the differences, but he gained exposure to people of color that other participants did not receive until later in life. Andrew's family

moved before he was old enough to learn more about his friend's culture and how it differed from White culture. He continued:

> Then a couple years later a family in the house next to them, they were a Latino family. And slowly the racial makeup of our neighborhood was shifting and my friends who had been living there previously – White families – started leaving and there was never a conversation. I never heard from my parents say anything about race. What they were talking about was housing value and I remember that, as a kid, that we ended up moving because – and a little bit around safety and crime, the general neighborhood – and so I remember moving out because of housing values and that the neighborhood was changing. But I don't think I really understood. It's only been since I've been older and learned more about race and housing values and all of that that I've looked back and have been able to see, "Oh, that's what my family was talking about." Yeah, so…

As the racial and ethnic dynamic of the neighborhood changed, Andrew's family decided to move out of the neighborhood. They never explicitly named the racial integration of the neighborhood as the reason for the move, but it became clear to Andrew afterwards that race was a component, if not the primary factor. He recognized the cultural racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014) that his family utilized by blaming housing value and crime as their reasons for moving. Moreover, the importance of living in an all-White neighborhood was extremely important to Andrew's family; so much so that they were willing and able to move to preserve their residential segregation.

Frank grew up near a university that attracted professors of different races, ethnicities, and countries of origin. Unlike Andrew, his family did not move but

embraced the diversity of their neighborhood. He became best friends with a person of color, who was born in the Caribbean, and learned about the experiences of racism and microaggressions that his friends experienced. His best friend confided in Frank that he liked a White girl who was one of their mutual friends. However, their friend group expected Frank's best friend to like the only female of color in the group.

> Yeah and he's like, "I mean, she's cool, like don't get me wrong, she's great but I actually think this other girl's cute too." So, I remember him mentioning that to me and I was like, "Wow, yeah. I was in middle school, so I wasn't interested in people dating so I was like, "Oh but that is kind of – it's lame." It'd be frustrating for me to experience someone telling me who I should like just because of one specific connector, criteria connection, you know? So, I remember that being frustrating for him and that was kind of one of my first "aha" moments of those microaggressions, not those major, like, he got kicked out of a store kind of thing or anything like that. But just little things where it's like, oh we assume this about you just because of how you look.

Frank's exposure to people of color within his hometown allowed him to learn about the microaggressions one of his friends experienced. He gained an "aha" moment that illuminated how systemic, covert, and cultural racism impact people of color in very subtle ways. Without having a friend of color, whom he met growing up in a neighborhood that welcomed diversity, Frank would not have gained this new perspective and understanding.

White culture in schools. Participants revealed how White culture is represented in two distinct ways within schools. First, similar to the racial make-up of their

neighborhoods, two participants endorsed attending predominantly all-White schools. Second, the two participants shared that the lessons taught in school depicted a White cultural pedagogy.

ALL WHITE SCHOOLS. Hannah described her high school as over 99% White. It was not until after high school that she gained exposure to people of color and therefore had an opportunity to learn about how their lived experiences were different than her own.

> The first person of color I remember having exposure to was in my school – my high school – of probably 2,000 people. There was one Black boy. I don't remember ever having any contact with him, but that was the first person I really remember. Then – when I went out into the workforce – I did meet people of color and made friends with people of color for the first time in my life just because I never had any exposure.

Living in towns that are predominantly White creates schools that are predominantly White as well. Currently, Hannah recognized that she lacked exposure to people of color throughout her school years. It was only after befriending people of color that she learned that their experiences were much different than her experiences. In the paragraph below, she shared her reaction after learning about a friend of color's childhood that was marked by extreme poverty and a stint in the criminal justice system before he turned his life around:

> It was gut-wrenching to me, revelatory. I mean obviously I knew there were people that lived other than the way I did, but I don't think I'd ever had that kind of direct exposure to somebody that grew up and had no chance in the world to

overcome their circumstances.

For Hannah, the experience of actually meeting someone who grew up with "no chance in the world to overcome their circumstances" broadened her perspective. She knew that people lived differently than her, but she did not appear to understand the depth to how differently other people, including people of color and people of color in poverty, lived. To learn that some people do not have the opportunity to work hard and achieve the American dream and overcome their circumstances was revelatory for her from a cognitive perspective, but also gut-wrenching from an emotional perspective. Her predominantly White neighborhood and school protected Hannah from experiencing these gut-wrenching feelings by protecting her from learning experiences different than her own.

George also described his experience having attended an all-White elementary school and a junior high school that only had one Black student.

> So, my elementary school was all-White. In junior high there was one Black student and I guess his father was affluent, a doctor maybe or something like that. So, he lived in a White neighborhood and he went to our junior high school and I shudder to think but I don't know how he was treated. I remember the only interaction we really had was that we were putting together a skit for the talent show and so we asked him to be in it. So, he participated with us in that and as far as I know that went fine except – of course, I would think that, right?

Despite having exposure to this one student of color, George understood that his interactions with this student were limited. He also understood that if the student of color had negative experiences, George would not have known about them. Both Hannah and

George understood at this time that their lack of exposure to people of color while growing up prevented them from fulling understanding the experiences of people of color and how the experiences of people of color may have differed from their own.

WHITE PEDAGOGY IN WHITE SCHOOLS. George and Hannah also detailed how Whiteness emerged within the pedagogy of their all-White schools. George described the current discomfort that he felt in recognizing that what he was taught in grade school overlooked the harm enacted against indigenous cultures in the U.S.

> So, that discomfort of realizing what part our culture played in the decimation of indigenous cultures, for example, and that kind of thing, it is very uncomfortable. Yesterday, I don't know if you saw this on facebook, but there was a website where you could go and put in your location and find out which indigenous cultures lived on this very spot. So, Cherokee I had heard of but some of the cultures I hadn't even heard of. Of course, I assume they were stacking them chronologically. But that sensation that we didn't – you know, that letting go of the mythology of the founding of America and how it was this big empty place and we just found it beautifully pristine and occupied it because nobody else wanted it. Even in [current state] history especially – are you from around here? The mythology we got in elementary school, junior high, and so forth, is that [his current state] was a hunting ground. Nobody lived here. People just came here from [neighboring state] and [neighboring state] and so forth and hunted here and it was shared by these different tribes. Well, that's utter bullshit.

George felt as though the history that he was taught in elementary school and

progressing past middle school told an historical narrative that was mythological and inaccurate. This inaccurate narrative is a big piece of White culture, as it prevented him from feeling the discomfort that he currently felt when forced to think about how White individuals decimated indigenous people. He recognized that a cultural narrative was spun in his school's pedagogy, which stated that America was "discovered" by White settlers. The pedagogy overlooks the stories of the indigenous people who were already here. Using the word 'discovered' makes it seem as though indigenous peoples were never in the U.S., which is a more comfortable narrative than acknowledging that they were killed off by White individuals.

Hannah also referenced historical inaccuracies that she stated were taught in her School about the U.S.'s founding fathers and the American dream in general.

> And I would have to say that I think the conclusion I've come to in the last year is we're learning every day that what we've been taught all our lives is nonsense. Everything. Going back to our founding fathers and the fact that they owned slaves, the fact that – like you just said – if we work hard and you do the right thing, you can make it. That's so not true. Every premise that I feel that our country has been built upon we're learning is false. We talk about immigration, but we slaughtered people to take this land. Everything. That's where I am right now. I'm feeling like everything we've ever been taught is nonsense. There is no equity. In fact, there's not only not equity, we've been working against people to try to elevate ourselves. So, you know how do you reconcile that? I guess that's the struggle I'm having right now. How do you reconcile the fact that everything we've ever been taught is nonsense?

Hannah now realized that the cultural narratives that are taught in school, including what is taught about the U.S.'s founding fathers, was done purposefully to make White individuals feel better about having oppressed people of color in order to elevate Whites. In other words, a narrative is created in school about our history that replaces the narrative of White supremacy. Like George, Hannah now realized that everything she had been taught while growing up was none sense. She questioned the validity of the American dream itself and stated that some premises the U.S were founded on, such as hard work, equity, and fairness, do not exist. She shared later in her interview that it was only after coming into contact with persons of color that she learned that the lessons that are taught in school are untrue.

White culture within the White church. Four participants in this study described how White culture existed in the churches that they attended. For some, it was the observation of overt racism. For others, it was noticeable cultural differences in styles of worship and a noticeable lack of diversity and color-blindness that defined their church. Lastly, one participant described how her church deliberately and purposefully excluded people of color from joining their congregation.

WHY IS MY CHURCH PREDOMINANTLY WHITE? Not all participants described the make-up of their church as it was not a question within the interview protocol. However, four participants recognized and shared that their churches were all-White. Jack, who is a pastor, believed that the racial segregation of the churches in his town was an issue, but he struggled to figure out how best to racially integrate his church. After reaching out to Black pastors, he learned that different churches had different cultures based on their racial and ethnic composition.

Well, I think by listening to other Black pastors, I was able to realize, even Something like worship style, if you come here, there's an organ blaring a certain style, there's hymnody, there's hymns that we're singing, there's dress that you see, there's worshiping behavior that's normal, and all these things, and to hear a Black pastor in our city say, "Look if you want to be a multiethnic congregation, you need to understand that your worship culture is a White worship culture." So, any black person that you're going to ask to come here, they're going to have to learn the White worshiping culture." [Me: Tell me about that]. Yeah. So, you come to our church, you go to Main Street Baptist downtown, that's a Black Baptist church, completely different culture of how they worship. Well, a lot of these churches that say that they want to be multiethnic in talk, but they're not willing to change the culture of how they do things. [Me: So, were you thinking, "I'm going to need to adjust our culture here."]. Well, I am thinking that now. This is where I am. But if I were to say, "Hey, this Sunday, we're not gonna use the organ. We're going to do some gospel tunes and whatnot." Well, you know, I've gotta move really slowly, is my point. Change culture. But yeah. He helped me see, "You're not gonna have Black membership at any level until you create a culture where they walk in and it's familiar. It's not foreign." And he

said an example, and it's so true… you know, I do a lot of international work, I've been to West Africa, I've been to Mexico, and whatnot, and he said, "What was it like to worship at those churches? You know? You're lost, you didn't know the patterns, you don't know the rhythms, you didn't know the intricacies – you just – that's what it feels like for a Black guy to come into a White Presbyterian church. And you just got to realize that."

Through listening to Black pastors, Jack learned that culture helped define worship styles and, therefore, cultural differences helped maintain the segregation of churches. He understood that changing the White culture of his church was needed if people of color were to feel comfortable at his church and that a person would feel lost if they were unable to connect to the culture of the church service. Later, Jack received additional advice from Black pastors that he should not actually pursue trying to make his church's congregation multiracial. However, Jack's discussion of the different roles of culture in different churches highlighted how White churches and non-White churches differ based on their different cultures, and not necessarily on their interpretation of scripture.

Ian also recognized that his church was predominantly White, which made him wonder if people of color would feel comfortable there. He wondered if the cultural differences went beyond different worship styles.

But I sometimes look around me and think, "Wow, there are a lot of White people here." [Me: Can you give an example of…]. Church. Well, I go to a church – I

> live in a small town near here. I go to a small church, about 75 average attendance. In general, there might be 10 people of color, so percentage-wise, it's not far removed from what the surrounding town is. But after having gone to church in the Dominican Republic for 12 years, I just think, "Wow. There are just a lot of White people here." And I am conscious of it, and I wonder if a person of color – and I'm including Asians also in this – but the non-White/Anglo person was here, how would this feel? Would they feel welcome? There obviously is some common bond in the religion, but yet I know that there may not be a feeling of welcome or just the assumption that White men or at least Whites should be running things. I think that can just exist even though no one says it or even believes it. But if that's just what always happens, it can feel that way. So, that's just a place I happen to often think about how White it is and how in some ways that feels a little wrong, like it shouldn't be so White.

Ian felt that it was wrong to have a church where a person of color would not feel welcome. He also felt it was wrong for his church to be "so White." He understood that the White cultural belief that White individuals, in particular White men, should be in charge may exist within the church and thereby make people of color feel unwelcome. The cultural belief that White men should be in charge corresponds with the previously described White cultural belief in White superiority. Thereby, it appears as if Ian is wondering if his predominantly White church with predominantly White men in charge is primarily influenced by White culture and a belief in White superiority. Ian only gained awareness that his church was predominantly White after having lived in the Dominican Republic for 12 years, where the pastor at his local church was not only a person of color

but also female. If it was not for his experience outside of the U.S., the culture of Whiteness that was pervasive within his church may have still remained invisible to him.

RACISM WITHIN THE WHITE CHURCH. Andrew provided an example of what an all-White church's culture might include. He juxtaposed the church he grew up in with churches he attended later in life.

> Yeah, I mean my church experiences have been quite different based off of which community I'm going to and I searched out a church community that was multiracial, multigenerational, open to people of different identities and was representative of those beliefs because there are a couple different churches here in [East Coast city] who are more progressive and liberal, but a number of those are still White and I wanted to be part of a community that represented their beliefs in the communities that they supported. And so the church that I'm with – [Church name] – does that and there's just such a vibrancy to that community because there are people coming from so many different places. That is not experienced when I go to a church back home with my family and I see so much racism within the churches I was a part of growing up and the church community my parents belong to.

Andrew alluded to the fact that the church he went to growing up was all-White, as he stated that his current church's multiracial composition was different than what he experienced growing up. He recognized cultural differences between the all-White churches he had attended and the multiracial churches he currently attended. The cultural difference included the multiracial church practicing their beliefs within the community,

whereas the all-White churches practiced “so much racism”.

PURPOSEFUL EXCLUSION. In this section, we have talked about how prominent institutions such as the church, school, and neighborhoods are predominantly White. Betty stated that the creation of all-White spaces is intentional and shared an example of how it is accomplished.

> No, I grew up in an all-White town. It was all White on purpose. I remember when I was 13, an African American family from a neighboring city – this was a little farming community – an African American family from a neighboring community asked if they could join our church and the church voted on it and the answer came back no. So, it was no accident that the town was all White.

Betty’s story is powerful because it described the incongruence between the church’s actions and its beliefs. Church is supposed to be welcoming to all individuals and is not supposed to be able vote on its membership or exclude people who want to join. As Ian recognized earlier it feels wrong to have an all-White church. Andrew also recognized that all-White churches do not always practice their beliefs in their communities, such as love for all and inclusion of all. Jack also wanted to rectify the fact that his congregation was predominantly White. However, Betty explained that predominantly White churches are that way for a reason. In her church, the ability to exclude people of color preserved White culture, as it would have been challenged by the inclusion of non-Whites.

White culture in families. At certain points throughout their interview, Erica, Debbie, and Andrew described culture as being maintained and cultivated within the family. Five participants in this study, George, Andrew, Jack, Erica and Betty described

how racism manifested itself within their family units. Racism within families presented as overt and exclusionary.

OVERT RACISM IN WHITE FAMILIES. George revealed that overt racism manifested within his family on two different occasions. George's father admitted to being racist and unwilling and unable to change. George also described how his grandmother revealed her overt racism. George described a conversation that he had with his father about racism:

> I know that he felt that he was – he saw some of the racism in himself and he said to me, "Well, I think our generation is just going to have to die out before you guys can get beyond this." With it that were the case and, personally, we're discovering now that there are plenty of young people who identify with White supremacy…

George recognized that his father's premonition that racism would die off in the next generation did not come to fruition. Part of the reason for why racism did not die off is its ability to change and evolve, as visible and overt racism became less socially acceptable and more covert and invisible racism began to emerge (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Perhaps unintentionally, George's father also normalized the ability to recognize one's own racism and the privilege to not try to change it. George also recalled an incident with his grandmother becoming overwhelmed due to her racist feelings:

> So, when I was maybe 3 or so… 3 or 4, she (George's grandmother) took me and my two cousins and walked us up to the park so we could play on the playground. So, what we didn't know and what she didn't know is that the swimming pool had

> just been integrated. All the public swimming pools had just been integrated in [Southern town] and one could look up what year that was and figure out what year that was and figure out when this must have been and how old I was. But I remember being really tiny and we walked up there and we were getting ready to get on the swings and my grandmother saw Black and White children swimming together and we all three remember that. She just blanched. Her face turned so white and she looked like she was about to faint. She said, "Come on, kids. Let's go home. I don't feel very good now." So, we walked home with her and I guess she had to lie down on the bed or something because it was so deeply disturbing to her.

Exposure to old-school racism of this nature can create the false narrative within potential allies that they are not racist because they do not harbor the same feelings as their racist family members. Additionally, being raised within families that practice racism does not help their children learn about the systemic or cultural forms of racism that White individuals need to understand in order to be an ally.

Jack also described racism that he witnessed within his family; in this case from his father.

> Yeah, I would say it's been recent that I've realized, not just I'm White, but that it matters. I would say from childhood, I grew up – my dad comes from Kentucky. Good ol' Kentucky poverty. I remember my sister dating a Black guy when she's in college, and that being unacceptable, and my dad was hellbent on hiding that from his family, and not letting them know that. Couldn't bring her home. You

know, that kind of stuff. I remember thinking, "That's wrong." I mean, I remember having those thoughts.

Jack's father wanted to keep his family White. Therefore, it was unacceptable for his sister to date a person of color. This deliberate exclusion of a person of color helped safeguard the culture of Whiteness within his family. Similar to George's father, Jack's father also demonstrated a culture of acquiescence to racism. Jack's father did not stop his daughter from dating the man of color, but he tried hard to hide it from his family. Indirectly, he was teaching Jack to acknowledge racism within the family, but not to confront it. Although a potential ally in his late 30's, Jack did not always see himself that way. When asked to define racism, Jack described a progression from Jim Crow racism to a broader definition of racism:

> Ten years ago, if you'd talk about White privilege and stuff like that I would've called you a liberal and just laughed at you. Now, I see so much of that. And so, my ethic is, as overt and oppressive as Jim Crow, or earlier today when I pulled up to a stop light and there were three beautiful, Black teenage girls just sitting there with their cellphones, just dancing. And I know that in the past, I would have pulled up to that scene and just, "That's such a weird culture." Now I look it as beautiful. So, anything of like the sin of just an inclination of, "I'm better than you. You're an uncivilized culture of people." To oppressive laws and stuff like that, and everything in between.

Jack grew up in a household that practiced racism that was more in line with old school racism. He did not acknowledge White privilege throughout the first 28 years of his life but now understands how prevalent it is within the U.S. His definition of racism

has become broader, including the recognition of systemic and cultural racism. The systemic piece of racism includes a history of oppressive laws that have privileged White individuals and oppressed people of color. The cultural piece of racism included his belief in White supremacy, which was exemplified by his thought that "I'm better than you" and that people of color subscribe to a culture that is "uncivilized". His beliefs that other non-White cultures are uncivilized was most likely bestowed upon him from the racism that was practiced within his father's family.

EXCLUSION WITHIN FAMILIES. Betty described how she was excluded from her family, due to having sons who were multiracial, as her husband was a man of color. In the exert below, she detailed how her family in a southern state made excuses for why they did not want her son to bring a Black friend to visit them during the Christmas holiday.

> They talked about how they didn't like him. No. They didn't say how they didn't like him. They said, "We can't understand him." I was like, "Well, you wouldn't say that if he was a French boy." You know? [Me: Right. So, they're talking about your son now. They're family?] They're talking about his friend, but they're talking about him in these terms of, "We don't want him because he's Black." Yes, exactly. You know one was, "We don't understand him." One is, "Christmas is only for family." Then I get down there and all of their friends are there. And so I just got hugely angry, wrote angry letters, didn't get any responses, and would try again, wouldn't get any response, would try again, wouldn't get any response. And basically, they disowned me for five years until I came sort of crawling back on my knees with this truce of, "Okay, let's be family again and I won't talk about race."

Whereas Jack's father and George's father decided not to challenge their own racism or the racism within their families, Betty decided to challenge the racism enacted by her family members. However, Betty learned the penalty for discussing race and racism within her family, which was exclusion. She was only allowed to rejoin the family after agreeing to not talk about race or racism anymore. Betty's lived experience of challenging racist beliefs within her family depicted another facet of White culture and color-blind racism, which is to not talk about race or racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Betty's family also displayed strategies of color-blind racism, as they never explicitly stated that race was the reason for why they did not want her son and his friend to visit. Instead, her family used rhetoric and linguistic style to avoid discussing race by stating that Christmas was just for family and that they could not understand her son's friend (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Even though Betty and her son were part of their family, they were excluded from the family for calling attention to race and racism.

4.1.4 The Impact of Being Surrounded by All White Spaces

Participants of this dissertation revealed four ways that they were impacted by Being surrounded by All-White spaces within neighborhoods, schools, families and churches. The four ways that participants described being impacted by living in all-White spaces appear inter-related. The first way that participants described being impacted is that White individuals do not discuss race. By not discussing race, White individuals are left to rely on the media and stereotypes to learn about people of color. The reliance on the media and stereotypes leads White individuals to develop internal biases against people of color. Lastly, by not talking about race, relying on the media and stereotypes, and developing an internal bias, White individuals do not believe people of

color when they share their experiences with racism. These interrelated concepts will be discussed below.

White culture does not talk about race. Based upon the experiences of Ian, Debbie and Jack, White culture includes avoiding the topic of race. Ian revealed how growing up in an all-White town race was not a topic of discussion within his family or his church.

> From my parents, from the bible, obviously, as a child growing up in a very White, small, [state] town, race isn't talked about a whole lot.

Ian named several fairly large cultural institutions where race is not discussed. He does not provide a reason for why it is not discussed, but Jack and Debbie allude to the reason for not discussing race in these cultural institutions in the following paragraphs. As a pastor, Jack described the strong reactions he received for bringing up race in different facets of his life.

> Racism, injustice, these things like that, you don't understand, well you might understand, probably do understand. In my circles, in my world, and I do that, and I get in trouble. But if I, like I recall you saw [the article he wrote in the leading newspaper in town], well, I got killed for that. Just from people in the world that I swim in, you bring up race, you bring up this issue, I mean, there's no bigger trigger. You're a liberal, you're a Marxist, you're all these different things.

Jack reported that there was no bigger trigger than discussing race within the circles he operated in. He believed that if he were to talk about race then he would be penalized severely. As Jack described previously, White privilege in his view was about

having connections and influence with the people in his circle. Therefore, by talking about race and risking getting "in trouble" or "killed for it", Jack would essentially be risking his privilege at the same time. Therefore, there is a tangible consequence and penalty within White culture for talking about race.

Debbie provided additional reasons for why White individuals do not talk about race, which included the evocation of difficult emotions.

> I think it's necessary. Like…White people have the privilege of not having to…like I have to seek-out that information, right? It's not something that is given to me, or that I learned about in school, or that was talked about around my dinner table. Race is something …that we don't talk about, especially in White culture. It brings up visceral feelings and emotions, and so – White culture is also very nice, we don't like to ruffle feathers. We don't talk about politics around the dinner table, or we avoid the situation by removing ourselves from the conversation around the dinner table if we don't agree with it.

Debbie understood, similar to how Jack understood it, that talking about race "ruffles feathers" and therefore it is not discussed at home, at the dinner table, or at school. Ruffling feathers is not permissible within White culture according to Debbie because White culture wants to remain "nice" and avoid disagreeable feelings. By avoiding content that would activate a negative emotional response, White individuals are better able to maintain the status quo that privileges them. If the topic of race does present itself, White individuals remove themselves from the proverbial dinner table. By

not talking about race, therefore, White individuals are left to seek out information about race. However, if people of color are not present in cultural establishments such as the residential neighborhood, church, school, and families, White individuals are left to rely on other sources to learn about race, which include the media.

Relying on the media and stereotypes. Betty described how the media, in particular television, influenced her opinions about people of color while she was growing up. She also described how in the present day she continued to fight the internalized stereotypes that were present for her despite knowing they were inaccurate.

> Well, and I don't want to make it sound like I was explicitly told this by my parents or anything, but it's in every TV message and if you look at the images from the 50s and 60s, they're pretty horrible as far as Asians and African Americans and I'm just looking at them like, "That's what they're like." And even now like if the whole thing about if you're walking down the street and a Black man's coming your direction, do you cross the street? Do you grab your purse tighter? I don't feel that coming up so much anymore because my son is Black. So, I don't really think of Black men as scary anymore, but to some degree those are the kinds of thoughts that come up and you have to say, "Wait. Stop and think about this. Are you really in any danger? Come on." It's an ongoing intentional interrogation of myself and what thoughts are coming up in my mind and I don't always control it.

Betty relied on messages that she received from television to learn about people of color. She was forced to rely on the television messages, as she lived in a town that

was all-White. The messages still infect her belief system today, despite the fact that her own multi-racial children serve as examples that counteract the messages that were previously instilled. The messages were infused with such strength that she needs to practice an ongoing interrogation of herself to identify the messages in order to manage her reactions to them.

George also discussed how the media impacted White culture using two distinct examples. In the first example, he shared that he did not believe that newspapers or television stations in his hometown covered the civil rights movement.

> You know there were marches for civil rights in [his hometown in a southern state] and they were totally not covered by the local newspaper and the local TV stations. They were just ignored. It wasn't news that anybody wanted to hear so it didn't happen. Apparently, that happened in a lot of places. So, a few years ago – I'll probably get this wrong, but I know you can look it up in the archives. A few years ago, maybe 15 years ago or something, there was a conference of newspaper editors and what one of the speakers said was, we should run a correction on the front page of the newspaper saying, "We didn't cover the Civil Rights Movement."

George described how discussing topics such as the Civil Rights Movement, race and racism were not topics that "anybody" (i.e. White individuals) wanted to read about or watch on television; mostly likely due to the adverse feelings it would evoke, as Debbie previously revealed. In the previous example, Betty depicted how television and the media portrayed people of color negatively. In this example, George disclosed how important issues pertaining to the experiences of people of color were purposefully

ignored. Together, George and Betty have described the two-pronged approach that the media utilized to influence White culture: negative narratives of people of color were included, while positive narratives were excluded.

Internal bias. The portrayal of people of color in the media, coupled with the lack of knowledge about people of color due to interacting in predominantly White spaces, created the potential for White individuals to develop internal bias. For Andrew, he described the internal bias that he recognized in himself after living in Belize for two years.

> When I got back to the US, it was jarring to see a person of color driving a really nice vehicle. It was just this really weird mental thing for me that whenever I would pass someone or see, particularly a black person, one, because people didn't really have cars in Belize, but two, I just hadn't seen people of color associated with wealth for two years and that had become so normalized for me that it really messed with my mind. I got back to the U.S. and I saw people of color with items associated with wealth. Like my instant reaction was like, "How could that be? Is that their car?" I was always able to – after that immediate, initial instinct of a response – I was always able to be like, "Okay, this is a reaction to what I've been seeing and living for the past two years. I know that this person is capable of attaining…" Yeah, and I continue to see like my instincts from the way I've been raised and socialized continues to pop up. So, I'm constantly – especially in Baltimore because I'm confronted by my race all the time – of I'm constantly like working – forcing myself to take that step back of like, "Why did that thought, or reaction, or instinct just present itself when I

know that's not how I want to or truly believe or feel?" It's still there and will that ever go away?

Although Andrew attributed his internal bias to the stereotype that non-Whites do not have wealth, he does not realize the impact that having grown up in the U.S. and White culture contributed to his internal bias. He had to leave the U.S. and then return for the bias to emerge in his consciousness. Once he returned, the bias was so powerful that even though he knew it was happening he still had a difficult time controlling it. As Betty previously stated, White individuals need to continuously interrogate themselves to monitor the bias they hold.

Hannah described two incidents involving the power of stereotypes, and how they related to her internal bias. In the first example she described the stereotypes that a friend of hers believed. In the second example, she described her own experiences with internal bias and stereotypes she held.

> But the other really difficult thing is that all of the stereotypes that have been so pounded into us. One of my best friends who's really quite – I mean this is someone since we were little kids. I've known her since I was a little kid and we've been close all this time and our families were really close, and she was kind of buying into the whole thing the welfare queen you know? And I thought about how hard it is to fight that stereotype because it's so ingrained and yes, those people do exist, but they're such a small percentage. And that's what people don't stop and think about. Yeah, there are a handful of them and just totally throw it out because it's not– Well, like the majority of people on food

stamps are White, you know? Food stamps and those programs…and then we've got people in the government who want to drug test them. I mean– the thing of it is there are so many stereotypes and that's what most people believe – the stereotypes – because that's all they've seen.

Hannah elaborated on how a common stereotype, that Black people are on welfare, was difficult to fight because it was so ingrained in her friend and other White people. Although she does not name White culture specifically as the culprit for pounding the stereotypes into White people, she highlighted that most White people believe them because they do not have another frame of reference. The power of the White habitus to prevent White people from learning that the stereotypes are false is of great significance. The story she shared depicted a friend's internal bias, however, Hannah eventually described her own internal biases that she tried to fight.

I've ended up in bad neighborhoods and held my breath and locked my doors until I got out. My sister and – when I lived in LA – my sister moved out there and we wanted to share an apartment for the time she was gonna be there. So, we said, "She's working here, I'm working here. Let's just drive and see what's between." We ended up in like Compton or something. That scared me to death. So, yeah, there have been times like that. Well, even out here. I have to admit that I drive through those areas in downtown and we meet at [local coffee shop] and you go to that little new bar – industrial bar district – and you kind of drive through some areas coming out that you think – and I still feel that way and I feel guilty about it, but it's the reality really, you know?

Hannah described driving through neighborhoods that are predominantly non-

White and feeling guilty that she did not feel safe there. Part of her guilt stems from the fact that she associated Black neighborhoods with crime and danger. She described the guilt as powerful, but she also alleviated her own guilt by returning to the stereotype by stating it was the reality of it.

Lastly, Betty shared an experience where she recognized that the stereotypes she Held about people of color made her doubt the knowledge of a Black man who was a university professor.

> I started going to the meetings and one of the people at this meeting was an African American professor from a historically black college/university here in Baltimore and – as we were talking – he kept saying the word solidarize. "We have to solidarize …" and every time he said it, I felt myself cringing and sort of feeling embarrassed for him wondering, "What are these well-educated students thinking?" Afterwards, I was talking to one of my African American colleagues and was telling…we both personally find him annoying, but that was beside the point. So, I was telling her about how I was cringing, and she said, "Are you sure that's not a word?" I said, "Look. I got a great education. I know that's not a word." But she put just enough doubt in my head that I went and looked it up and it means to create solidarity. He was saying exactly what he meant, and I had the painful recognition that if he had been a White male professor from Yale or Harvard I would have never questioned him.

Betty recognized that she judged the professor due to his race and admitted that she would not have questioned the Black professor's vocabulary if he were a White professor. Additionally, she admitted her own arrogance when she stated that she

received a great education, which she viewed as superior to the education of the Black professor, even though she was not a professor herself. Her initial reaction was that he could not be using the word accurately and that he was embarrassing himself, which demonstrated the internal bias she had about the intellect and intelligence of people of color. As it turns out, she was completely wrong about the greatness of her education and the strength of the Black professor's education.

Not believing people of color. Two participants in this study, Betty and Frank, shared their disbelief after person of color described to them an experience with racism. For Betty the experience was even more powerful because the person of color she did not believe was one of her sons:

> Things would happen to him like he told me some neighbor spit on him and I'm like, "Well, what did you do? Nobody would do that if you didn't antagonize them some way." He'd say, "I didn't do anything" and I convicted him of lying. That happened repeatedly. At 13, he started talking about wanting to kill himself and he ended up in [local hospital] for six months and that was sort of like a two-by-four hitting me in the head that something's going on with him that I don't see, you know?

Betty did not believe her son when he shared with her that he had been spat on by a neighbor. She assumed, incorrectly, that if he had been spat on then it must have been a reaction to a wrong he had committed first. The fact that she did not believe her own son represented a denial of the existence of racism, an unfamiliar concept for her potentially due to having been raised in a town that was all White "on purpose". The mental harm of the racism that her son experienced was so intense that it drove him to consider suicide.

Betty's experience also revealed the depth of White culture's strength. It prevented her from believing her son, only up until he was considering taking his own life.

Frank also remembered how his initial reactions were dismissive when hearing from a Black professor about the anxiety he felt when the professor was pulled over by the police.

> Before all this kind of really became a mainstream story, like it was obviously a problem it just for some reason wasn't in the news cycle. I was oblivious to it. But I met a guy who is an African-American professor up in the Cincinnati area and he was telling us about how he is fearful when the cops pull him over. And that he feels like he gets pulled over often and he doesn't break any – well, that he's aware of – he doesn't break any traffic violations or anything like that and just the anxiety that he feels when that happens. And I remember, that was my first hearing of that and I remember just thinking, heck, that guy's just probably really anxious. You know? I wrote it off, as that guy is hyper-aware. I wonder why he's hyper-aware. And then it just kind of became a theme and it became in the news cycle, which is – I'm ashamed that it took that for me to take his words seriously, but it just seemed so foreign to me, being a White privileged person to think, if I get pulled over by the cops I just show them my ID, it's no big deal, they might give me a ticket or a warning, that would stink but like I would have no fear for my life.

Frank described how the media, in particular news stories about racial profiling, impacted the extent to which he believed a person of color when the person of color described his interactions with police. Prior to news stories that covered racial profiling,

Frank assumed that the person of color was overly anxious and hyper-aware. He also shared that he was oblivious to the issues between persons of color and police prior to the media beginning to cover them. He assigned more credibility to the media than he did to a Black professor who shared his own personal experiences with him.

4.2 White Privilege: Active Versus Passive and Visible Versus Invisible

All of the participants in this study equated being White with having White privilege, or as Andrew stated: "a shit ton of privilege." When pressed to describe how White privilege manifested itself in their everyday lives, nine participants provided responses that depicted a passive understanding of their relationship with privilege, whereas one participant provided a more active depiction of his relationship with White privilege. The depiction of a more passive relationship with White privilege included a description of privilege that did not require any effort on the part of the participant to experience their privilege. One example of passive privilege involved not having to think about race or privilege. Additional examples of the depiction of passive privilege included daily activities that were only considered privileged after juxtaposing them with the harm and negativity that participants expected a person of color would have experienced in the same situation. In comparison, the depiction of a more active relationship with White privilege did not require a juxtaposition with the experience of people of color. Rather, it depicted how White people deliberately engaged, or activated, their White privilege in their daily lives.

Participant's responses to queries about how they experienced their White privilege also ranged in visibility, moving from an invisible view of privilege to one that

suggested greater visibility. For instance, not thinking about being White depicted invisibility of White privilege. Whereas, understanding how White privilege existed without a comparison to people of color depicted greater visibility of White privilege. This section will highlight the three depictions of White privilege described by participants and delineated based on their levels of passivity and visibility: 1) Passive and Invisible: Lacking awareness of being White; 2) Passive with Partial Visibility: Needing Juxtaposition to Expose White Privilege; and 3) Active with Increased Visibility: No Juxtaposition Required.

4.2.1 The Invisible and Passive Part of White Privilege: Lacking Awareness of Being White

Participants described the passive and invisible form of White privilege as entailing not having to think about being White and the comfort generated from being surrounded by other White individuals. Of the 10 participants in this study, 8 endorsed not having to think about being White as a form of White privilege. Four of the eight participants revealed that they lacked awareness of their Whiteness for the majority of their life. Four participants also described the reasons they believed that they did not see their racial identity, which included being in the majority and surrounded by other Whites. At times participants also provided additional meaning for what being in the majority meant to them.

Being in the majority makes being White invisible. George, a 63-year-old, White, cisgender, heterosexual, married, male described being White as “invisible” and something that he was unaware of due to White people making up the majority of people in the U.S.

> How do I experience being White? I guess that in this country White is sort of the default, you know. If I lived in a place that the majority of people didn't look like me then I might be aware of it. Or, I had a friend who said that she loved going to Detroit because it was such…this is a White woman who said… it was so strange for her to be a minority and to feel that. She said she felt herself kind of slinking around because she suddenly was experiencing this new thing. But for me and for many White people, I think, my Whiteness can be invisible to me because it's so pervasive.

George's description of how he experiences being White remained in the theoretical, as he is not able to provide a distinct example of his own experience of being White. Rather, he borrowed the experience of one of his friends, which highlighted how his own lived experience of being White and having White privilege remains invisible to him. He theorized that his lack of awareness of being White is due to its pervasiveness, which situated being White as the default in the U.S.

Betty, a 66-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, White, divorced, female explained that she did not even think about being White until she was past age 50.

> I honestly don't think about it. It's a state of normalcy. You know you just go about your business and there's nothing to really think about. I mean I think for a lot of White people I encounter, and myself included, I didn't become aware of my Whiteness until I joined [local racial justice organization] like in my 50s. So, I think what happens for a lot of us is we recognize someone else's otherness first and, like I said, my town was all White.

Betty revealed that being White was not something she was aware of for the first 50 years of her life. Similar to George, she described not having to think about being White currently in her daily life, and therefore was not able to provide a tangible depiction of how she experienced White privilege. Likewise, her description remained cognitive and academic. She provided insight into how Whites eventually gain awareness of their privilege, which required the juxtaposition of recognizing people of color. Lastly, she also theorized that Whiteness remained invisible to her because her town was all White.

Like George and Betty, Jack, a 38-year-old, White, cisgender, heterosexual, married, male also described not having to think about being White for most of his life.

> What does it mean to be White? I will just say this, just even asking that question is not a question I thought to ask until five years ago. And I think even asking that question – it's interesting, what does it mean to be White? The fact that I grew up not even thinking to ask that question is what it means to be White. If that makes sense. Just majority culture, not assimilating to anybody else's culture, I just am, I don't have to think about my ethnicity. I don't have to think about my race. I don't have to think about these things, because the world that I inhabit is this. Everybody else has to assimilate.

Due to the pervasiveness of White people in the world he inhabited, Jack's race was invisible to him for the first 33 years of his life. In the present day, Jack stated that being White means that he does not have to think about his race or his ethnicity. He also revealed that there is a culture that is born out of being in the majority and that culture does not have to assimilate to others, yet it can force others to assimilate to it. The ability

to force other cultures to assimilate to it exemplifies the privilege of being White, which is also the biproduct of the belief in White superiority.

Like George and Betty, Jack did not provide specific, tangible characteristics of being White and having White privilege in this quote. He only described being White as a lack of awareness of racial identity, although later in his interview he is the one participant that depicted White privilege as an active engagement. George, Betty, and Jack introduced how being in the majority allows White people to avoid recognition of their race. In the following sub-section, Andrew, Erica, and Ian described how being in the majority is a privilege that allows them to feel comfortable and validated.

Being in the majority creates comfort and validation. Four participants depicted White privilege as a feeling of comfort that is created by being in the majority. Andrew, a White, gay, married, cisgender, male distinctly connected how being surrounded by other White people led to a feeling of comfort.

> It [being White] means that I have to actively choose to not be in the majority. The way my life is set up working here at [East Coast University], and my family, and my home base of friends is mostly white. The home stuff is almost entirely white. So, it means that I have the opportunity and the privilege to be surrounded constantly by people who look like me. And so, yeah, I think it just means it's so easy for me to be comfortable.

Being surrounded by White people was easy for Andrew, even when examined across different aspects of his life such as work, family, and his personal home life. Andrew viewed being surrounded by Whites in most aspects of his life as providing comfort. Similarly, Erica stated that being surrounded by other Whites made her feel

"comfortable", "heard", and "validated." Ian, a married, cisgender, male connected how being surrounded by other White people created the privilege of having his voice heard: "mostly it means that here in [home state], wherever I go I'm surrounded by people that look like me. And that I know I will be allowed to be there and present and have a say." Being heard and validated represented a privilege that was created by the comfort of being in the majority. The previous section of this chapter, which depicted White culture, revealed that maintaining all-White institutions (i.e. the White Habitus) was a prevalent piece to White culture. It appears as though maintaining all-White spaces also yields White privilege, which includes not having to think about race and feeling comfortable being in the majority.

4.2.2 Partial Visibility of White privilege: Visibility by Comparison

As Betty stated in the previous section, many Whites only begin to recognize their Whiteness when they first view another person's "otherness." In this study, seven participants described recognizing White privilege by juxtaposing it with an otherness. Two participants, Erica and Debbie, described how their gender illuminated their understanding of White privilege. Five other participants described White privilege as either avoiding harm, or not experiencing the problems that people of color experienced. Participants still failed to view their White privilege as anything other than the absence of a negative, rather than viewing the positives that exist without a juxtaposition.

Gaining visibility through juxtaposition with gender. Erica, a cisgender, heterosexual, female in her late 30's, stated that being White, "means that I can do anything I want." However, she did not feel the same way about being female:

> From a feeling perspective, I guess? I'm very conscious of being a woman every day. [Me: what is that consciousness?]. Safety, security, sex, talking in a room where I need to speak up, where what I'm saying is not being heard.

Debbie, a 29-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, married, White, Latina female expressed a similar sentiment:

> I never felt that my body was at harm because of my race. Maybe I did because I was a woman, or because of my gender – but I never was in situations where I felt threatened because of my race. Either…or emotionally, physically, psychologically, or even had to think about it.

Erica and Debbie realized that they have felt unsafe due to their gender. The recognition that they have not felt unsafe due to their race is now illuminated and is considered a privilege based on the juxtaposition with gender. It is through the juxtaposition of their race with gender that they realized that not having to worry about safety, security, and bodily harm due to their race is a privilege.

Gaining visibility through juxtaposition with the experiences of people of color. Five participants described their White privilege as avoiding the harm and problems that are experienced by people of color. The avoidance of problems ranged from avoiding small problems to avoiding bodily harm, including death and murder. We will start with the more benign depictions and move to the more severe.

Frank described White privilege as the absence of problems that people of color experience:

> I definitely feel privileged here in our culture for sure, being White. I think it's just because I guess the lack of problems that I just don't have to deal with that my friends do that aren't White. Just little things that I don't notice or that I take for granted until I hear a story by them or something like that.

Frank recognized two forms of White privilege. The first is the privilege to avoid the little problems that his friends experience daily. The other is the privilege to not see the problems that others are experiencing, or to take them for granted. His White privilege is invisible to him, until a person of color describes their problems to him, which he realized are things he can avoid. Only after the sharing of their negative experiences does Frank realize that he is privileged compared to his friends of color. George described a similar sentiment:

> Well, what does it mean for me to be White? I guess I don't think of myself as someone who celebrates Whiteness or White culture. It's something I recognize in myself and others and something that I deal with but for me it means that I've avoided many of the problems that my fellow citizens experience on a daily basis. So, for me being White means that I don't think I'm going to get shot when I get pulled over.

George also viewed White privilege as the ability to avoid problems that people of color are not able to avoid. However, he extended the level of severity of the problems described by Frank from "little things" to getting shot. In this regard, the ability to avoid life and death situations is also a White privilege. Casey, Andrew, and Hannah also juxtaposed their relationship to police and authority figures with the experiences of people of color.

Casey described explicitly how her interaction with police officers at an anti-pipeline protest differed completely from the experiences of her peers of color.

> They [the police] would tell me things willingly. If a brown person walked up they would be, like, you need to back up. The person could ask the SAME question as me and they wouldn't get an answer, so they would come back and be like, "he won't tell me." So, what I would do was go right back over and be, like, "hey, man, I have this question." I would just repeat it and they would give me an answer. You know, at least a slightly better one. Then I'd go back and tell the group. So, I just became this back-and-forth messenger because I could get close enough to them without startling them, or making them uncomfortable, that they would actually talk to me.

The example Casey provided does not involve the police harming people of color. However, it clearly depicts how White people and people of color are treated differently by police. The police in her story are willing to share information with her, which speaks to the comfortability described earlier that White people have around each other. This very basic and mundane activity of having a conversation with a police officer is only a White privilege because it was not granted to people of color. Casey's example may be one of the "little things" that Frank described in the opening passage of this subsection, and it highlights the importance of "little things" when it comes to White privilege.

Andrew also provided a clear example of how authority figures treat White individuals differently.

> Some of my colleagues and I went down to the [city name] Housing and Resource

> Center last night to serve dinner because they were short on volunteers and we have students that go there as service sites so we thought we'd help out because it's summer. But there are security guards when you walk in and they, for a lot of their residents and guests, they use their batons to metal detect and all that. But we walk in and we were a predominantly White group. The security guards moved off to the side and we walked right in. They didn't even ask, "Are you here to volunteer?" They just assumed, and some people might say because like, "Some of you had professional clothes on" or whatever, but I'm sure it was because of our race.

The use of metal detectors and batons play different roles in the situation described by Andrew. For the mostly White group of volunteers, the use of batons and metal detectors was avoided. The security guards themselves moved aside to allow the mostly White group to enter undeterred, which demonstrated that being White symbolized an authority above suspicion and physical examination. The mostly White group is in constant control of their surroundings and their bodies. Whereas, for the non-White groups that must pass through security, their bodies are not totally within their control for the time they are passing through the metal detectors. Rather, they are under suspicion and scrutiny, with batons and security guards observing them. Andrew recognized that being allowed to avoid the security measures was a privilege related to his race that people of color would not be granted. Additionally, the depiction of privilege in Andrew's story tells of a passive relationship. He and his White colleagues did not actively try to avoid security, rather, the security guards moved away from them.

Lastly, Hannah highlighted how a mundane activity such as walking down the

street actually represents the ultimate White privilege after juxtaposing it with the murder of Trayvon Martin.

> And that's the ultimate privilege. That's the ultimate…That we can just walk down the street and know that we're not going to be attacked for who we are, that we're not gonna be…the whole thing driving while Black. That's a thing. That is a thing and people get killed…Yes. I think it probably started with Trayvon Martin that if you want to talk about a moment that flipped a switch for me. That's the first thing I remember. That's the first time I remember somebody just being shot…killed for no reason and then how that all played out and that they found that man not guilty.

The ultimate privilege for Hannah is the ability to walk down the street and not get killed by a security guard. It is only a White privilege because people of color are not afforded the same basic, daily, convenience. The ultimate privilege she described feels synonymous with freedom, as it is a freedom to walk outside of your house and not get killed. For White people, the privilege of not being attacked remains invisible because it is such a mundane activity and should be granted to all people.

In this subsection, White privilege becomes more visible to participants as White individuals are able to recognize their privilege in comparison to the experiences of people of color. However, a passive relationship with privilege exists in the descriptions in this section, as the privilege exists only in theory or as a juxtaposition. White privilege in this subsection is a theoretical comparison, where White individuals are privileged performing mundane and reflexive tasks such as asking questions, volunteering, and going for a walk or a drive. In the next sub-section, a more intentional and active

relationship with privilege will be depicted, one that does not require a juxtaposition to reveal itself.

4.2.3 Increased Visibility: Activated White Privilege

Up until this point, all participants defined White privilege as an absence of awareness of their race and the avoidance of harm and problems that people of color experience. However, one participant described White privilege as more than just the absence of harm. Rather, he described it as a privilege that is invoked by deliberately calling upon the resources and opportunities that can be provided by other White individuals. Jack described in detail how he deliberately activated his White privilege:

> I would say the interconnectedness that I have as a somewhat wealthy, influential, White guy, is just constant. Perfect example: my wife, just this morning, texted me. She's got an infection going on in her eye, "I don't know what to do." Well, I've got three doctors, the best doctors in the city, right now, that I can call, no appointment, they won't even charge, you know, just, "Hey, go over and see him. They'll figure it out and give you a prescription." Her brother, my brother-in-law, got diagnosed with cancer. Immediately, he's at [one of top hospitals in the country] because my father-in-law is a wealthy, powerful, [State] senator. So, he gets the best treatment there, immediately fit in. And then, that's not enough, I make some phone calls here, and he's at – the next day he's at [top hospital in state] and all the best doctors over there, because the board member goes to this church. I would just say, it's the connection. I'm a pastor, so I'm not very wealthy, but comparatively so, I am, but I would just say it's the connections.

> The availability. Whatever situation, I've got a person I can call with influence that it's taken care of the next day. I would say, when I talk to brothers and sisters in minority cultures, that world is just completely foreign to them. That a problem could come up and then make a phone call and it's done. Now, how much of that is my socioeconomic status, how much is that I'm White, how much is that, you know. I think on the course it's all interplaying, but I can tell you that it helps. I would say, just connections that I don't have to think about, other cultures have to think about mine. That kind of stuff.

Jack understood his White privilege included influence, connection, and immediate access to other powerful White individuals. Through their influence, Jack's family received access to the top medical coverage across two states for free. He had the ability to solve problems through his access to a network of other White individuals, which he believed people of color did not have access to. Lastly, Jack understood that access to the White network is not as dependent on wealth as it was on influence. As a pastor he did not consider himself wealthy based on his salary, but he had significant White privilege due to his influence and connections within the White community.

> Ian referred to social connections and influence as social capital. He referenced it when

talking about how he tries to be an ally by giving away what social capital he can and by helping people of color increase their own. However, he makes an interesting observation about social capital and White privilege: they do not diminish with usage. Rather, they actually increase the more they are used.

> And even in some sense, even by giving your power away, you're getting – part of what we're talking about in some of these forms of capital, like social capital especially – the more social trust you have, the more you use, the more you have. Some of these things aren't scarce resources, they're meant to be the more you use it, the more there is. It grows. In some ways, in some settings, by giving away of yourself, you actually are increasing your power.

According to Ian's description of social capital, it rejuvenates itself the more it is used. In fact, according to Ian, resources are meant to be used and shared. For White individuals, per Jack's description of his privilege, White privilege is a form of social capital. Therefore, the more White privilege is used between Whites, the greater their privilege grows as they trade needed resources.

4.2.4 Boundaries to White Privilege: Skin Color and Aesthetic

Three participants described how skin color acted as a boundary for determining who was White. Debbie, a Latina female, explained how her skin tone and aesthetic was used by other Whites to depict her as something other than White.

> Yeah, I identify as White, even though often times I say I pass as White because people are often like: "What are you?" Like, "Oh, you're very exotic looking." So, there's like that part of me that I'm like, "Oh, yeah, I am half Guatemalan." But in my day-to-day, English is my first language, everything about me, I went to Catholic schools growing up. So, I think I can, in a certain way, go between. Well, it's interesting, and I think this is where my mixed racial background comes in because growing up I was always "othered". All of the friends of my parents

would be like: “Oh, what are you? Oh, you’re so beautiful, your eyes are so different.” And, so I knew that I was different, even though I was within that culture. So, I didn’t realize that I was White… until I probably came to college because all throughout my middle and high school I was surrounded by actual White people, you know? White people with brown eyes and brown hair that didn’t look different. You know what I mean? [Me: So, growing up, you may not have identified as White through high school or…?]. I think I always did because it was always a surprise to me. Okay, so when people would be like: “What are you?” You’d be like: “You know, I’m White.” Or…I would be like, “I’m half Guatemalan”, because they would be asking me like, “What’s different about you?” [Me: You’re not fully White?]. Yeah, even still I check White, but I also check Hispanic or Latino.

This passage described the importance of skin color and aesthetics in determining who is White. For Debbie, she understood that the subtle differences in her aesthetics due to being half-Guatemalan caused “actual” White people to question her racial identity. Even in middle school, she knew that the questions that were “othering” were based on her appearance. She knew that her friend’s parents wanted to know what was different about her. When she arrived at college, and interacted with more people of color, her understanding of her racial identity changed. Having been raised in White culture Debbie now felt “in between”, as she did not feel like a person of color because she ascribed to White culture. She did not feel White either due to her skin color and aesthetic. The way she identifies now mirrors the U.S. census, as Latinos are free to choose their race (https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html).

Ian also realized the power and reach of skin color and White privilege while traveling abroad to visit his sister in Africa.

> I went to visit her when she was in the Peace Corps there. I remember very distinctly the kind of special treatment we got because we were White and powerful. I remember little children running up to us to greet us. I remember being asked to explain American Blacks. So, I remember that experience as being very odd, like when does a White person get to speak on behalf of American Blacks; that doesn't seem right. Because there, obviously, the color difference is very stark and a clear distinction…a feeling of privilege. [Me: Were there other feelings associated with that feeling of privilege?]. That the world wasn't just, that this is messed up. Not that people shouldn't feel welcome, regardless of their skin color, and that when you go visit a country it's nice to feel welcome and valued. But to have little children run up to greet you as if you are a famous person – it just seemed like it was a very stark depiction of privilege, of power. You want people to grow up thinking that people that look like them are beautiful, are powerful, are worthy. You also want them to grow up thinking people look different, so there's nothing wrong with thinking a White person looks attractive, or whatever.

Ian understood that even globally being White is a symbol of affluence and power, which is indicative of the White cultural belief in White superiority. Additionally, being White represented an authority on what is right, or accurate, as he was asked to speak on behalf of American Blacks. He recognized that the different (i.e. special)

treatment that he received was due to his skin color, which he labeled as a privilege. Ian's sentiment described the gravity of his interactions in Africa as he believed they were representative of an unjust world.

A stark example of the power of skin color as a boundary for White privilege is illuminated by Betty, as she described how her racially mixed sons did not receive the same privileges as she did.

> I think there's this thing that happens. I was White. I had privilege. I didn't think about my privilege. I just thought it was something everybody gets, you know? You just work and you get what you get. And I had this unacknowledged expectation that my children would have the same privileges and I found out, of course, that they don't. That was a real … that's what…it sort of hit me how unfair this is. It was hitting my family personally. When my son started to drive at 16 and he and his friends would be in the car and they'd pull into the gas station to get gas and a police officer would come up behind them and ask
> if they're getting gas and ask to see license and registration and when he gives them the registration it shows it belongs to a White woman and they're like, "Who's Betty Johnson?" My son would say, "That's my mother." They'd say, "Well, describe her"; like they were sure he was lying and that the car is stolen. That's one. Damn.

Betty's expectation was that her sons would receive the same everyday courtesies, benefits, and privileges that she received, such as walking down the street without being spit on and driving a car without police questioning the validity of its registration. However, after one of her sons was hospitalized for suicidal thoughts she finally realized

that their experiences were not fictional. She also realized that privilege was not something her sons would receive because of familial genealogy. Rather, race-based privilege is based on appearance and aesthetic and not genetic lineage.

4.3 The Intersection of White Privilege and White Culture

As revealed by Erica and Ian, White culture's purpose is to make White people forget about their Whiteness and White privilege. Accounts provided by George and Betty provided evidence for how White individuals become forgetful/unconscious of their White privilege. George began by describing an incident that involved a police officer who knew his father. To begin the story, George decided to describe his father's upbringing and his ascension in society.

> I am a White male, cis male, and as far as class, my father's family didn't have anything. He was sort of a self-made man with all the pros and cons that come with that. He was a realtor in [city in the south east] and so I feel in retrospect that I probably, you know, profited as a member of his family from the segregation that existed in [hometown] at that time…The story I told – I don't know if I told you this story, but the first time that I got pulled over for speeding…so, when the cop stepped out of the car I recognized him as a regular at my dad's auctions. My dad was an auctioneer also. So, I called him by name and told him whose son I was. He said, "Okay, I'm going to give you three chances but the third time I'm going to give you a ticket." I said, "Okay." In fact, the next two times I got pulled over was by this same cop in different parts of town. I don't know why it worked out that way but finally he gave me the ticket. But I

> think that I didn't realize – I just felt lucky that he knew my dad and so forth and I didn't really think of myself as gaming the system or having advantages that other people didn't have… It's just something I accepted. So, I spent a long time recognizing the differences in my experience based on racial things.

Later in life George realized that the advantages he received by knowing the cop's name were not solely based on the cop's connection to his father. However, when the incident first occurred, George stated that he did not view himself as gaming the system or having an unfair advantage. Part of the reason that George did not think he was gaming the system or having an unfair advantage was due to the fact that he appeared to believe that his dad had earned the advantage. He stated that his father was a self-made man and had worked hard and earned his advancement through real estate and being an auctioneer. By calling the cop by name and identifying the relationship with his father, George is activating the privilege that Jack described, which entailed using connections and influence. For George, he believed at the time that his father had earned this privilege, and that it was not race-based. It was not until looking back later in life that he is aware of the racial privilege that allowed him to bypass the tickets.

Betty also provided an example of overlooking her White privilege due to the perception of her father's position, or status, within her town.

> Yes. I remember when I went to [top-ranked university]. I couldn't wait to get out of my farming community. I went to [university] for my freshman year of college – freshman and sophomore – and we were in the dorm and some of the native [state residents] were complaining about the Latina people, Latinx people, who had been let into the school on Affirmative Action and I joined in the

> conversation and said, "Yeah, what's with that? I worked hard to get here." And if I had to be really honest with myself, I did not work hard at all, you know? My father was the school board president. Every year I would do things, get away with it. Other kids would get called into the principal's office. There were just no … I wouldn't do my homework and I'd make up something. It was crazy when I think about it: what I got away with and I didn't work hard. And when I see now African American people what some of them have achieved, I'm like, "Man, you should be ashamed of yourself. You had all that privilege and you haven't achieved any more than they have." You know?

Betty was able to reflect back on her mindset as a college freshman. She believed that she was hardworking and that her achievements were based on her merit. However, as she reflected back after over 40 years, she understood that she was not the hard worker she had once believed. Rather, she identified her father's position and career as having benefited her. However, at the time she did not see his position as an advantage or even a privilege. She may have been blind to it due to the thought that she earned the right through her family privilege, and the position she believed her father earned.

Similarly, at the beginning and end of her story, Betty compared herself to people of color, thereby reinforcing the need for White people to compare themselves to non-Whites to evaluate their Whiteness. At the beginning of her story, the idea of Latino/x students having gained college admittance through affirmative action angered Betty, as it appeared to her that the Latino/x students had not worked as hard to attain the entrance to the same university. At the end of the passage, Betty again compared herself to persons of color. She was ashamed for not having achieved more than persons of color in her life

due to the head start she had through her race-based privilege. Even in the present, she was comparing herself to people of color to evaluate her own achievements.

4.4 Being White and an Ally: Feeling Stuck Versus Finding the Balance

Since being White entails having White privilege, pursuing action as an ally requires the ability to navigate how issues of White privilege impact those actions. All of the participants in this study self-identified as allies and demonstrated at least some awareness of White privilege. Therefore, this section reveals how the participants of this study understood the intersection of their White privilege and their allyship. Two main themes emerged within how participants understood their White privilege and allyship. The two main themes are: 1) How White Privilege Impedes Allyship; and 2) Finding a Balance with Incorporating Privilege into Allyship.

4.4.1 How White Privilege Impedes Allyship

All participants described how having White privilege impeded their allyship at some point. However, it impeded allyship in three different ways. Some felt stuck in not knowing how to act as an ally with privilege. Others feared losing their privilege if they acted as an ally. Thirdly, others were cognizant of reinforcing power imbalances by employing their privilege in acts of allyship. The three ways that participants described how White privilege impedes their allyship are described below.

Feeling stuck. Four participants described how they felt stuck, or immobilized, in trying to understand how to act as an ally who also has White privilege. Betty opened by describing a general feeling of being stuck as an ally.

> I mean most of us, as White people, I think who are out there working for racial equity know that change is necessary and many of us are also kind of stuck in, "I don't know how that happens. I don't know what to do. I don't know even how to talk about it."

The desire to know how to move forward as an ally is sometimes crippling for White allies, as they may become overwhelmed with understanding that change is necessary but that creating change is difficult. Without a clear path forward, they have the potential to become "stuck" as Betty described.

Andrew provided an example of how White allies may become stuck in their efforts to integrate two forms of feedback on how to act as an ally.

> I think for me the two things I try to live by when trying to be an ally is the first to shut up and to not speak per se and, with that, comes listening – not just the not speaking, but the listening – and then the second part is the speaking up and the speaking out. And that sometimes can be a difficult balance because they can often seem like opposites.

Part of what it means to be an ally requires action and making effort to confront and challenge racism and systems of oppression. Speaking out against injustice is a required action for an aspiring ally. However, it is important for allies to listen and learn so that when they speak out the messages that they deliver are beneficial and not harmful. As Andrew noted, it is a difficult balance to strike between knowing when to speak out and when to listen. Due to a fear of causing harm, many allies may ere on the side of caution and not speak up.

Frank described how his fear of causing harm immobilized his ability to act as an ally. He detailed the different factors that made him feel stuck after a colleague of color placed the responsibility for combating racism and oppression at the feet of White people.

> I went to a conference, a national one, and one of my colleagues from [Southern University] was there and she's an African-American lady and she was giving a keynote lecture on racial reconciliation and she said something that bothered me then and still bothers me now because I don't know what to do with it, which is a good place to be but it's also just kind of like, I want it to be resolved, you know? And she was talking about how, she said it's not the obligation, or it's not the responsibility, I'm not sure which word she said, it's not their obligation or it's not the responsibility of the oppressed to explain or to discover how to stop being oppressed. Does that make sense? So, in theory that made sense to me, but it wasn't – it struggled for me because I also then wonder, if we're all just well-intentioned White people, you know, say there is no racism [within the well intentioned White person] and we're well-intentioned, like just doing beneficence, doing good, might also cause some harm. It might also, maybe, limit some autonomy, you know? So, like I would want to know from an African-American particular perspective, what would be some very tangible things, maybe large scope policy wise, that need to be changed so that I can better know how to vote.

Frank struggled to figure out how to transform his responsibility to fight discrimination and oppression into action. Despite having good intentions, he struggled with the fear and belief that acting to combat oppression might either harm persons of

color or undermine their autonomy. Therefore, he desired tangible direction from people of color to instruct him on how to act. He believed that receiving instructions from people of color would safeguard him from causing harm, while also assuaging his guilt. However, it also would shift the responsibility to people of color to instruct him, which is what his colleague of color asked him not to do. Therefore, Frank felt stuck in figuring out how to move forward as an ally.

Frank provided an example of failing to act that involved his best friend, a man of color, and racism at the university where Frank worked. Frank's best friend, whose father also had connections to the university, was caught in the rain and went into the administration building to ask if he could make a phone call. Instead of being granted the call, the staff called the police on him. In the passage below, Frank described his process in trying to figure out what to do after learning about his best friend's experience.

> Right. So, the way I approached it is I first apologized to him because I represented this institution too. It's like I'm embarrassed and I'm ashamed that you were treated this way. And I also told him, I was like, it should not matter that your dad has connections here. You're a human being and you deserve to get a phone call and stay out of the rain, as people do. And I asked him if there was anything that he wanted me to – and there wasn't. He posted on Facebook and he wanted to vent about it and people in the community made comments on it saying that sounds just like this place. Which was also – I was just like, man, we need to do something about this. You know, like we need to have a better presence in our community if that's what a lot of people are feeling. Yeah, but he didn't want me to do anything. He said he just wanted to vent. So, I don't know. Yeah.

Frank gave up when his friend did not provide him with specific actions to take to remediate the situation. In this case, Frank is burdening his friend with the responsibility of figuring out how to end the systems of oppression, just as his colleague at the conference had asked him not to do. Frank did not take any personal responsibility for challenging the oppression that existed within the university where he currently worked due to fear of limiting his friend's agency. Frank's fear of limiting his friend's autonomy is severe and also somewhat narrow. Instead of asking his friend to tell him what to do, Frank could have devised his own desired plan to challenge the racism at his university. He could have assumed responsibility of his own to challenge the university's racism since he represented the university. After having devised his own plan, Frank could have sought feedback and approval from his friend, which would have relieved the burden from his friend. However, by solely asking his friend without doing his own work first, he has overburdened his friend to prescribe a course of action for Frank.

Casey also described not knowing what to do when she first became interested in racial justice. In particular, Casey named her White privilege as something that she saw as an impediment and something she originally viewed as useless. However, feedback from a Latino friend provided her with a new outlook on the utility of her White privilege.

> When I was first learning about racial justice I felt really guilty because I had spent my whole life just not thinking about this stuff and not realizing what people had gone through. I felt that I wanted to make positive changes, but I had no idea how to do that and I kind of wished I didn't have this privilege because it feels so useless. It doesn't feel like it's worth anything. It just keeps me away

> from people. It keeps me from understanding other people. And a friend of mine who is Latino said you can't give up your privilege. Some people try to get rid of all their money or, you know, they'll decide they don't need a fancy education because other people don't have access to it. They'll somehow prevent themselves from having an opportunity in a way that doesn't make systemic changes. It changes their life but it's not necessarily helping. So, he said don't get rid of it; weaponize it. You have privilege and you can use it as a tool.

Casey had a desire to help make changes, but as described by Betty, Andrew, and Frank, she originally did not know where to begin. She viewed her privilege as useless and a deterrent, as it prevented her from understanding and connecting with those whom she was trying to help. However, her friend helped to reframe Casey's viewpoint on White privilege by asking her to consider it as a tool to fight discrimination and oppression. Casey was originally stuck, until she received direction from her friend. The comparison of White privilege to a weapon is fitting, as a weapon is typically used to cause harm. Therefore, a weapon such as White privilege must be used appropriately, or it runs the risk of causing harm. The risks of using White privilege as a weapon to fight racism and oppression will be discussed in an upcoming section that will examine how White privilege reinforces power imbalances.

Fear of losing privilege. As described previously in this results section, some of the benefits of White privilege are physical safety, comfort, and having influence. Two participants described how acting as allies would diminish their White privileges regarding physical safety and influence with other White individuals.

Andrew stated that the murder that occurred in Charlottesville, VA during the alt-

right protest in the summer of 2017 had changed his desire to attend protests and rallies.

> And I go to rallies and protests quite frequently and I know there's always the potential, but after what's been happening and particularly after what just happened in Charlottesville I feel like I would change my answer of what I probably…or like the one about violence would ensure. I think I said like, "Maybe it would." But now it's like, "probably." You know? So, it's just interesting how I wonder what I would have answered to some of those questions had I taken the survey on Monday versus before everything that happened.

Andrew is now contemplating the risk to his physical safety that he might encounter in his work as an ally. Previously, in his ally-related work he had not felt uncomfortable attending protests and rallies. However, the threat of physical safety is now very real and very risky for him and other potential White allies. The risk to his physical safety, a reality that people of color live with daily, appears to impede his desire to fight oppression and racism by going to rallies and protests.

Jack described becoming stuck in trying to figure out how to use his White privilege to create change in his community. As a pastor, Jack received direction from pastors of color to challenge other Whites who are racist.

> He is a Black prophet in my world. But his big thing is, "Hey, White church. We know it's really cool now to go into the areas that are being gentrified and plant these hip, cool, multiethnic congregations. We really don't need you to do that. We need you to go to the White, Trump-loving, Black-hating people. You're the only one that can reach them. So, build a church for them. Instead of trying to come build churches for us, we really need you to go leverage what you can do

> for us, and reach these people, and get them outta their racism," and stuff like that. I'm battling that. It's a huge struggle. It's a huge struggle. "Y'all could plant a church at the trailer parks. And y'all could teach them. Y'all could proclaim to them the good news of Jesus' love for them, and that that means them loving their neighbors. And you could transform their worldview and all that stuff." I can get a lot of people to sign up to go to the cool church downtown. I don't know how many people I'm gonna get to sign up to go plant the trailer park church. But I think, from what I'm hearing from these guys, I think that probably is the harder work. And the more important work. And we don't do that culture well either. Good gracious. You know.

Jack is struggling because, as a pastor, he wants to build a congregation that is multiethnic in the churches that he oversees. He admitted that building multiethnic congregations would serve as evidence that his church had achieved racial reconciliation for their previous racist behavior, which was important to Jack. However, Black pastors in his community were telling him explicitly that building multiethnic congregations was not their need. Instead, the Black pastors asked him to direct his efforts and White privilege towards challenging racist, Trump-loving Whites. Jack admitted his struggle with approaching other Whites as it might decrease his influence, which he previously revealed was a large part of his White privilege. He explained how his influence may be risked below:

> I'm a person of influence, and I have access to influence. It's me asking the question – having the courage to ask the question, "What do I do with that?" So, right now at this church I've got powerful, wealthy, influential White guys. I

> have access to, and influence over, some of the most powerful people in the state. And I'm talking, in every area. Now, I could take that and slowly, and I mean slowly, take these influencers and help them see these things, and what would happen if I took some of these business men, and they got so passionate about this, that they put the Check-to-Cash places out of business in [southern city] because they're preying on people of color. What would it look like to take some of these businessmen and get them to dream about, how can we come into the impoverished parts of our city, and fight for justice, and do some cool stuff, that you could do with your power, and your money, and all that stuff? Or change the culture [of his currently all-White church], make it multiethnic, do more radical stuff, and they'd [White influencers in his congregation] be gone. How do I take, and I get difference of opinions on this from my Black brothers and sisters, some of them say, "People listen to you in ways they'll never listen to us. Just slowly keep it going." To other people who just want me to be the fiery prophet who calls them out and tells them to repent, and if they leave church, they leave church, and you know. So, do I compromise my platform that can do so much good, to do…? You know. That's where I've gotten.

Jack felt that if his congregation would reflect multiethnic identities he could potentially change the culture of his church, which was described as problematic to him previously. A large part of Jack's identity as a pastor was called into question when it was made known to him that people of color might not feel comfortable attending his church. Therefore, making his congregation multiethnic would help assuage his guilt for having an all-White congregation and would also strengthen his identity as a pastor.

Additionally, Jack is struggling with how to challenge other White individuals. If he were to challenge the racism of White individuals, he may lose some of his influence if the powerful White individuals were to leave his church. Therefore, Jack is struggling with how to retain his privilege, as a person, a pastor, and an ally, in order to retain his ability to use his influence to challenge other Whites.

Hannah described the physical risk to her White privilege that she confronted when asked to walk in a 4th of July parade with a group of White allies on behalf of Black Lives Matter.

> The first thing I did with [local chapter of national anti-racism organization] that wasn't just going to a film and a discussion was they were asked by the [large southern city] Black Lives Matter chapter to march in the [smaller city] Fourth of July parade on behalf of Black Lives Matter and so about ten of us – I would say is all that we ended up with – marched in the parade with a big banner and carrying signs that said how many people of color had been killed by police in the last year and carrying mocked up gravestones. I entered that fully expecting to be pulled off of the parade route and also not knowing what kind of reaction we would get, and it was a very profound experience because we were permitted to finish, we weren't pulled off the route, and we got incredible responses from the people…where they're talking about your safety and "If you decide you need to leave", like, "If we're asked to leave, recognize that if you don't leave, you could probably well be arrested." So, there was a group of us that said, "I'm not up for being arrested, so I would leave" and it was, "Don't leave by yourselves. Always go with someone else. Be aware of your surroundings." That was my

> very first experience with realizing that there's a danger to speaking out in defense of people of color because there's so much hatred and that obviously is…and realizing that we experience that in such a small form and they experience it every day walking down the street. So, there haven't been a lot of – or at least not that I participated in – because I have to admit that I try – as an introvert and as someone who is averse to risking getting arrested, to be honest – I do pick and choose what I do with that in mind for a few reasons. I'm very claustrophobic and the thought of being put in a jail cell makes me crazy.

Hannah acknowledged feeling a tiny dose of the same fear that she realized people of color have to experience constantly. However, she also revealed her choice to leave if her physical safety, through being arrested, was threatened. She participated in the parade and had a rewarding experience, but also understood that she was not willing to risk harm to her body, even with the recognition that people of color have to live with this harm. As allies, if we are not willing to experience the same harm that people of color are subject to the system will not change.

Ian critically evaluated his allyship based on how much of his White privilege he actually risked in his aspirations to be an ally. He wondered if the system would ever change if he was not risking enough of his privilege.

> How much am I really risking? The things where I've really paid a high price for are the personal stuff – inviting homeless kids to live with us? We paid a heavy price for that emotionally. But what we did didn't change Dominican society. I wasn't yielding to leadership for people of color, you know what I mean?

As an ally, Ian understood that despite his well-intentioned actions, without a risk to his privilege change would not occur. He also understood that despite some well-intentioned individual acts as an ally his White privilege was not in jeopardy. Erica also wondered about how much privilege she had to risk within her workplace.

> Within the workplace, I have a tremendous amount of power in my job because I'm an institutional leader. I'm trusted. I'm an alum of this particular place that I work. And so, that gives me a lot of privilege regardless of my race. But it's also a White institution, so I'm able to facilitate conversations around race and equity in ways that people of color cannot. And that I wouldn't put that burden on them. I am able to challenge policies and practices and structures in a way that people of color cannot. I have very little to lose in bringing up things.

At work, Erica suggested that she has significant White privilege through social capital. Therefore, she revealed that she did not have much to lose while attempting to be an ally for her colleagues of color. In general, Erica is evaluating how much White privilege she has within her workplace and is using it to evaluate her actions as an ally. Without risking more of her privilege, it appeared as though the same racism continued to emerge, and the overall system was not changed.

Fear of reinforcing power imbalances by using White privilege. Participants revealed how acting as an ally can actually increase their privilege. Three participants described how acting as an ally may provide financial benefit to White individuals. One participant, Ian, described how acting as an ally provides an emotional gain, as White allies may view themselves as saviors. Lastly, four participants shared that acting as an

ally may help White individuals retain positions of power and leadership that are already a component of Whiteness and White superiority.

FINANCIAL GAIN. Casey shared her opinion that an aspiring White ally should not benefit from social justice work.

> You know, it's important not to take personal claim over ideas that are not yours and not to do work because you'll benefit from it but because it's right. Yeah, it's hard. There are so many gray areas, but I think that is always a risk. There were a bunch of [national anti-racism organization] organizers. There's threads in an email with organizers from all over the country in different [national anti-racism organization] chapters and someone was promoting this book that a White guy wrote about doing racial justice work and someone said, "I'm really uncomfortable using our educational threads to promote something that's going to make a White guy money for doing this work."

Casey delineated two ways that a person may benefit from performing social justice work. One would be taking credit for another person's ideas. The other would be making money from the work, which in this case took the form of having written a book about racial justice. She described it as a risk for an ally to operate in a gray area where making a profit is included. Although she does not use the word privilege specifically, making money off of racism as a White person increases both their financial privilege as well as their social capital in certain social circles.

Hannah also recognized the issue with making a financial profit from ally work. While attending a lecture by the author Tim Wise, she noticed that some Black attendees

were leaving the lecture. She thought about what it meant for people of color to hear a White man getting paid to talk about race.

> Yeah. He spoke that day and it was interesting to me to watch how…I wondered how, and once again the audience was a lot of White people, but a lot of Black people too – probably half and half maybe. There were a few odds and ends of people that…Black people that got up and left during his speech and I thought – it made me think about how does what he's saying sit with Black people? Of course, it's gonna be different from person-to-person, but there were some people that just, I got the sense that they're like, "I don't need to listen to this White guy talk about this stuff. I live it." You know? He's making his living from it. He sells books and he speaks and…yeah. But I do remember sitting there listening to him and thinking, this is really self-centered. In listening to him, I thought, this is all about him.

When Hannah put herself in the shoes of the persons of color who were leaving Tim Wise's talk early, she assumed they were turned off by an unrealized message he is delivering. The message is that another White man is profiting off of race and racism, and therefore the harm experienced by persons of color. Additionally, Hannah recognized that he is getting paid to speak about himself, which not only afforded him financial gain but social capital as well, as he receives adulation for sharing his thoughts and opinions.

Betty also understood that it is an issue for White individuals to be paid for performing ally work. She explained how and why profiting in any way from ally work is dangerous and named White privilege as the primary factor for the danger.

> What I'm out there saying on a regular basis is the same thing peoples of color have been saying for decades and decades, but they couldn't get in the door. If they could get in the door, nobody was listening. And so, my White privilege is now getting me and mycolleagues into the door, you know like for some reason they can hear it from us and they couldn't hear it before. Like I said, peoples of color have been trying to do this for decades, if not centuries, and now White people are stepping up and getting paid to do it, which is kind of a repeat of the same old oppression.

Betty understood that having White privilege afforded her many benefits as an ally. She was able to "get in the door" and gain an audience that people of color may not have been able to gain. She was able to be taking more seriously by her White audience and state things that people of color had already stated. Lastly, she stated that White individuals and organizations have monetized their ability to re-iterate the statements of people of color. Betty explained that getting paid to reiterate what people of color have already stated is a problem, as it reinforces power imbalances. Restating what people of color had already stated makes White privilege necessary. It also maintains the current power structure that elevate Whites and subjugates people of color, as Whites with privilege are needed to assist people of color getting in the door.

EMOTIONAL GAIN: BEING A WHITE SAVIOR. Ian described another form of benefit that White allies receive, which is the emotional reward for being helpful. He discussed how being a savior, or rescuer, of others is valued by White individuals.

> And we find this in the [human] trafficking issue with rescue. People wanna be rescuers. And part of that is the way that's socialized. Who wants to be rescued? No one. That's why lifeguards have to knock people out to save them because no one wants the lifeguard to rescue them. You don't get, "Hooray. Look at Ian. He was so great at being rescued." No one likes that. That's part of this, "Well, we wanna be these rescuers." And so, we find that the whole savior mentality, which as White people, especially religious White people like myself, have been trained to value and honor, that can actually be pretty harmful to diminishing people's agency and dignity…right. And this is the same kind of thing in my anti-trafficking work. You don't really want people that are in it for stuff they get out of it, that wants to be the rescuer. That's ultimately not gonna be very helpful. Even if, maybe, they initially go in for that reason, you want them to realize, "Okay. This really isn't about me at all."

As Ian noted, we are socialized to feel good about being a savior, especially in the White religious world. The reward of feeling good about being a savior makes allyship more about the White ally than the marginalized person. Ian understood that an act of allyship that was initiated solely to make allies feel good about themselves would ultimately not be helpful; and it may potentially limit the autonomy of people of color as well as potentially cause harm.

MAINTAINING POSITIONS OF POWER AND AUTHORITY. Using White privilege within acts of allyship may help White individuals maintain positions of authority. Andrew explained that speaking up as an ally may be problematic if his act of speaking up limits the autonomy of a person of color.

> I mean I know my voice will be heard and I know it'll be taken more seriously, but that's also when the need to shut up comes in sometimes too because I can't just rely on that because then I have the potential of constantly taking away the voice or the space for someone else to be heard who I know is likely more able to speak to what's happening and the issue.

As previously described in the section on White privilege, being in the majority is a privilege because it allows the voice of a White person to be heard. As a White male with privilege, Andrew understood that he has the ability to speak up and be heard without ever being told it is too much. He understood that it is a balance, as he previously described, between speaking up and listening. If a White person chooses to speak up, they risk reinforcing their position of authority by taking away the opportunity for people of color to share their expertise.

For Debbie, using her privilege to protect persons of color seemed valuable and important at first. However, after processing her thoughts during the interview she gained an understanding that assuming the role of protector also reinforced existing power imbalances.

> When the camera, or news, or camera phones, that technology has viscerally put racism in the face of White people. And they can avoid it, but if you're watching

the news and another Black man is killed, they're likely gonna show it on the news. And so, I think – technology has also kind of helped to shout and magnify the voices. But then, there's always the disbelief: Black Lives Matter is a cult; Black Lives Matter wants to kill White people. So, it's like negating those theories, but also like I already said to you today, it's so difficult to have conversations with people who utilize false news and don't believe the truth. So, it's also, in a sense, allyship is creating a safe haven and protecting my friends of color from that, or my students of color, or my community of color. [Me: Does that have an element of privilege in it that as a White person you're there to protect them?]. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. [Me: Right, so is that a good thing or a bad thing to able to use your privilege to protect them?] I think it's a bad thing because they need protecting…

When describing the need for White privilege to protect people of color, Debbie missed the paternalistic nature of providing protection, which reinforced a power imbalance that White individuals can have control over the safety of persons of color. However, as the interview progressed, she started to re-think it:

It's definitely helped me to reflect on my role because I don't think I realized I was trying to protect my friends of color. So, that's a realization for me. And

> how do I create safety for them without protecting them? How do I increase their safety, without using my Whiteness. I don't know, that's like…it's hard.

After reflecting on the interview, Debbie realized that she was unaware that she was even trying to protect her friends, most likely due to the unconscious nature of White culture and White privilege. After realizing her unconscious motive to protect her friends of color, she began to dissect the nuance between trying to protect persons of color versus helping to keep them safe. She identified the struggle of not wanting to provide protection, as that is paternalistic and may limit the autonomy of persons of color, with also wanting to use her privilege to try to create safety.

Casey also described an incident that revealed her desire to protect a Black woman who was being verbally harassed by a White man. Casey used her White privilege to protect the woman of color but did not use her privilege to rebuke the White aggressor.

> I've seen people get harassed in parking lots and stuff like that, especially women of color getting yelled at or people getting too close to them and trying to intimidate them. It was at a [national grocery store chain] parking lot. It was a White man. Yeah, and she seemed to just be trying to ignore him. She wasn't really engaging but she also wasn't running away or anything. But she seemed uncomfortable. I wasn't comfortable with the way he was talking to her. Like, if someone was talking to me that way I would feel very threatened. So, I went up and just said, "Hey, how are you? Can I do anything for you? Are you all right?" He just kept talking. I mostly kept talking to her and it was one of those weird

> situations where the theory is you can engage with the aggressor or with the person who is being attacked. It kind of depends what you're safe to do. He was scary so I decided to just talk to her just so she wasn't alone. We just walked in the store and eventually he just wandered off because we weren't listening, and we were engaging in a discussion together.

Casey's example invoked a paternalistic use of White privilege. By not engaging with the White man due to his aggressiveness and her fear for her own safety, the White man is left undeterred from potentially harassing another person of color. Although Casey's work potentially kept the woman of color safe in the moment, she failed to engage the White male perpetrator to inform him that his actions were wrong. If she had chosen to engage with the White man instead, her privilege as a White woman may have allowed her to engage with the aggressor and combat his racist behavior, which may have prevented him from harassing other people of color again in the future. Her protection of the woman of color only maintained the dominant status of White individuals, either as aggressors or protectors. It also maintained the status of people of color as inferior and in need of protecting.

Ian, a doctoral student in political science, described how being an advocate for change may also reinforce his power as a White man.

> If I was to get up, I might talk about how our prison system's racist. As a political scientist, present evidence or whatever, but we should advocate policy change. Sure. That wouldn't be entirely it, because then I'm still a White man in charge.

Ian understood that if he were to push for systemic changes within the criminal justice system he would also perpetuate the current power dynamics where White man

are typically in charge. Ian, and the other participants in this current section, have revealed a paradox that appears to exist for White allies. The paradox suggests that if an ally advocates for change, or weaponizes their privilege, and retains or increases their privilege through their acts of allyship, the system that already privileges Whites is maintained and potentially reinforced.

4.4.2 Finding a Balance: Recognizing White Privilege in Allyship

Seven participants described their efforts to manage, and at times suppress, White privilege in their efforts as allies. Three themes were identified for how participants in this dissertation attempted to manage their White privilege within allyship. The three themes will be explored in the next sections and are entitled, muting privilege, intercepting other Whites, and finding a balance between privilege and action.

Muting White privilege. Muting privilege, as described by the participants of this study, took several forms. One form entailed literally shutting up. Another form of muting privilege entailed letting people of color lead. Lastly, muting privilege also entailed assuming a support role, and moving against the leadership position that White privilege vaults White individuals into most of the time.

SHUTTING UP. Previously, Andrew described being an ally as literally shutting up and not speaking. He stated that not speaking allowed people of color to have space to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Debbie revealed a similar sentiment when she described what it was like for her to be an ally and identify as White.

> I think it's like recognizing your power, but also knowing when to shut up. Because it's not transformative when [White] people talk about racism. And I

> think it's supporting people of color talking about their experiences or the system. But also, continuously and constantly educating myself and others because there is so much that I still don't know, you know? I think it's like building the power in others too to talk about their experiences when I…and it's so…also hard to do that because experiences of people of color are constantly questioned, and judged, and there's a perception put on it, just like what we're currently experiencing with women talking about their sexual harassment and rape.

Debbie highlighted the fact that the experiences of people of color are often questioned and judged when they are shared. Therefore, shutting up means that White individuals need to listen in a non-judgmental fashion, which allows for the understanding that although the experiences shared by persons of color seem unimaginable to White individuals they are indeed very real. A perfect example of the invalidation of the experiences of people of color was shared earlier by Betty who did not believe her own sons' experience with racism. Shutting up allows White individuals to mute their White privilege, as they reframe from taking up space that can now be used by people of color to share their experiences from which Whites can benefit and learn.

LETTING PEOPLE OF COLOR LEAD. White people are typically accustomed to being in leadership positions, due to a myriad of reasons that include systemic racism and White privilege. However, according to two participants of this study, being an ally required adjusting the frame of how to be a leader within social justice. As Casey described below, she assumed she would come in to a social justice organization with a solution that would lead the way forward for others. However, she realized that people of color were already leading themselves and did not need the solutions she thought she would provide.

> I think I had realized there was a racial disparity but for some reason still expected the room to be mostly well-intentioned White people wanting to help, as opposed to people of color helping themselves…I thought of White people as having an equal role in it or, I guess, the same role. I think it's all necessary, but I didn't think of it in terms of "go get your White people and deal with them so we don't have to." It was we are all already in the room together. It changed from me feeling like I needed to come in with a solution to now me coming in and saying, "What do you want from me? How can I help you?"

Casey's expectations of herself as an ally changed. At first, she thought she would use her White privilege to assume a leadership role and provide solutions to people of color on how to fix racism. However, she realized that people of color already had solutions and were already leading themselves. She decided to redirect her allyship away from helping people of color to helping White people stay out of the way of people of color. She also decided to mute her privilege by assuming a support role and asking people of color how she could help in that support role.

Ian essentially agreed with Casey that allyship entailed letting people of color lead him on how to be involved.

> It means, when possible, letting others who haven't had a chance to speak to speak. It means, whereas my inclination is to take leadership, it means to be a little bit more thoughtful in what that looks like and to let others step up and lead.
>
> Yeah. And I guess the missing piece, now that we're talking – it would be great if there was – or let's say, in an ideal world, where you have people of color leading. And rather than going in to lead or start your own organization, you basically say,

> "Hey, look. Put me to work. Here's what I can do. How could I help?" Some of that might be interacting with Whites. So, Whites might be able to hear more from me than a person of color. Some of that might be that I might have advantages in certain kinds of activities as a White person that I can be useful.

Like Casey, Ian understood that allyship meant preventing White individuals from interfering with the leadership of people of color. It also included showing up with a desire to be helpful, which included taking direction from persons of color and joining activities or organizations that are already in performing ally-related work. The shift from leading to supporting also marks a shift in focusing on oneself to assuming a support role, where kudos and financial and emotional rewards may not appear. Therefore, the shift in letting people of color lead also marks a shift in personal gain.

PLAYING A SUPPORTING ROLE. Casey outlined how shutting up and letting others lead allowed White allies to assume a supporting role. The value of being supportive may be overlooked in White culture due to White culture's desire to be individualistic and action-oriented. However, the example provided by Casey revealed how White allies may mute their privilege by playing a supporting role when attempting to act as an ally.

> So, coming in and just being flexible to whatever the needs are. Like I told someone recently, sometimes ally should mean shutting up because you don't always have to be the one to talk…I saw the other [White] woman that works on that campaign start taking notes without asking one day because she realized that there was stuff that we needed to keep track of and financial stuff and with fundraising, things like that, and a list of questions we had for a particular city

> council member. Mike [person of color with name redacted] and Tony [person of color with name redacted] were so emotionally invested that it was just taking everything out of them to have this conversation.

Casey highlighted the importance of taking notes for the leaders, who were persons of color, at a community-organizing meeting. Later, she highlighted how driving colleagues and preparing dinner for people are additional actions that are supportive and very valuable. For White individuals, being supportive is key to allyship as it provides emotional and physical support to persons of color as well as other White allies. Being supportive also allowed Casey and other White allies to contribute without highlighting their White privilege. They have not removed privilege from their identities, they have just attempted to make it dormant while performing ally work.

In general, the act of being supportive can often be overlooked by White allies. George described working on the Jesse Jackson presidential campaign in the 1980s but did not feel as though he was acting as an ally based on the type of work he performed:

> I wish I had a good story from that campaign but all I did was stuff envelopes and do office stuff. Yeah, it was a great experience to be in a situation where the leadership was African-American.

George felt as though his experience working on the Jesse Jackson campaign was not a "good" story of allyship, as he only stuffed envelopes and did other office-related work. He failed to see the value in a White individual assisting the campaign of a Black man for president, especially if the White individual was not in a leadership position.

Erica discussed how White privilege is accompanied by power and how balancing that power and privilege created tension for her in her professional role. Her role, at a mostly White private university, involved fostering community partnerships within the predominantly Black neighborhood which was adjacent to the school.

> It's about not taking on that power. Representing an institution [the private university where she works] in a neighborhood is so loaded when you're thinking around privilege and power. And as a White institution in a majority Black neighborhood ensuring that everything that we do is not about taking credit but ensuring that there is empowerment in resident leaders who are doing it. That is a tension that I am managing every day. And making sure that, that equity lens is part of everything that we do. Saying at every meeting the reason that we are not taking credit for this is because this is not our work. This is X residents' work, this is X community's work…Yeah, I think that's the crest of the tension. It's a power for me. A lot of my work colleagues [of color] don't have power.

Erica believed that part of allyship was not taking credit for work that others are doing, as well as making sure that those who are doing the work receive the credit they are due. However, due to power and privilege this can be difficult if the power and privilege provide resources to support persons of color. In a truly supportive role, Erica's viewpoint was that her university should not be in a position to take or receive credit. However, the tension and balance of the privilege associated with her role at a predominantly White university are omnipresent for her. Her university has resources they are trying to lend to support their neighbors of color, however, she is attempting to

tailor her efforts to be supportive and not usurp the work of the people of color in the neighborhood. She is trying to play a support role and make sure her privilege, and the privilege associated with her university, does not impede the autonomy of the community members they are trying to assist.

Intercepting other Whites. Previously, Betty, and Ian also described how they have used their privilege to intercept other White individuals who were enacting racist behavior. Two other participants described their actions to intercept other Whites. Andrew described speaking out in support of colleagues of color whose ideas had been looked over.

> Yeah, I mean I feel like at meetings quite frequently if it's a racially mixed group and a colleague of mine – who's a person of color – has said something like an idea; she speaks up and said something, an idea, and it's passed over, but it's an idea and either someone then restates a very similar idea and then I'm able to say like, "Well, that's exactly what Mary just stated. So, I'm not understanding why this idea's any different from what she shared."

By shutting up and allowing space for non-White individuals to talk in a work meeting, Andrew was able to observe that an idea posed by a colleague of color was overlooked after a White individual re-stated the same idea. Andrew was able to use his voice to highlight that his colleague of color was overlooked. The example is complicated because his use of privilege, although directed at other Whites, remains paternalistic in his taking up for his college. However, if he had remained silent and not

spoken up she would not have been recognized, and more importantly the oversight the group made of her would not have been recognized.

Erica described how a White individual can perform ally work that attempts to relieve the burden from people of color while also attempting to protect their autonomy.

> We hosted for the second time a two-and-a-half-day undoing racism workshop for community residents and [mid Atlantic university] members. And so, two years ago we did our whole staff as well as all your group partnership leaders…And there was a lot of White-lash from [mid Atlantic university] people coming out of this workshop. They weren't emotionally ready for it. [Me: White lash, sorry, just so I'm clear, is that people being angry at White people?]. White people being angry at being asked to think about things that they don't want to think about. And so, one of my colleagues of color, university colleagues of color, was getting all of these questions after the workshop like, "Well, you didn't really think that that's what they meant?" And so, very quickly I was like, I have to insert myself here. This is not her work, this is not her burden. I need to take this one. And so, I was able to do that. And I spent like three days in the work week, and this is sort of outside my general duties, meeting one-on-one with these White colleagues and challenging them, in some ways encouraging them to read certain things because that backlash toward her – not appropriate, not happening. Horrible – professionally and personally. And it's the personal. I think that is the most important thing for me. Workwise, she's safe. But she cannot take that home every day. No way. And so, yesterday there was this – there's a workshop coming off next week…And so, I was really excited because a

> White colleague of mine called and was like, do you mind if I reach out to the whole group and invite everyone to attend. And I was like, oh, please start doing that. The more White colleagues that can take up some of this work and take on the burden of organizing and holding the conversations – because that's really what it is. There's no resolution really, just holding it, holding that tension and being able to manage it. That's my goal.

Erica's actions attempted to find a balance between taking on the responsibility of "going to get her White people", as Casey described earlier, and protecting her colleague of color from the emotional harm and burden that her White colleagues were unintentionally inflicting. Erica understood that it was not her colleague's role or burden to make her White colleagues feel better after they were challenged with thoughts that made them uncomfortable. Although, from the outside it might appear that Erica limited the autonomy of her colleague of color by responding herself, it also relieved the burden that her colleague of color may have carried. In this sense, Erica was not taking a leadership opportunity away from her colleague of color, rather she was assuming a leadership position to challenge their White colleagues, which relieved the burden from her colleague of color.

Finding the balance between White privilege and action. Finding a balance between muting privilege and acting in a way that allows people of color to lead and does not exert

White privilege requires a nuanced approach. Two participants described their approach and process that attempted to strike a balance between listening, learning, and then acting.

Erica described the nuances within allyship, as well as the nuanced role that allies need to play in their interactions with people of color. She described an attempt to support a colleague of color without using her privilege to usurp his autonomy.

> I have a colleague who is a Black male, who I've known for 15 years who is burnt out, frankly, working at our place of employment, and has very much been the person who young people of color have come to for years and years. And he has heard their concerns and their complaints. And he has tried to bring them forward to the institutional level for a long time. And he is burnt out on it, and for very real reasons. So, after really sitting down – and again, we've been friends for a long time and we trust each other. And he said, "I need your help with this." I think that where I get stuck is if he didn't ask me, I wouldn't take up some of his causes. Not because I wouldn't want to, but I wouldn't want to take that power away from him, to take them forward himself. But since he has asked, I will step in. Not just back him up but bring up things that he doesn't have the energy to bring up anymore. [Me: So, if he doesn't bring them to you, then, do you think, I need to go ask him?]. Yeah, and that's a real tension there. I don't know that there's a right or a wrong way of doing it. I think that for me it's developing relationships that are built upon trust with my colleagues of color, and letting them know, very frankly, that I've got their back if they want me to…I'll always have their back, but if there are specific things that I can elevate or where they want help, to just ask. And oftentimes if I see something that's not going somewhere, I'll also reach back and be like, do you want my help with this? Or do you want me to raise this? Or what support can I give you? But I also know

enough that I can't solve everything, and I'm not trying to play that role. I want to be an ally for them, but not a savior.

Erica acknowledged the tension of wanting to help as an ally but trying to respect and maintain the autonomy and power of people of color. She revealed that part of her work as an ally was gaining the trust of her colleagues of color and sharing with them that she was willing to raise issues and support them if they deemed her help useful. It appeared as though she let her colleagues of color know she was willing to be an ally and waited for them to approach her with issues, which worked to maintain their autonomy. She also revealed that she will reach out and ask people of color if they need her help and support if she felt it might be needed. Her approach is more nuanced than the one Frank took with his best friend, as she is not asking a person of color to tell her what to do. Rather, she is asking if she can provide help or support. The act of asking if her help was needed is a way of preserving the power and autonomy of people of color, as it provided them the power to decide whether or not to allow her efforts to be included. Lastly, Erica stated that she was unsure of whether or not there is a right or wrong way of being an ally. However, her description may suggest a more formulaic approach, with the formula including building trust with people of color, demonstrating knowledge of the issues, always being ready to play a support role, and asking if you can engage prior to taking action.

Jack described a formula that was similar to Erica's for moving toward action as an ally. His formula included not rushing to action, taking the time to educate himself, listening, and learning prior to taking action.

And I just basically said, "Look, I feel like I'm missing something here. And I'm

going to actively investigate and listen." And that was really important for me. I feel like a lot of guys in my generation are getting it, but they're going too quickly into action. Here's what I mean, a lot of guys left that – we call it general assembly, where our whole denomination comes together – left the general assembly where we made this public declaration, "We repent, we're sorry. We're sorry for our sins of the past", and all this stuff. And they came back, and they would host a racial reconciliation conference of the church and invite a black speaker, and da, da, da, da, da, da. And it was really important to me that we did – because I felt like even that is just the same old stuff. So, I came back, and I befriended Black pastors here in the city. I started listening to people of color in our congregation, their story, got a guy who's kinda mentored me, our church, in this, and just really listening. That article I published in the [leading newspaper in local city] was the first time I said, "Alright, I've been listening. I feel like I'm at a point now where I can speak and start sharing some things that I've learned. And start moving my congregation and hopefully our city forward in these things." I think I was a listener, and a studier, for a period of time.

Jack's formula provided a rough guideline for how he prepared to move toward action as an ally. He deciding to "investigate and listen" after recognizing that he was "missing something" in his church's desire for racial reconciliation after their years of racism and segregation. He understood that only after self-educating himself would he be in a position to potentially act as an ally. He sought out Black and White mentors and made sure to actively listen to people of color when they shared their experiences. When he decided to act, he wrote an article in the leading newspaper in his town that was

geared toward helping other White individuals gain awareness of White privilege. It appeared as though he was able to mute his privilege in order to listen to people of color and then use his White privilege to speak up in order to educate other Whites by sharing the information he gained from people of color.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

In the Journal of Counseling Psychology's Major Issue addressing Whiteness, Helms (2017) and Sue (2017) both stressed the importance of making Whiteness visible. In an effort to make the invisible more visible, the results of this study help to reveal the characteristics of how White culture and White privilege are understood and experienced by aspiring White allies. Additionally, this study sought to examine how aspiring White allies understood their allyship and its intersection with White privilege. In this chapter, the results of this dissertation will be compared and contrasted with the extant theory and empirical literature that has examined White culture, White privilege, and allyship. Based on the comparison of the results of this study to extant theory and research, recommendations for future direction in training and research will also be provided. Lastly, this chapter will conclude by addressing the limitations of this study.

5.1 White Culture and its Socialization Process

Culture and socialization are linked, as socialization is the process that generates culture (DiAngelo, 2016). Scholars have highlighted the role of socialization in the definition of what it means to be White (DiAngelo, 2016; Helms, 2017), in the production of White privilege (McIntosh, 1988), in making White supremacist ideology invisible (Sue, 2011), and in creating color-blind racism, which is the predominant form of racism in the present day (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Sue, 2004). D.W. Sue (2004) devised a theory that described the characteristics of White culture and its socialization process. He named this theory ethnocentric monoculturalism (Sue, 2004). Ethnocentric monoculturalism, in accord with one of the underlying theories of this dissertation, is

based on the underlying tenet that Whiteness is invisible to White individuals. Therefore, prior to examining the theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism in more detail, the invisibility of White culture will be reviewed.

5.1.1 The Invisibility of White Culture

Participants of this study revealed that Whites are unaware, "forgetful", and "unconscious" of their culture. Being that White cultural values are responsible for instilling color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Sue, 2004), their invisibility allows color-blind racism to proceed undeterred. Results from this study support empirical studies conducted by Bonilla-Silva (2014) and Trepagnier (2006), which revealed that White participants were not only unaware of their culture but actively denied that one existed. The denial of the existence of White culture extended to a point that White participants in their studies lamented not having a culture of their own and expressed admiration for the culture of other groups (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Trepagnier, 2006). One participant even shared that she felt "ripped off" for not having a culture as a White person (Trepagnier, 2006, p. 118).

The endorsement by participants of this study that White individuals are forgetful of their culture also supports Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism. Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism also described the characteristics and components of White culture and its socialization process and how they are made invisible. The participants of this study validated Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism in their depictions of how they experienced being White in their

everyday lives. Sue's theory (2004), and support provided by the participants of this dissertation, are described in the following section.

5.1.2 A Theory of White Culture: Ethnocentric Monoculturalism

Ethnocentric monoculturalism for White Americans entails a belief in the superiority of their cultural heritage, history, values, beliefs, and traditions (Sue, 2004). The belief in the superiority of White culture leads White individuals to compare other cultures to the characteristics of their own culture and deem them as inferior (Sue, 2004). The monocultural aspect of White culture entails the belief that due to its superiority, only the expression of White culture should be allowed. The belief that White culture should be the only recognized culture creates the potential for conflict between White individuals and people who adhere to other cultures or believe there is room for the expression of more than one culture (Sue, 2004).

Sue's (2004) theory also depicted how socialization creates two different levels of consciousness, or visibility, within White culture. He explained the two different levels of consciousnesses and the socialization process: "most Whites are socialized from the moment of birth into two competing educational curriculums: (a) on a conscious level they are taught cherished values of freedom, equality, the intrinsic worth of everyone, and the principles of democracy and (b) on a less conscious level they are taught a hidden curriculum that certain groups are undesirable, inferior, and to be feared and avoided" (Sue, 2011, p. 416). According to Sue (2011), it is socialization that creates both a conscious and hidden level of recognition of White culture. His theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism delineated the components of the socialization process and how they

work to create the two different levels of consciousness within White culture. Identifying the socialization process and how it works may help make it more visible. Therefore, it is the socialization process that results from this study helped to illuminate, including the unconscious components of White culture. According to Sue (2004), there are five tenets that encapsulate ethnocentric monoculturalism for White Americans. The five tenets are 1) belief in superiority, choseness, and entitlement; 2) belief in the inferiority of other groups; 3) the power to define reality; 4) manifestation in institutions; and 5) the invisible veil. These five tenets are presented below along with evidence from the results of this study that supports their existence. The evidence from this study is particularly important given that it is derived from the testimony of White individuals.

Belief in superiority, choseness, and entitlement. Sue (2004) stated that White culture's belief in its own superiority is comprised of six different principles. The six principles include the desirability of White skin tone and certain physical features, the Protestant work ethic, individualism, capitalism, monotheism through Christianity, and the use of English as the spoken language. Sue (2004) postulated that White individuals believe that if a person adheres to these values they will be rewarded. Gaining societal rewards provides White individuals with validation in their belief in hard work and thereby makes them feel entitled and chosen (Sue, 2004). Four of the six principles that Sue (2004) theorized as part of White culture's belief in its superiority were revealed in the results of this study. The four values that were revealed by the participants of this study were the desirability of White skin tone and aesthetics, the Protestant work ethic, individuality and capitalism, and the overall belief that White culture is superior. They will be reviewed below with supporting data from this dissertation.

SKIN COLOR AND AESTHETICS. Sue (2004; 2006) and DiAngelo (2014) have theorized that skin color, skin tone, and certain physical features, such as blonde hair and blue eyes, are deemed more valuable by White individuals and White culture and are used to determine who is considered White. They are also used to other those who are not White. Debbie's experience and perspective as White and Latina provided evidence supporting Sue's (2004; 2006) and DiAngelo's (2014) theories about skin color and aesthetics. Due to her more yellow skin tone, darker hair, and the shape of her eyes and face, Debbie felt as though "actual White people" recognized these differences and labeled her as "exotic", which served as a euphemism for not White. Labeling her as exotic, as well as asking her "what she was", demonstrated that the White people she grew up around considered being White the standard, default, or the norm and that anything outside of that norm was considered exotic. The belief that being White is the norm, or standard, and that any deviation from that is considered exotic supports Sue's (2004) assertion that White culture is ethnocentric. The belief that Whiteness considers itself the standard for society is also included in DiAngelo's (2016) definition of what it means to be White.

Debbie's experience of being differentiated by her physical appearance does not appear to be an isolated incident. The use of physical appearance to determine who is White has been used in the U.S. legal system as well (Wright, Jr., 1997). In a 1984 case involving two brothers who changed their racial identification on a job application, the court ruled that race would be determined by self-identification, ancestry, and appearance (Wright, Jr., 1997). The court's ruling that appearance would be part of racial identification, as well as Debbie's experiences, lend credence to Sue's (2004) theory that

physical appearance, including skin tone and aesthetics, are critical factors in determining who is White. Determining who is White, as discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, is important as it has implications for access to resources (Roberts, 1997).

Additionally, Debbie's experience provides evidence that disproves the assertion made by many White people that they do not see race and are therefore color-blind (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Her self-identification as White is congruent with the U.S. Census Bureau's definition of race, as the census bureau states, "people who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race" (https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html). Despite the census bureau's acceptance of Debbie's self-identification as White, it was not accepted by the White people she grew up around and White culture's definition of what it means to be White. As skin color has implications for the therapeutic relationship (Tummala-Narra, 2007), graduate training programs and models of White racial identity development need to acknowledge skin color and aesthetics as critical in understanding what it means to be White.

THE PROTESTANT WORK ETHIC, INDIVIDUALISM, AND CAPITALISM. It is theorized that the U.S. was founded on six Protestant traits, which include conscience, industry, success, use, anti-sensuality, and civic-mindedness (Brookhiser, 1997). Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism states that part of White culture includes adhering to the Protestant work ethic, as the Protestant trait of industry, or industriousness, is synonymous with the ideal of hard work. In many ways, the Protestant work ethic and the Protestant traits have become synonymous with the recipe

for the American dream, which states that through hard work a person can achieve their goals and ascend in society. Three participants in this study identified the Protestant trait of hard work as part of White culture. Three other participants stated that White culture equated to the American dream. Two other participants endorsed efficiency, individualism, and being action-oriented as part of what it means to be White as well. Individualism and capitalism are also components of the six Protestant traits (Brookhiser, 1997), as it is theorized that individualism and capitalism have the potential to benefit the greater good (Brookhiser, 1997).

The belief in the value of hard work is integral to the theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism (Sue, 2004). Ethnocentric monoculturalism suggests that as White individuals are rewarded for their hard work and their adherence to the Protestant work ethic, they feel their beliefs and culture are validated and, thereby, they begin to develop "an inflexible assumption of possessing the absolute truth" (Sue, 2004, p. 765). In other words, Whites feel culturally superior when their hard work pays off. Two participants from this study described the omnipotence that Whites assign to their belief in the potential of hard work. Ian shared that most White people believe that if a person works hard they can achieve "anything." He concluded his comments by revealing, "we all believe what we believe because we think we're right." Ian is insinuating that White individuals do not view the ability to achieve "anything" through hard work as grandiose or hyperbolic. Rather, hard work and success represent a straightforward equation that is easily replicable. Betty summarized the simplicity of it by stating, "you work hard, and you get what you get."

In the descriptions provided by Ian and Betty, issues pertaining to discrimination, racism, and oppression are not considered by White individuals, which makes the belief in the American dream color-blind (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). As Erica stated, the underlying philosophy of the American dream is that any individual can "pull themselves up by their bootstraps", regardless of their race, class, or religion. However, the three participants in this study who identified the American dream as a part of White culture also shared, without invitation by the interviewer, that White individuals have an advantage in achieving it. Providing an advantage to White individuals in achieving the American dream helps to preserve the status quo that currently affords them with privileges and resources (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

Based on the rigid view that White individuals have of the relationship between hard work and success, they view those who are not successful as not having "tried hard enough" and "lazy". Therefore, the Protestant traits become the basis for stereotyping people of color as well (Brookhiser, 1997). Additionally, the Protestant traits also provide a basis for describing Whites and othering people of color. According to DiAngelo (2014), a component of Whiteness is not only being defined as the norm, but that people of color are viewed as a deviation from that norm. As an example, a White individual cannot be successful, efficient, useful, and industrious unless a person of color is comparatively unsuccessful and inefficient. The opposite of the Protestant traits appears to fit common stereotypes of Black individuals (Jones, 1997). The opposite of the Protestant traits of use and conscience would be lazy and immoral (Jones, 1997). The opposite of anti-sexual would be hyper-sexual (Jones, 1997). Hannah concluded her thoughts about hard work by sharing that White individuals believe they "have what they

have because they deserve it." White individuals can only feel this way if someone is seen as undeserving. Someone who is viewed as underserving can only be seen that way if racism, discrimination and oppression are believed to not exist, which is why White individuals adhere to a color-blind mentality (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

OVERALL BELIEF IN SUPERIORITY, ENTITLEMENT, AND CHOSENESS. In addition to their beliefs that having lighter skin and certain physical features are more desirable, White individuals also subscribe to an overall belief in their superiority, which includes feelings of entitlement and choseness (Sue, 2004). Three participants explicitly named White supremacy or superiority as part of the ideology of White culture, while three others described an adherence to a White supremacist ideology without using the words 'White supremacy' directly. One participant who described a White supremacist ideology without using the term White supremacy described a desire for White individuals to "control" people of color. Another participant depicted the belief in White supremacy as a need to justify the enslavement and harm that people of color had experienced. Due to its invisible nature (Helms, 2017; Sue, 2004), and the overall covert nature of culture and socialization (DiAngelo, 2016), it is important to name the White supremacist ideological beliefs of being White, as counseling psychologists have struggled to define it previously (Helms, 2017). Based on the results of this dissertation, any definition of Whiteness that is used in the research and training of counseling psychologists going forward should be inclusive of the White cultural belief in White supremacy or superiority.

Identifying additional attributes of White superiority may help make the definition of Whiteness more visible to White individuals and help them gain greater understanding

of it. Feelings of entitlement and choseness are two ways in which the belief in White superiority manifests itself (Sue, 2004). Two participants of this dissertation explained how feelings of entitlement and choseness fit in with the ideology of White superiority. Frank described lower-class Whites as feeling more entitled to success than people of color. He described them as feeling "bitter" toward people of color, as they felt as though they were entitled to more benefits being White. The expectation that White individuals deserve more than people of color supports the view that being White represents a tangible property value (Roberts, 1997), which is also one of the underlying theories of this dissertation. Additionally, the "bitterness" towards people of color that Frank revealed serves as an example of the conflict Sue (2004) suggested could arise when White culture is challenged. Whereas for upper class Whites, Frank posited that their superiority may manifest itself in their belief that people of color, and Whites from the lower-class, should ascribe to their way of life.

Casey provided a description of what choseness appears to resemble. She opined that White people believe that "White people have the solutions, that we have more knowledge, more understanding, more capabilities." Casey's view of White supremacy depicts the ideology of a White supremacy that does not reflect the overt racism that was based on the concept of biological differences amongst the races (Hovenkamp, 1997). Rather, it appears to fit with the purpose of White supremacy and new school racism, which purports to justify the status quo that privileges White individuals (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). White individuals need to think that they have the solutions and more knowledge and more capabilities because it justifies the history of the United States, which has used racism and oppression to subjugate people of color and create privilege for White

individuals (hooks, 1995; Roberts, 1997). Casey, like all of the other participants, did not provide a personal experience of her adherence to White superiority, choseness, and entitlement. The lack of personal experiences provided by participants reflects an externalization of their own adherence to White culture, which may connote a lack of personal responsibility for their beliefs in White superiority.

Belief in the inferiority of other groups. Ethnocentric monoculturalism includes not just a belief in the superiority of White culture, but the belief in the inferiority of non-White cultures (Sue, 2004). Sue (2004) included historical examples of how a cultural belief in White superiority was used to justify the colonization of non-Whites. One participant of this study, Casey, also used the word "colonialism" to describe White culture and stated that the purpose of White culture was to justify "controlling" people of other cultures. She stated that the justification of controlling others included describing others as not capable of caring for themselves. Betty agreed that White culture utilized its belief in the inferiority of other cultures to justify the mistreatment of them. Betty used the institution of slavery in the U.S. as an example of how skin color was used to separate those who were deemed inferior from those who were deemed superior. Debbie also agreed that skin color is used to determine who is othered, and thereby considered inferior. She suggests that superiority and inferiority are linked, in the sense that Whiteness cannot maintain itself unless there is an "other" to be deemed inferior.

Betty also provided an example from her personal life of a time when she deemed a person of color as intellectually inferior. She revealed that she assumed a Black man was using an incorrect word while addressing a group of people. She felt intellectually

superior to him, despite the fact that he was a university professor and she was not. It was not until afterward, that she discovered that his use of the word was accurate. Making her example even more profound is that Betty had previously married a Black man and was raising two Black sons. Her life experience provides an example of how color-blind racism remains prominent, and a powerful actor in well-intentioned White individuals. Betty's real-life example, and Debbie's testimony, help to display that ethnocentric monoculturalism does not just assume that being White is superior but that being a person of color is inferior (Sue, 2004). As described in the previous section, the need to deem people of color inferior helps justify the current status quo that privileges White individuals and the historical oppression and discrimination that has befallen Black individuals (DiAngelo, 2016; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; hooks, 1995; Leonardo, 2009), as it is easier to justify the subjugation of others if they are deemed inferior (Frederickson, 1997).

The power to define reality. According to Sue (2004), all societies are ethnocentric. However, what distinguishes ethnocentrism from ethnocentric monoculturalism is power, and the ability to impose one's culture onto another (Sue, 2004). Jack confirmed Sue's (2004) assertion about the ability to impose one's culture onto another, as he described feeling as though he never had to assimilate to any other culture but that everyone else had to assimilate to White culture. Erica shared a similar sentiment in her definition of White supremacy. She stated that White culture does not have a desire to learn other cultures or have awareness that they exist. Likewise, George referred to the "decimation of indigenous cultures" in the U.S., which exemplified the use of power to impose one culture by subjugating another culture. Additionally, the power

to define reality extended past the decimation of indigenous cultures and into the way we learn about history.

Sue (2004) stated that this imposition of White culture, and its belief in its own superiority, has been depicted in U.S.'s schools within the narrative that Columbus discovered America. The narrative that Columbus discovered America overlooks the fact that indigenous cultures already inhabited the U.S (Sue, 2004). Overlooking the fact that indigenous cultures inhabited the U.S. allows a reality to be imposed that does not include their decimation. George and Hannah agreed with Sue's (2004) opinion that the U.S. school system has been able to define a reality that overlooked the decimation of indigenous groups. They described learning later in life that the narratives that they were taught in school, about the "founding fathers" and the "decimation of indigenous cultures", were not accurately presented.

Manifestation in institutions. According to the theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism, White culture is manifested both overtly and covertly throughout many institutions, including the legal system (Sue, 2004). Results from this study highlighted how the monocultural aspect of ethnocentric monoculturalism presented itself within institutions such as the residential neighborhood, school, family, and church. All participants from this dissertation described living in predominantly all-White neighborhoods. Many participants described attending predominantly White schools and churches. According to Bonilla-Silva (2014), a socialization process that he labeled the White habitus occurs within all-White institutions. The White habitus informs a White individual's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about race (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). What is

important about identifying all-White institutions, like school and church in particular, is that Whites adhere to a theoretical belief that the integration of these institutions would be beneficial (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Sue; 2004). However, based on results from this dissertation, participants described how the actions of White individuals worked to maintain the segregation and monoculturalism of their all-White institutions.

Part of the socialization process of the White habitus includes excluding people of color from all White spaces, as well as White individuals isolating themselves from integrated areas (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). The processes of maintaining White spaces by excluding persons of color from the White habitus emerged within the results of this dissertation. Betty's church excluded a family of color from joining, and her own family excluded her multiracial son and his friend from joining their holiday festivities. Andrew's family isolated themselves by moving neighborhoods when families of color moved in. Andrew's testimony is particularly damning because he described identifying a friend of color's home as representing a different culture, prior to his family deciding to move. Likewise, Jack identified how some parishioners isolated themselves by leaving his church once he made race and White privilege topics of conversation. By excluding people of color, the monocultural aspect of ethnocentric monoculturalism is preserved. Preserving monoculturalism and the White habitus is important to White individuals as it helps to maintain color-blind racism, the status quo, and the paternalistic assumptions and stereotypical images that are a part of silent racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Sue; 2004; Trepagnier, 2006).

Identifying White habituses is important to allyship and antiracism, as altering the make-up of monocultural institutions and the White habitus may be one of the best ways to challenge new racism (Trepagnier, 2004). Empirical results have indicated that challenging the White habitus through diversity courses, diversity experiences, and making Black friends at college can lower color-blind racial ideology during four years of college (Lewis, Neville, & Spanierman, 2012; Neville et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2010; Todd et al., 2011). However, most research has focused more on the examination of color-blind racism more directly, with less of a focus on the impact of the White habitus. Several participants from this study, Hannah, George, Ian, Casey, Erica, and Debbie, recognized that their awareness of race and racism improved greatly when they left the White habitus of their childhood neighborhood. Therefore, results from this dissertation appear to suggest that altering and challenging the all-White formation of a White individual's White habitus can impact their understanding of White culture and color-blind racism. Future research should continue to explore how challenging and altering the composition of all-White institutions and the White habitus impact color-blind racism and silent racism.

The invisible veil of meritocracy. Sue (2004) stated that the invisibility of Whiteness and White Culture is designed to help mask White privilege. Four participants in this study, confirmed that White culture, at times, remains invisible to White individuals. The masking of White privilege affords White individuals the opportunity to deny that they have certain unearned advantages, also referred to as White privilege, and that racism continues to subjugate people of color. Sue (2004) described three myths that make up the invisible veil of ethnocentric monoculturalism. The three myths are the

myth of meritocracy, the myth of fairness, and the myth of equal treatment. The myth of meritocracy works from the belief that hard work and ability are related to success. The myth of equal opportunity states that everyone has the same opportunities to succeed and that the playing field is level. The myth of fair treatment states that equal treatment equates to fair treatment, whereas any treatment that is different is considered preferential. The three myths are socialized into White individuals as reality and operate on a conscious level (Sue, 2004). The three myths also hold that racism and discrimination toward people of color do not exist, because their existence would mean that the playing field would be uneven and fair treatment would not exist. Thereby, Whites deny the existence of racism through the practice of color-blind racism.

Results from this study provided evidence that supports the existence of the invisible veil of meritocracy (Sue, 2004). In particular, Betty's depiction of her mindset during her first two years of college displayed how White individuals believe in the myth of meritocracy and how it masks their own privilege. As she remembered her first two years in college, Betty and her White peers were upset that Latino/a students were admitted to the same college based on what they assumed were affirmative action policies. She reported that she believed at the time that she had worked hard and had earned her admission, which is akin to her belief in meritocracy. She believed that the Latino/a students received beneficial treatment and had not worked as hard to gain admission, which violated her belief in the myth of fairness. Looking back many years later, Betty understood that she had not worked hard and that she "got away" with not doing her homework and other infractions because her father was the school board president. She realized at the time of her interview that her beliefs in college were a

myth. As the invisible veil was removed, she currently understood that her privilege played a bigger role for her than she originally thought. However, during the time she was in college, Betty did not view herself as privileged due to the invisibility of the myth of meritocracy.

In order for Ethnocentric monoculturalism to maintain the invisible veil of meritocracy, it also needs to deny that people of color experience racism, which disproves the myth of fairness (Sue, 2004). Two participants in this study provided clear examples of how they did not believe people of color when the person of color told them about an incident involving racism. For Betty, she did not believe her own son when he recounted a neighbor spitting on him. She stated that she "convicted him of lying" about the incident. Frank also described how he minimized the story a professor of color recounted to him about being racially profiled by the police.

This dissertation adds to Sue's (2004) theory by providing an additional explanation for the reason behind White individual's desire to deny the existence of race. White individuals do not want to acknowledge racism because they do not want to acknowledge the harm that racism has caused people of color. That harm was recognized by several participants as having a historical basis in the form of slavery and manifesting itself in the present day in the form of harassment and shootings by police. However, Ian may have described the desire to make White culture and the harming of Black bodies invisible at its best when he asked, "do you want to think about the child that made your shoes?" Of course, the answer is "no, we do not." Ethnocentric monoculturalism provides White individuals with a socialization process that tells another story that allows

White to forget about the harm they have caused people of color. Forgetting about the harm that Whiteness represents allows the status quo to progress without being challenged and it allows White individuals the ability to enjoy their privilege without knowing that they are privileged and without knowing that their privilege is formed and maintained on the subjugation of people of color.

5.2 Ethnocentric Monoculturalism and How Whiteness Transforms Into Racism

Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism is integral to another theory that he developed which highlighted White culture's role in the production of racism (Sue, 2006). In the theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism (Sue, 2006), White privilege is hypothesized to be the result of the racism produced by the combination of White skin, White culture, and power. Whereas the outcome for White people is privilege, the corresponding outcome for people of color is oppression and discrimination (Sue, 2006). Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism places an emphasis on socialization and White culture, as they are the primary mechanisms that produce racism, oppression, and White privilege. Whereas White privilege has reached a status of "currency" in social science literature (Leonardo, 2009, p. 75), White culture remains somewhat unacknowledged and under-researched. Essentially, the bulk of Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness is transformed into racism focuses on socialization, which is the process by which cultural norms, behaviors, and interactions are given life (DiAngelo, 2016). Indeed, White supremacy, stereotypes and racial biases, and social conditioning, which are all components of the theory of how Whiteness transforms into

racism, are all major components of White socialization and culture. A table that Sue (2006) used to outline his theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism is presented in Figure 5.1 .

Figure 5.1. *How Whiteness Transforms into Racism (Sue, 2006, pp. 17; Continuation).*

Whiteness

The constellation of physical features most characterized by fair or light skin color/tone. Other physical features may be considered ideal (associated Western traits) such as blond hair, blue eyes, or elongated face. Whiteness, alone, conveys neither positive nor negative valence.

+

White Supremacy

A doctrine of White racial superiority and non-White inferiority that justifies domination and prejudicial treatment of minority groups. It strongly conveys positive qualities to Whiteness and negative qualities to non-White groups.

+

Power Imposition

The ability to define racial reality by imposing White supremacist ideology and beliefs on the general population (both Whites and people of color).

via

Schooling and education + Mass Media + Significant Others and Organizations

Three mechanisms used to convey the superiority of Whiteness and its associated correlates through a process of social conditioning.

yields

White Racism

The individual, institutional, and cultural expression of the superiority of one group's cultural heritage over another and the power to impose and enforce that worldview upon the general populace.

Outcome

Unearned advantages and benefits that accrue To Whites by virtue of a system normed on the Experiences, values, and perceptions of the group.	Unequal/unfair treatment that Results to people of color not from their own actions but based solely on the color of their skin and visible physical features.

Results from this dissertation support each of the different components of Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism. Many of the components of how Whiteness transforms into racism (Sue, 2006) are a part of Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism and were therefore reviewed in the previous section. However, they will be reviewed again briefly in the following paragraphs. The first component of Sue's theory (Sue, 2006) highlights how Whiteness is identified by skin tone and aesthetics, a position supported by personal accounts shared by Debbie and Ian.

The second component in Sue's (2006) theory, White Supremacy, is also supported by data provided by participants of this dissertation. Sue's (2006) definition of White supremacy focused on a "doctrine of White racial superiority and non-White inferiority" (pp. 17). Two participants provided descriptions of how a doctrine in White superiority may manifest within White individuals. Casey described a mindset within White individuals that reflected beliefs about "feeling inherently better", which she stated was distinct from the access to resources and opportunities Whites are also afforded. Additionally, she reported that Whites think they have more "capabilities", "knowledge", and "solutions." Likewise, Andrew also provided descriptions of what a facet of White superiority may look like. He suggested that as a White person he is focused more "on myself" and how to advance himself and his own thoughts and ideas. He believed that a White individual's focus on themselves superseded their focus on family or community. The testimonies of Casey and Andrew depict a belief in White superiority that is not dependent solely on a corresponding belief in the inferiority of people of color, which was a connection that Debbie had previously described when she stated that Whiteness is "upheld" by the othering of people of color. In Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness

transforms into racism, it does not appear that a belief in White superiority and the inferiority of non-Whites are linked, but that they co-exist simultaneously. In his theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism, Sue (2004) opines that the belief that White individuals have in the inferiority of people of color is used as a justification of the harm that White supremacy has inflicted on non-White peoples.

Sue's (2006) definition of White supremacy appears to focus predominantly on beliefs in White superiority and the inferiority of non-Whites, which appears to forgo a reference to the systemic, political, economic, and social accumulation of power, currently and historically, that has privileged White people and oppressed people of color (hooks, 1995; Leonardo, 2009). In a later section of this chapter, entitled What does it mean to be White, the results from this dissertation are integrated with Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism and the theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism (2006) to provide a prefatory definition of what it means to be White. Within that prefatory definition of what it means to be White, a more comprehensive definition of White supremacy that includes the systemic accumulation of power and the individualistic components of a belief held by White individuals in White superiority will be provided.

The third and fourth components in Sue's (2006) theory, Power and White racism, are also supported by data provided by participants of this dissertation. Frank specifically named the "power differential" that he observed between White individuals of different regions, and socio-economic statuses, versus that of people of color. He linked it to White supremacy by stating, "I think there's still a power differential. I think that

Whiteness as an ideology, even if it's one side of the political spectrum or the other, there's still that underlying assumption that Whiteness is superior". Other participants, such as Jack, discussed the imposition of power. Jack stated that he never had to assimilate to other cultures, but that other cultures had to assimilate to White culture.

White racism was described by many participants as well in the forms of colorblind racism and silent racism. Participants described how White individuals avoided talking about race, denied the experiences of people of color who had experienced racism, and used color-blind strategies to rationalize racist behavior, such as excluding family members who brought up issues of race and moving neighborhoods when families of color moved in. Evidence provided by participants of color-blind racism and silent racism are explicated more fully in the next section of this chapter. The fifth and final component of Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism is the outcome of all of the combinations of all of the other components. Sue (2006) postulated that the outcome is divided into two parts: 1) White privilege; and 2) non-White inferiority. White privilege was endorsed as a significant portion of being White by all of the participants of this dissertation and included beliefs in ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). Participants, including Debbie, Betty and Erica, not only shared their belief that part of White culture included beliefs in the inferiority of people of color, but that White people used it to justify their beliefs in their own superiority.

One participant of this dissertation, George, shared a story that revealed an example of how Whiteness transforms into racism (Sue, 2006). The example also

described how Whiteness is potentially made invisible, as Sue (2004) theorized in ethnocentric monoculturalism. George recounted a story that described how his Whiteness and White culture yielded White privilege. During his interview, he recalled being pulled over by a police officer in his hometown. George recognized the officer due to a connection the officer had with his father, which George initiated by calling the officer by name and describing their connection. At the time, George did not believe he was enacting a race-based privilege or "gaming the system." Rather, George believed he was invoking a family-based privilege, as he stated he believed he "benefited" from being associated with his father. George recognized he benefited due to his father's status, but he believed the benefit had been earned by his father's success as a prominent businessman in their hometown. Additionally, although George stated that he did not believe he was gaming the system, his initiative to make a personal connection with the officer is a deliberate action to invest in his own well-being. The officer did not offer to help him; rather, it was George who asked for the reprieve. George's focus is on his own advancement and it appears to operate independently of the presence of a person of color.

It is within the White socialization process that George's privilege was converted in his mind from a race-based privilege to a familial privilege. When he began the story, George shared that his father was a "self-made" man whose family did not have anything. The description of his father as a self-made man is a salute to White culture. The archetype of the self-made man represents hard work, achievement of the American dream, meritocracy, equal opportunity, fair treatment, and the Protestant traits. As a self-made man, George shared that his father had achieved without any support from his own family. George's father is a representation of pulling oneself up by the bootstraps.

George's depiction of his father intimates his belief in the myth of meritocracy, the myth of equal opportunity, and the myth of fair treatment. He understood his relationship to the police officer as a product of his father's success and hard work. In other words, the "benefit" had been earned and was not a race-based privilege.

The fourth step in Sue's (2006) theory states that racism yields privilege for Whites and oppression for people of color. George received an unearned privilege from the officer, who let George off without a ticket. George's interaction with the officer provides a stark contrast to the interactions between police officers and persons of color that were described by participants of this study. Frank recalled that his sister knew Mike Brown, who was unarmed when he was murdered by a police officer. Hannah related the stories of Trayvon Martin and Rodney King. Frank also retold a story of a colleague of color who feared being pulled over by a police officer in Cincinnati. The contrast in stories regarding interactions with police officers depicted privilege for White individuals and oppression for persons of color, which are the products of Sue's (2006) theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism.

At the time of the interview, George now understood that he benefited from White privilege during the interaction he had with the police officer when he was a younger man. He understood that his father's identity as a self-made man was compromised, as he acknowledged that his father benefited from working in the real estate industry at a time when the U.S. was still legally segregated. At the time when he was pulled over, however, George did not have an awareness of how White privilege may have influenced his interaction with the police officer. He was unconscious of his White privilege, as it

was made invisible to him by White culture; which told him that his benefit was earned. It was not until later in his life that George understood that his race played an integral part in the advantages he received and his ability to activate it when interacting with a police officer.

If the goals of Whiteness research and multicultural trainings are to make Whiteness visible (Helms, 2017; Sue, 2017), more emphasis needs to be given toward making the components of White socialization and White culture visible, as well as how they work to create and conceal White privilege. The results of this study support Sue's (2004) description of White culture as ethnocentric monoculturalism. The results of this study also help depict how White culture helps to transform Whiteness into racism, and White privilege into a belief that any advantage has been earned through hard work. Future research should strive to further uncover characteristics of White culture and explicate it in greater detail. Gathering more evidence to support Sue's theories (2004; 2006) will help better inform how aspiring allies are trained.

5.3 Color-blind and Silent Racism: Providing Empirical Support

Results from this study provided depictions of color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014) and silent racism (Trepagnier, 2006) that will hopefully bring greater visibility to how Whites enact these forms of racism in their everyday lives (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). To confirm that color-blind racism works to deny race and racism, three participants in this study described White culture as avoidant of talking about race. Debbie stated that talking about race can "ruffle feathers" with Whites, while Jack shared that talking about race is something that gets him into "trouble" and that he will be "killed for"

(metaphorically speaking). Ian stated that it was a topic that simply was not discussed during his childhood. The denial of race and racism, however, went beyond simply not discussing race within White culture.

Personal examples from two participants in this study provided vivid examples of how Whites deny the racism that people of color shared with them. Betty recalled that she did not believe her own son when he shared with her that a neighbor spat on him. She stated that she "convicted him of lying" about the incident. The depiction of her denial of racism is extremely powerful because it superseded her belief in her own son. Frank also described minimizing, one of the four frames of color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014), the fear and apprehension that a professor of color shared with him about being pulled over by police.

Another color-blind strategy employed by White participants in this study involved the avoidance and denial of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Three participants identified incidents that they believed avoided using the term race when racism was at play. Debbie shared that White individuals used a linguistic style to ask about her racial identity. By using the word "exotic" and asking her "what she was", she believed their real intent was to ask about her race without being overt. Other participants, Betty and Jack, shared incidents where they believed racism was at work despite the word race was never directly stated. After discussing race and racism within his church, several members of his congregation decided to leave Jack's church. Although they provided a reason other than his discussion of race, Jack believed it was due to his focus on race and racism. Likewise, Betty felt as though her son and his friend were excluded from her sister's Christmas celebration due to their race, even though her sibling provided a reason

other than race. By denying race and racism, the tactics of color-blind racism allow White individuals to maintain the status quo that allows the historical privilege created by White supremacy to continue uninterrupted (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Identifying the real-world application of color-blind racism will only help to make it more visible to White individuals, as there are many techniques and strategies that are utilized by color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Future research should strive to continue to identify all of the different real-world practices of color-blind racism.

5.3.1 Silent Racism

It appears as though only one study has attempted to corroborate the research findings that White individuals enact silent racism through their internalized stereotypical images and paternalistic assumptions (Houshard, et al., 2014; Trepagnier, 2006). Findings from this dissertation provide rich data that depict paternalistic assumptions and stereotypical images. Paternalistic assumptions entail a desire to protect people of color due to their inability to protect themselves (Trepagnier, 2006). During her interview, Debbie uncovered an unconscious desire to protect her friends of color from racism. Her unconscious desire to protect her friends of color validated Trepagnier's (2006) theory that paternalistic assumptions are often below our level of consciousness. Betty shared another example of a paternalistic assumption. She recalled a memory of driving by a Black child in pigtails that she associated with something "lesser than me and mine." Betty's association revealed her paternalistic assumptions about the Black girl in pigtails and revealed a core belief in White superiority that accompanied them. Identifying real

world paternalistic assumptions will help bring them to the surface of consciousness, which should allow White individuals the opportunity to challenge them.

Other participants shared how stereotypical images impacted their view of people of color (Trepagnier, 2006). Andrew shared an example of a stereotypical image that he had to fight to subdue. He revealed that he had to fight the thought that people of color did not have enough money to buy an automobile when he viewed a person of color driving a car. Hannah also described becoming fearful when walking into a Black neighborhood because societal stereotypes helped her believe that the neighborhood was dangerous. Data from this dissertation provides evidence of both stereotypical images and paternalistic assumptions that make up silent racism. Silent racism is an important construct that needs to be highlighted more, as it is a form of racism that is committed by well-intentioned White individuals and typically remains below the surface of their consciousness (Trepagnier, 2006). Future research should focus on uncovering more examples of how silent racism is enacted, which can inform how anti-racists are educated and trained.

5.4 White Privilege: Socialization and Invisibility

A debate has emerged in the theoretical and empirical literature regarding White privilege and its visibility to White individuals (Leonardo, 2009; McIntosh, 1997). Some suggest that White privilege is invisible to Whites, whereas others suggest that a desire to protect their privilege serves as evidence that it is visible to them. Results from this dissertation may help inform the debate about the overall visibility of White privilege and how White individuals comprehend it. Nine participants from this dissertation viewed

their White privilege as solely represented by outgroup disadvantage, whereas only one participant in this study recognized ingroup advantage as part of his White privilege (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). The recognition of ingroup advantage compared to outgroup disadvantage may help define the potential visibility of White privilege: if White individuals do not have visibility of their ingroup advantage they may not comprehensively see their White privilege. However, they may feel as though they have full visibility of White privilege.

Todd and Abrams (2011) suggested that the visibility of White privilege may fall on a continuum, with denial of White privilege on one side of the continuum, recognition of ingroup advantage on the opposite side of the continuum, and recognition of outgroup disadvantage falling in between. Ascertaining the visibility of ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage may be based on the association of personal responsibility that individuals assign to White privilege, as the failure to recognize ingroup advantage may reveal a failure to accept personal responsibility for White privilege (Leonardo, 2009; Todd & Abrams, 2011). Results from this study support the notion that the assumption of personal responsibility may reveal the extent of the visibility a White individual may have of their privilege. The nine participants in this dissertation who described White privilege as out-group disadvantage described their White privilege in passive terms, using terms such as "invisible" or "default." The passivity of the participants' descriptions lacks an assumption of personal responsibility. Other descriptions that did not assume personal responsibility described White privilege as the freedom to walk around without fear of being hassled by police or others. Still others described it as the privilege not to have to think about their race, as well as a feeling of safety and comfort.

The abstractness and passivity with which these participants described their White privilege on an everyday basis fails to recognize the unearned benefit they received for being White and the personal responsibility for having and using White privilege. White privilege has historically been associated with an access to resources (Roberts, 1997) and only Jack's testimony described how his deliberate use of his relationships with other White individuals led him to greater resources and personal gain. His intentional activation of his privilege reveals his visibility to it, and his responsibility for his actions that initiated it.

The implications for recognizing outgroup disadvantage and not recognizing in-group advantage is important to racism and antiracism. Those who view privilege as mostly associated with outgroup disadvantage are more likely to support prejudicial attitudes (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). They are also able to distance themselves from their White privilege, which may alleviate feelings of guilt they have for it (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). Therefore, when it comes to visibility, Whites may be more inclined to recognize out-group disadvantage than their ingroup advantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). As the recognition of White privilege is positively associated with recognition of racial discrimination (Pinterits, Poteat, & Spanierman, 2009), Whites who do not see their in-group advantage may not recognize how it perpetrates discrimination toward people of color. Gaining a complete view of White privilege may be the first step in assuming personal responsibility for it, which may be the first step that leads to antiracist action (Todd and Abrams, 2011).

The lopsided focus on outgroup disadvantage may derive from Peggy McIntosh's (1997) seminal article on White Privilege, which is used in many graduate training courses. In the article, McIntosh (1997) listed 46 circumstances that she felt entitled to due to her race. Based on this author's review, almost all of the 46 circumstances depict White privilege in relation to outgroup disadvantage. The only two circumstances that appeared related to ingroup advantage described being able to ask someone for career advice and being able to speak to another White person when asking to speak to a person in charge (McIntosh, 1997). In one of the circumstances, McIntosh (1997) revealed a passive tone that did not assume any personal responsibility (Leonardo, 2009). McIntosh (1997) stated, "I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me" (p. 294). A more active statement may acknowledge that her race would actively help her if she needed medical and legal aid, as was the case for Jack when his wife and brother-in-law needed medical help. His race not only did not work against him, but it worked for him! He intentionally initiated calls to friends who were doctors, made same-day appointments, and was connected to top-ranked doctors in his state. Future research should investigate ingroup advantage to explicate it fully and to understand it more completely. Greater understanding of ingroup advantage will allow counseling psychology and antiracist training programs to teach it in more detail.

Another factor impacting the visibility of White privilege may be the socialization processes of Whiteness, such as ethnocentric monoculturalism (Sue, 2004). In particular, ingroup advantage may be more difficult for White individuals to see due to a belief in the myth of meritocracy (Sue, 2004). In a study conducted by Todd and Abrams (2011), White participants appeared to substitute a belief in meritocracy as an alternative

explanation for their White privilege. In accord with the findings of Todd and Abrams (2011), one participant from this dissertation, George, also depicted how he had substituted a belief in meritocracy for White privilege. George described an interaction with a police officer that allowed him to bypass receiving a traffic ticket based on the relationship that the officer had with George's father. At the time he received the ticket, George noted that he did not feel "advantaged" in his ability to gain exemption from the ticket, even though he later realized that the incident with the officer represented White privilege. As we try to make White privilege visible, focusing on how it is made invisible may be critical to uncovering it. The visibility of White privilege may be obscured by White culture, which convinces White individuals that any advantages they have are earned.

According to Leonardo (2009), White privilege is a term that has gained currency in Whiteness studies. However, it appears as though the currency is not fully explicated, as White individuals may only associate White privilege with outgroup disadvantage; which was the case for nine participants in this dissertation. Understanding and recognizing ingroup advantage may be more pertinent to White individuals, as it may be more responsible for the accumulation of resources that sustain White privilege. In order to better understand White privilege, a shift may be needed to focus on creating visibility of ingroup advantage specifically. Graduate training programs should apply a change to how we think about White privilege that is reminiscent of a change that Barbara Trepagnier (2006) made to how we think about racism. Trepagnier (2006) stated that Whites individuals should not ask if they are racist, but how they are racist. For White privilege, White individuals should not ask if they are privileged, but how much of it do

they see. In order to better illuminate White privilege, understanding the connection between White culture and White privilege should be further explored, as it does not appear that one can exist without the other. Therefore, making White privilege fully visible may also require making White culture fully visible.

5.5 White Privilege and Allyship

The visibility of White privilege is critical to the aspiring ally, as it informs and impacts the effectiveness of their actions. In particular, the use of White privilege within allyship has the potential to reinforce the power, privilege, and paternalism that make up White supremacy (Edwards, 2006). Edwards (2006) devised a theory of social justice ally identity development that described characteristics and underlying motivations for aspiring allies, which includes how they use White privilege. Empirical literature has also, at times indirectly, examined the use and understanding of White privilege within acts of allyship (Case, 2012; Malott et al., 2015). Results from this study provide support for the social justice ally identity development model (Edwards, 2006). This section will describe the theory of social justice ally identity development, while also integrating results from this dissertation and the extant empirical literature. Specifically, results from this study will focus on White privilege and the corresponding visibility an ally has of it at each developmental status. Additionally, all of the participants of this dissertation discussed having gotten stuck at some point in their identity development as an ally. Their immobilization appeared to be related to their relationship with their White privilege. Therefore, this section will also examine how allies at each developmental

stage became stuck, as managing the risk and reward of acting as an ally may immobilize aspiring allies (Edwards, 2006; Smith & Redington, 2010).

5.5.1 Social Justice Ally Identity Development

Edwards (2006) developed a theory that is intended to aid aspiring social justice allies in understanding their underlying motivations within their aspirations to be an ally. Edwards' (2006) theory is an ideal match for this study, as the participants of this study were recruited as self-identified allies but are potentially better categorized as aspiring allies who are trying to understand their own identity as an ally. Edwards' (2006) theory is also a match for this study since neither sought to identify factors and experiences that promoted the development of an ally identity. Rather, this dissertation and Edwards' (2006) theory sought to examine how White individuals who identified as aspiring allies understood what it meant to be a White ally. Edwards (2006) developed his theory as a guide to help aspiring allies examine their underlying motivations for allyship, as he suggested that despite good intentions some allies are harmful and unintentionally perpetuate systems of oppression in their efforts to be allies. By providing his theory as a guide for aspiring allies, Edwards (2006) believed that ineffective allies could work to be more effective by adjusting their underlying motivations. The theory of social justice ally identity development that Edwards (2006) proposed includes three different statuses. The titles of the three statuses of Edwards' (2006) model are the aspiring ally for self-interest, the aspiring ally for altruism, and the aspiring ally for social justice. The three statuses, results from this study, and extant empirical literature are discussed below.

The aspiring ally for self-interest. The aspiring ally for self-interest views the world as fair and just and therefore does not understand issues that are systemic and institutional in nature (Edwards, 2006). As such, they tend to intervene when an overt act of discrimination is directed at one of their friends or family members. Conversely, they are less likely to intervene if a friend or family member is not present (Edwards, 2006). They tend to view themselves as more of a protector than an ally and thereby do not see their own role in sustaining systems of oppression and institutional discrimination (Edwards, 2006). When they move toward acting in a protective manner, they typically do so without asking permission. Therefore, their style of intervening has the potential to cause harm and "ultimately perpetuate the system of oppression" (Edwards, 2006, p. 48). The aspiring ally for self-interest is aligned with the contact and disintegration stages of Helms' (1984) model of White racial identity development. Therefore, the aspiring ally for self-interest is only starting to gain awareness of their racial identity and White privilege. Due to their limited awareness of race, racism, and White privilege, they act to maintain their "likely unacknowledged" privilege (Edwards, 2006, p. 48). Results from this dissertation support the depiction of the aspiring ally for self-interest.

Evidence supporting the description of the ally for self-interest. The social justice ally identity development model (Edwards, 2006) posited that allies may hold characteristics and perspectives from all three ally identities based on how they interpret different situations. Aspiring allies may act from one identity's perspective in one situation and another identity's perspective in a different situation (Edwards, 2006). As the visibility of White privilege may rest on a continuum for White individuals (Todd & Abrams, 2011), which may be based on their awareness of ingroup advantage and

outgroup disadvantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005), allies at all development levels need to continuously work to identify how their everyday privilege manifests itself in order to continuously combat racism and White supremacy. For the aspiring ally for self-interest, in particular, they are characterized by their minimal awareness of White privilege. Therefore, they may also be characterized by a minimal assumption of personal responsibility for their White privilege (Todd & Abrams, 2011).

Four participants from this dissertation described incidents that revealed the characteristics of the ally for self-interest. Debbie, described her unconscious desire to protect her friends of color. After talking about it during her interview, she gained awareness of her desire to protect them and realized the paternalistic nature of her unconscious motivation. After uncovering her unconscious motivation to protect her friends, she wondered how she could increase their safety without limiting their autonomy. Debbie's experience demonstrated that not all of a person's underlying motivations are conscious within their ally work, which is an underlying tenet of the social justice ally identity development model (Edwards, 2006).

In a 2010 study, Munin and Speight found that the allies they interviewed lacked awareness of their White privilege (Munin & Speight, 2010). Three participants in this study also described a lack of awareness of their White privilege within their aspirations to act as an ally. Jack shared that he worried about losing influence if he were to discuss race and racism as the pastor of his church. Although he is not naming White privilege specifically, the influence he desires to protect represents White privilege in the form of ingroup advantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). Hannah and Andrew

described their desire to avoid physical harm and potential arrest if they were to protest against injustice and oppression. Although they were also not referring to White privilege specifically, their choice not to attend a protest is based in White privilege. By not recognizing their White privilege, Jack, Hannah and Andrew are also not recognizing their desire to protect it. Additionally, lacking awareness of White privilege within acts of allyship may lead allies to act in a manner that is harmful to those they are trying to aid (Edwards, 2006). Therefore, it is important for all allies to recognize that they may have to constantly search for their White privilege due to its invisible nature.

How the ally for self-interest may become immobilized. Visibility of White privilege appears to be associated with assuming personal responsibility for racism (Todd & Abrams, 2011). Therefore, the aspiring ally for self-interest, who has minimal visibility of White privilege, may also struggle to assume personal responsibility for it (Todd & Abrams, 2011). With minimal assumption of personal responsibility for White privilege, they may also fail to take action if racism does not impact them directly. One participant from this dissertation, Frank, described an incident where he failed to act due a lack of assumption of personal responsibility. Frank's best friend described experiencing racism from the staff at the university where Frank worked. In addition to his White privilege, Frank had clout at the university through his family connections. He failed to use his power and privilege to confront the staff members about their racism, as he wanted his friend to instruct him on how to act. Frank's deference to his friend shifted all of the responsibility for addressing the racism within the university to his friend. When his friend did not provide him with guidance on how to act, Frank assumed zero responsibility of his own and chose not to intervene. His lack of action maintained the

status quo and did nothing to challenge current systems of oppression and privilege within the university. In order for the ally for self-interest to evolve in their allyship, they must gain awareness of their White privilege, which includes their personal responsibility for it. If they can gain some personal responsibility for their White privilege, they may learn how to incorporate it into their aspirations to be an ally.

The aspiring ally for altruism. The aspiring ally for altruism has a greater awareness of White privilege than the ally for self-interest (Edwards, 2006). They recognize that systems of oppression exist, and they may recognize on a cognitive level that they benefit from the status quo. However, the aspiring ally for altruism may struggle when called out for their own oppressive behaviors and their own role within systems of oppression. They continue to view persons of color as the sole victims of an oppressive system and therefore focus their efforts outwardly to solely help those who are oppressed. They adopt an identity as a rescuer, a hero, or a savior for people of color. They also try to distance themselves from other members of the dominant group, instead of trying to help them. Their outward focus assumes a paternalistic nature that may yield some positive outcomes in the short-term but may ultimately perpetuate systems of oppression in the long-term (Edwards, 2006). By using their White privilege in an attempt to empower others, as opposed to letting marginalized groups empower themselves, they unintentionally reinforce their White privilege and the system of power that has privileged them (Edwards, 2006). Results from this dissertation that support the depiction of the ally for altruism are presented below.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLY FOR ALTRUISM. According to Edwards (2006), aspiring allies for altruism have developed a cognitive understanding of their White privilege. However, aspiring allies for altruism may fail to recognize their own involvement in systems of oppression and discrimination and thereby direct their White privilege towards preventing other Whites from committing acts of racism (Edwards, 2006). Casey shared a story that depicted how an aspiring ally for altruism may use their White privilege in a way that is helpful in the short-term but may be ineffective in the long-term. She described observing a woman of color being verbally accosted by a White male in a grocery store parking lot. She utilized her White privilege to insert herself into the situation in an attempt to protect the Black female. However, she only focused on protecting the Black female and failed to address the White male. In the short-term, her actions may have helped the Black female. In the long-term, her actions did nothing to interrupt the status quo and may have reinforced the paternalism associated with White people feeling the need to protect people of color.

Allies for altruism may find that they receive praise and other rewards for their actions as allies (Patton & Bondi, 2015). The praise and rewards may actually increase their White privilege, which reinforces the system of oppression that initially bestowed them with White privilege (Munin & Speight, 2010). As an example, Betty pointed out that White people are now getting paid to say the same things that people of color have been stating for years. Other participants, Hannah and Casey, also observed how White individuals receive financial gain for their actions as allies. Both Hannah and Casey referenced White authors, such as Tim Wise, who earn money by writing books about racism. To highlight the privilege that White individuals receive for their ally work,

Osayande (2010) pointed out that not only are aspiring allies such as Tim Wise praised for their ally work, but people of color who perform the same work are denigrated. The financial reward and uplifting feeling that White individuals receive for their work as allies, and the simultaneous denigration of people of color for the same work, only reinforces the system that bestows power and authority on White individuals and subjugates others.

Whereas authors such as Tim Wise receive a financial reward, others receive emotional rewards, including feelings of positivity and self-righteousness associated with being a savior (Smith & Redington, 2010). As Ian confirmed, many White people adopt a savior mentality, which he believed was extolled by White culture. It has been revealed previously that being labeled as an ally may also increase White privilege (Patton & Bondi, 2015). Due to their nascent awareness of White privilege, as they may only associate White privilege with outgroup disadvantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005), the aspiring ally for altruism may have difficulty recognizing how their ally work increases their White privilege. Therefore, they may not understand that the praise and benefits they receive as aspiring allies increases their White privilege. Progressing in their ally development will require White individuals to gain a more complete understanding of their White privilege, which will help them understand how to better challenge systems of power and oppression (Edwards, 2006).

HOW THE ASPIRING ALLY FOR ALTRUISM MAY BECOME IMMOBILIZED. In a 2017 study conducted by Smith, Kashubeck-West, Payton and Adams, one participant described having difficulty figuring out how to use their White privilege. The participant, who was

a professor, wanted to use their White privilege to teach White students about racism that emerged in class. However, the teacher's awareness of White privilege allowed her to understand that focusing on teaching the White students would take class time away from students of color. Thereby, students of color would be harmed by White racism. The professor was unsure of how best to act and was immobilized for a time. Two participants from this dissertation also described how they became immobilized due to their inability to find a clear direction for the use of their privilege. Jack described becoming immobilized as he debated whether to use his privilege to build a church in a predominantly Black neighborhood or a predominantly White neighborhood. When he finally decided to act, he disregarded advice from a Black pastor who directed him to focus on "Trump-loving" Whites. He later revealed that the newly built church only attracted a White congregation and that using his White privilege to engage the racist Whites would have been the more needed work.

Frank also shared that he received advice from a colleague of color that made him unsure of how to act as an ally. The advice he received challenged White individuals to assume responsibility for fixing racism. However, Frank was unsure of how to act as an ally, as he recognized that using his privilege within allyship may cause harm and embody paternalism. Cognitively Frank had accepted the fact that he had White privilege, but behaviorally he was unsure of how to turn his privilege into an action that did not cause harm. Frank failed to act, which preserved the status quo and also maintained his White privilege. The aspiring ally for altruism is different from the aspiring ally for self-interest, as the ally for altruism has greater awareness of their White privilege but is unsure of how to weaponize it in a clear path forward. In order for the

ally for altruism to evolve in their allyship, they must learn how to use their White privilege in a way that challenges systems of oppression without reinforcing White supremacy (Edwards, 2006).

The aspiring ally for social justice. The aspiring ally for social justice is an aspirational identity that an aspiring ally is constantly striving to achieve (Edwards, 2006). The defining characteristic of the aspiring ally for social justice is their desire to work with, and not for, people of color. Instead of trying to separate themselves from other members of dominant groups, the aspiring ally for social justice desires to work with their peers in order to help them (Edwards, 2006). They seek out criticism and model how to receive criticism of their own oppressive behaviors in a way that is non-defensive (Edwards, 2006). They have gained acceptance of their White privilege and recognized how it interacts with their allyship. Their overall goal is to dismantle systems of privilege and oppression (Edwards, 2006). Results from this dissertation depicted examples of how the aspiring ally for altruism may progress to action. Potential strategies for action included intercepting other Whites and acting in a way that muted their White privilege. Muting privilege included shutting up, listening, and allowing people of color to lead.

Intercepting other Whites. Extant literature has highlighted that White individuals have utilized their White privilege to help educate other Whites about racism (Case, 2012; Malott et. al., 2015; Smith & Redington, 2010). However, addressing other Whites to teach them about racism needs to be executed with a deft approach. Edwards (2006) postulated that the aspiring ally for social justice needs to direct their privilege at

other White individuals in a way that does not create distance. Aspiring allies for social justice also need to take personal responsibility to educate themselves and other Whites about their biases and racism (Edwards, 2006; Smith & Redington, 2010). Participants in a 2010 study also revealed that White allies need to tailor their approach when engaging other White individuals to meet the racial awareness of their peers (Smith & Redington, 2010). Lastly, participants in two studies suggested that ally work that included engaging and confronting other White individuals would entail risking White privilege (Patton & Bondi, 2015; Smith & Redington, 2010).

Two participants from this dissertation described their nuanced approach to engaging other White individuals, which supports Edwards' (2006) depiction of the aspiring ally for social justice. Erica described how she intercepted her White colleagues from asking a colleague of color harmful and color-blind questions about racism. Erica's approach focused on educating and modeling non-defensiveness to her other White colleagues, while also preventing them from causing emotional harm to her colleague of color. In another instance, she described having worked to gain the trust of colleagues of color at her place of employment. After gaining their trust, she shared that she will seek them out later and ask if they need her help in raising important issues about race. Her accountability to people of color was another characteristic of aspiring allies identified in the extant literature (Patton & Bondi, 2015; Smith & Redington, 2010). The process of asking people of color if her help was needed allowed her colleagues of color to retain their autonomy, as they had the power to accept or refute her offer. Erica's description of engaging with people of color in her allyship provides a nuanced approach that Frank was unable to execute when he asked his friend for guidance on how to act as an ally. Erica

had a plan and asked permission to execute it, whereas Frank did not have a plan. In seeking out people of color to ask for their permission to act, and by intercepting other Whites to prevent them from harming her colleague of color, Erica is acting from a disposition of personal responsibility to combat racism.

Jack described the process that he utilized prior to writing an article in the predominant newspaper in his hometown. Although he did not listen to the advice he received from people of color in other instances, Jack shared that he made it a point to educate himself by listening to people of color intently and not rushing to action. After listening to people of color, educating himself, and self-reflecting, he wrote an article that was designed to inform other Whites about the existence of White privilege. He modeled his own progression of awareness of White privilege to meet other White individuals at their developmental levels. He shared that speaking out about racism and White privilege caused him to lose members of his congregation, who also tried to slander him, which demonstrated his willingness to risk some of his White privilege.

MUTING PRIVILEGE. According to Edwards (2006), the aspiring ally for social justice needs to work with people of color. Extant research has revealed that White allies believe that working with people of color may take the form of working for people of color and being accountable to the leadership of people of color (Smith & Redington, 2010). Participants from this dissertation shared the belief that letting people of color assume leadership positions was critical to allyship. Several participants also described strategies that they employed to defer leadership to people of color. Letting people of color lead required aspiring White allies to mute their privilege. Muting privilege, as

described by Andrew, Betty, and Ian, included shutting up in meetings to provide space for people of color to talk. Casey shared that Whites need to assume a support role, which goes against the action-oriented culture of Whiteness. She stated that playing a support role entailed taking notes at meetings, preparing food for others, and offering car rides. George shared that he assumed a support role within the Jesse Jackson campaign for president but revealed that because he stuffed envelopes he did not originally consider it ally work.

HOW THE ASPIRING ALLY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE MAY BECOME IMMOBILIZED. The aspiring ally for social justice may become stuck if they over-intellectualize their allyship and fear making mistakes (Edwards, 2006). They may also fear causing harm unintentionally (Edwards, 2006). Participants from this study provided support for Edwards' (2006) depiction of how an aspiring ally for social justice may get stuck. Betty revealed that an aspiring ally may become stuck if they cannot figure out how to challenge racism and oppression on a systemic level. Andrew described getting stuck in finding the balance between listening and speaking up. Frank shared his fear of causing harm if his actions as an ally were unintentionally harmful. Ian shared that part of the fear in being an ally is being "another White man in charge", which would perpetuate the status quo and potentially harm people of color. Edwards' (2006) theory of social justice ally identity development theorized that the final stage of his developmental model was aspirational in nature. Therefore, the ally for social justice will have to continue to perpetually navigate the nuances of shutting up, speaking out, and monitoring how they use their White privilege. Identifying how aspiration allies for social justice may get stuck will hopefully allow them to also figure out how to become unstuck.

Edwards' (2006) model of ally identity development suggests that getting unstuck may entail sorting through the aspiring allies underlying motivations. His theory shifts the focus from identifying the factors that lead to becoming an ally to focusing on the processes of being an ally (Edwards, 2006). It is the opinion of this author that the underlying motivations of allies that Edwards (2006) worked to uncover can all be traced back to White privilege. Results from this dissertation helped to add real world descriptions of the different stages of ally identity development. Results also highlighted how White privilege may be the predominant underlying motivational force for allies at each stage of their ally development.

To summarize, participants revealed many ways White privilege affected their allyship, including: their desire to maintain White privilege within their acts of allyship, their desire to weaponize their privilege against other Whites, their desire to gain financial and emotional benefit from their actions as allies, their desire to use their privilege to educate and intercept other Whites in a more amicable way, and finally their attempts to try to mute their privilege by deferring to the leadership of people of color. Additionally, results from this study also helped to depict how White privilege may play an integral role in how allies become stuck in progressing from one stage to another. Future research should continue to examine how White allies understand the impact of White privilege in their everyday lives and the different obstacles that may immobilize aspiring allies.

5.6 What Does It Mean To Be White

Helms (2017) suggested that future research needed to examine the historical origins of Whiteness, including its socialization process. She also advocated for the deconstruction of Whiteness in order to highlight its different components. This dissertation attempted to deconstruct Whiteness with the hope that after its deconstruction it can be reassembled to create a cohesive definition of what it means to be White. As Helms (2017) pointed out, the three articles within *The Counseling Psychologist's* Major Contribution that were supposed to examine Whiteness never provided a working definition for how they defined Whiteness (Atkins et al., 2017; Spanierman et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2017).

This dissertation attempted to deconstruct and define Whiteness by asking White individuals what it means to be White. Figure 5.2 depicts a prefatory model of what it means to be White that is based on the results from this dissertation, Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism, Sue's theory of how Whiteness transforms into racism (Sue, 2006), Bonilla-Silva's (2014) research into the White habitus, and Robin DiAngelo's definition of what it means to be White (2016). Whiteness is used in the prefatory model as a superordinate term to define everything that entails being a White person in a White body, including the ideology of Whiteness. The prefatory model deconstructed Whiteness into four components: 1) White skin and aesthetic; 2) the White socialization process; 3) White culture; and 4) White privilege. The four components of what it means to be White are inter-related, as White skin and aesthetic are used to determine who is socialized into Whiteness. The socialization process yields the norms, values, and beliefs that are White culture. Finally, White privilege is viewed as the

outcome of Whiteness. The four components of the model will be further delineated in the paragraphs below.

5.6.1 White Skin and Aesthetic

To be White requires White skin as well as other physical features associated with Whiteness. The assertion that Whiteness requires White skin is present in extant theories (Sue, 2004; Sue, 2006) as well as the results of this dissertation. Debbie's testimony demonstrated that skin color, aesthetic, and certain physical features are used to determine who is White. Debbie's childhood experience also highlighted that it is other White people who determine who is White and, thereby, who is not White. Debbie's testimony revealed that it was "actual" White people, and not the parameters of the U.S. census, that influenced how she identified her race while growing up. Based on the census (https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html, para. 10), Debbie is able to identify as White, which is how she identifies currently. However, based on the interpretation and action of other White people, she was made to feel othered, which also meant not-White.

Debbie's skin is actually White. However, by her own description it is slightly more yellow than "actual" White people. Her face and eyes are more round. Her hair and eyes are brown. Therefore, when Whiteness is determined by other White individuals, it appears that it is the skin tone and aesthetic that is more indicative of western Europeans that is considered White. In accord with Debbie's experience from childhood, Sue's (2004) theory of ethnocentric monoculturalism opines that it is the fairer western European skin tone and aesthetic that is valued by Whiteness. Therefore, in

order to qualify as White, it is not just that you need White skin, but a certain type of White skin that is accepted by other White people. According to Sue (2004), it is skin color that determines our cultural conditioning, or in other words, our socialization.

5.6.2 The White Socialization Process

DiAngelo (2016) stated that people are not born knowing their culture. Rather, a socialization process occurs, beginning in our childhood, and throughout our entire lives, that teaches us societal norms (DiAngelo, 2016). The socialization process occurs in schools, homes, neighborhoods, with significant others, and through the mass media, as well as other places. (DiAngelo, 2016; Sue & Sue, 2008; Sue, 2006). Several scholars have postulated that a socialization process occurs as a part of Whiteness (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Helms, 2017, Sue & Sue, 2008). Bonilla-Silva (2014) labeled the socialization process that teaches White people their "racial taste perceptions, feelings, and emotions" as the White Habitus (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 152). The White habitus is produced by residential racial segregation, which creates a sense of group solidarity amongst Whites and includes the fostering of negative views of non-Whites (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

Results from this dissertation provided evidence that supports the notion that residential racial segregation is a key component to the White habitus, as participants described growing up in all-White neighborhoods and attending all-White schools and all-White churches. The importance of residential racial segregation is described in ethnocentric monoculturalism (Sue, 2004). Ethnocentric monoculturalism stated that cultural conditioning has "trapped" Euro Americans into a worldview that "only allows them to see the world from one perspective" (Sue, 2004, pp. 762). The exclusivity and

all-White configuration of the White habitus is what helps create the monocultural worldview and ensures that it will continue to exist without challenge or impediment.

The importance of residential racial segregation was depicted by participants of this dissertation. Participants described their observations of effortful and deliberate actions taken to maintain and protect the White habitus. Participants also revealed the rhetoric of color-blind racism that was used to cover up the effortful and deliberate actions to preserve the White habitus. As an example, Andrew stated that his family moved out of their neighborhood when families of color moved in. However, his family rationalized their move as a desire to maintain property values and not as a desire to retain living in an all-White neighborhood. Betty reported that her church excluded a family of color by taking a vote to determine their admission, which eventually denied them entrance. She also shared that her family "disowned" her for talking about race and excluded her son and his friend from their holiday gatherings. Their reasoning for excluding her son and his friend was that they claimed they could not understand them. The extent and severity of the actions described (i.e. moving homes; disowning family; exclusion from a church) to protect the White habitus may reveal a somewhat conscious awareness of it and its overall importance to White people. As Leonardo (2009) opined about White privilege, the investment in something reveals a conscious awareness of it. This dissertation revealed White individual's investment in the White habitus, evidenced by their desire to protect it.

The actions of participants to protect the White habitus may also reveal a desire for White individuals to suppress their connection and adherence to White supremacy, as it was also revealed by participants of this dissertation that when they left the White habitus

their awareness of race and racism began to change. Erica shared a thought-provoking example of what happens when White people leave the White habitus. A trip with her mother to another neighborhood forced her to ask, "why is everyone in this neighborhood all Black?" and "why is everyone here sick?" Living in the White habitus protects White individuals from having to confront the questions that Erica had asked. Other participants, such as Betty, Casey, Debbie, Hannah, and George also shared that leaving the White habitus made them learn that the viewpoint that was taught within the White habitus was limited and faulty.

5.6.3 White Culture

The White socialization process produces White culture. As a review, DiAngelo (2016) defined culture as the everyday characteristics of life that are shared by a group of people and are experienced through a shared system of meaning. As it pertains to White culture, Sue (2011) postulated that Whites are socialized into two competing levels of consciousness. On a more conscious level, Whites are taught to believe in freedom, equality, and the intrinsic worth of all people (Sue, 2011). One a less conscious level, they are taught that people of color are inferior, undesirable, and to be feared and avoided (Sue, 2011). Less conscious beliefs of White culture also included beliefs in White superiority, choseness, and entitlement (Sue, 2004). Extant theory (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016; Leonardo, 2009; Sue, 2004), and testimonies from participants of this dissertation, also suggest that the less conscious facets of White culture included a belief in White supremacy and new racism. For the more conscious components of White culture, extant theory (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016; Leonardo, 2009; Sue, 2004),

and testimonies from participants of this dissertation described a belief in the American dream and the Protestant characteristics (Sue, 2004). The more conscious and less conscious beliefs of White culture are discussed below.

Many participants of this dissertation specifically named White supremacy as a defining part of White culture. Other participants provided descriptors of White supremacy without naming it specifically. As a review, White Supremacy refers to a system that includes the political, economic, and social accumulation of power, currently and historically, which has privileged White people and oppressed people of color (hooks, 1995; Leonardo, 2009; Sue, 2006). Both the systemic nature of White supremacy and the ideological assumption of White superiority were referenced by participants of this study. Historical evidence of systemic, political, economic, and social accumulation of power were referenced by Betty and George when they recalled slavery and the decimation of indigenous peoples in the U.S. Another participant, Frank, recognized the power over people of color that came with Whiteness, regardless of the White person's socio-economic status. Lastly, Jack also referenced the power that White culture represented, as he believed that other cultures had to assimilate to White culture and that White culture did not have to assimilate to others.

In addition to representing a system of empowerment and oppression, White supremacy also entails an ideological assumption of White superiority (DiAngelo, 2016; Leonardo, 2009; Sue, 2006). White superiority is believed to be held at the individual level and at the group level (Sue, 2004). At the group level, Casey characterized the belief in White superiority as distinct from simply having greater access to opportunities.

She stated that Whites believe that they have more knowledge and capabilities. She also revealed that she believed White individuals have an inherent belief in being better. Testimony provided by Debbie also demonstrated beliefs in White superiority at the group level. Due to her skin tone and aesthetic features she was labeled as exotic. White people calling Debbie exotic due to her skin tone and aesthetic placed being White as the standard, or norm, for society and people of color as exotic, or a deviation from that norm (DiAngelo, 2016). Establishing Whiteness as the norm, and thereby the measuring stick to compare "others", positions it as superior.

At the individual level, Andrew depicted the belief in White superiority as a value of focusing inward and on individual self-advancement. He stated that the desire to advance one's individual status superseded a focus on the community or family. The focus on individual advancement that Andrew outlined was supported by Ian and Frank as well, who both described White culture as individualistic. Individualism is characterized by color-blind ideology, as it suggests that an individual's successes and failures are based on their own individual abilities and characteristics (DiAngelo, 2016). A person's self-advancement then is determined solely by themselves and is free from outside influences, such as racism, oppression, and discrimination. In general, color-blind racism is a part of all facets of White culture, as the purpose of color-blind racism is to maintain the status quo, or in other words, the current system of White supremacy. Additionally, silent racism is also a part of White culture and is a direct result of the paternalistic assumptions and stereotypical images that are infused within the White habitus (Trepagnier, 2008). Results from this dissertation provided evidence that support the existence of the practice of color-blind racism and silent racism.

Results also demonstrated some of the cultural norms that are the result of color-blind ideology. Participants described relying on stereotypes of people of color since, due to racial residential segregation, they did not have real life experiences with people of color to inform their opinions. Their opinions were changed after they left the White habitus. Participants also described White cultural behaviors and practices of not talking about race, avoiding talking about race, and denying that race played a role in events where racism was clearly at work. Those who reported having discussed race relations within their churches or families were admonished and excluded for it.

The more conscious beliefs within in White culture include the viewpoint that White individuals believe the world is equal, fair, and just (Sue, 2004). As such, White individuals believe that the world is meritocratic (Sue, 2004). Meritocracy includes the White cultural belief that an individual's status in society will be determined by their own ability, effort, and success (Sue, 2004). Thereby, White individuals believe that the more competent, capable, and intelligent will be more successful, which is akin to the individualism described previously (Sue, 2004). Likewise, White individuals believe that those who work harder and are more motivated will be more successful. Participants of this dissertation revealed their belief that White culture was associated with the American dream and the corresponding principle that hard work will yield commensurate results. Hard work is associated with the Protestant traits, such as industry, use, and success. The beliefs in hard work and meritocracy serve as a "veil" which prevents White individuals from consciously recognizing "institutional and personal injustices" (Sue, 2004, pp. 766). According to Sue (2004), the veil is a product of cultural socialization. Thereby, the White cultural beliefs that hard work and individual ability are what produce societal

success are used to serve as a distraction or replacement for the reality that the world is not just, fair, and equal, as people of color are discriminated against and oppressed. George's interaction with the police officer demonstrate how he believed his advantage was earned and not the race-based privilege he understood it to be later in his life.

The data provided by participants of this dissertation support the viewpoint that White culture is not readily conscious to White individuals. Participants of this study described White individuals as forgetful, unaware, and unconscious of their culture. They described the unconsciousness as purposeful, as it served to help White individuals forget about White supremacy and the harm that has been committed against people of color due to White supremacy. As Ian shared, we do not want to think about the child who made our shoes. Additionally, though, we also do not want to think about the fact that we might really want those shoes.

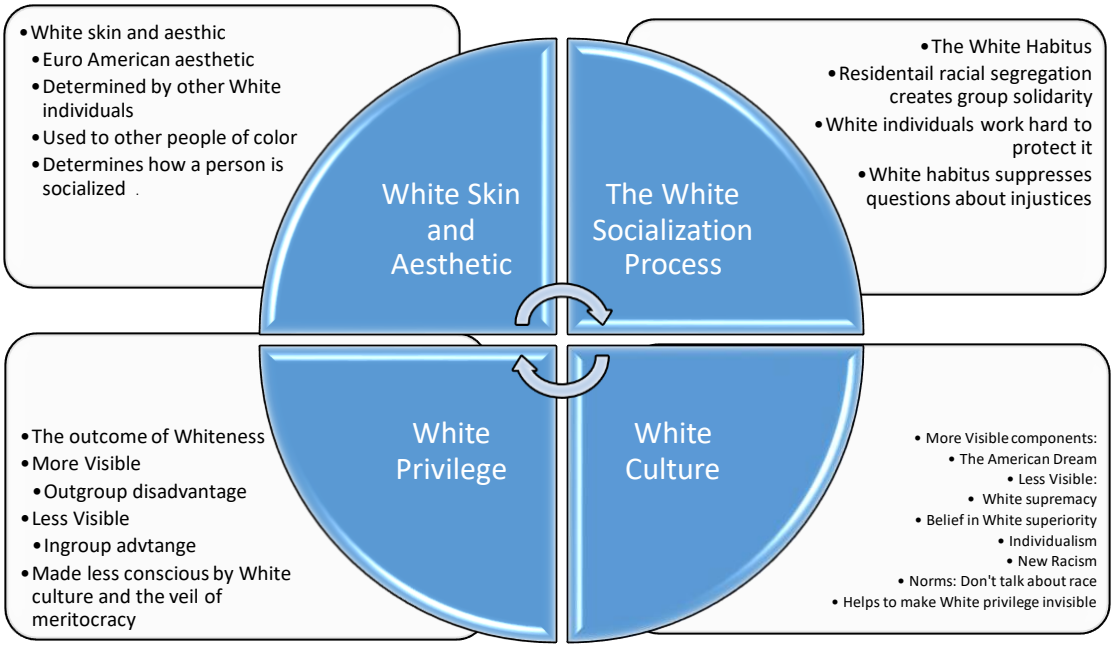
5.6.4 White Privilege

The combination of White skin, White socialization, and White culture, including White supremacy, produces White privilege (Sue, 2006). It is the daily representation of White supremacy (Leonardo, 2009). White privilege has been defined as greater access to resources and escaping penalties such as racial discrimination (Neville, Spanierman, & Lewis, 2012). Participants of this dissertation further defined White privilege by bifurcating it into outgroup disadvantage and ingroup advantage (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005).

Distinguishing between outgroup disadvantage and ingroup advantage may inform how

White individuals view their White privilege. White individuals who viewed their White privilege as solely associated with outgroup disadvantage appear to have a lower awareness of their White privilege (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). Whereas, Whites who viewed their White privilege as entailing ingroup advantage appear to have to have greater awareness of their White privilege (Todd & Abrams, 2011). Results from this dissertation also provided an example of how the veil of meritocracy helps make White privilege less conscious in White individuals. The story that George shared about his interaction with a police officer in his hometown revealed how he believed the advantages he gained with the officer were related to his father's hard work and success. It was only until later in his life that George realized his interaction with the police officer was in fact White privilege, built on his father's ascension in real estate at a time when the U.S. was legally segregated.

Figure 5.2 Defining What it means to be White



5.7 Return to the Subjectivity Statement

Although I do not find myself concerned with gaining the title of being an ally, I do feel a responsibility to take all that I have learned throughout the course of my graduate training and use it to help other White people learn the things that I have been taught throughout graduate school. On my internship from July 2018 to July 2019, I worked at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County's counseling center. As part of an outreach requirement of the internship, I conducted one presentation for the university's continuing education seminar series within the division of student affairs. The presentation was the same as a guest lecture that I provided for a multicultural course at the University of Kentucky. My presentation covered the content of this dissertation. After my first presentation, the vice president of student affairs asked me to conduct the presentation again during the next semester. By the end of my internship, they had asked me to conduct the presentation a total of four times.

As part of my internship, I was asked to reflect on my process of making these presentations about Whiteness. During my reflection, I recognized that my presentation became progressively less effective each time, even though the slides did not change. What became apparent was that I had grown stale. I learned that the most powerful components of my presentation were the parts of my own development and learning that I shared in the presentations. In the first presentation, I I shared examples from my own life of when I adhered to the beliefs associated with Whiteness. As an example, I provided vivid examples of times when I used the linguistic styles of color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Feedback I received from participants was that sharing my own personal journey, in particular the times when I have been wrong, had resonated with

them the most. In later presentations, I recognized that I was not providing as many personal examples because I was not reflecting on the material and thereby was not continuing to learn and grow. The presentations are important because they were essentially a 90-minute verbal report of this dissertation. My reflection on the research process and the data from this dissertation began when I started reflecting on my presentations of it. I learned that I was very close to this data and that I needed to learn and grow or else my presentation, and really myself, would grow stale and thereby ineffective.

When I think about the process of completing this dissertation, I recognize how much I learned along the way. I almost excluded questions about White culture while developing the interview protocol, as I did not believe there was a White culture at that time. After conducting the research, it became one of the focal points of my findings. This research process taught me that there is a White culture, but more importantly it reminded me that I need to challenge myself to identify what it is that I do not know; and that I may not even know to look for. As I leave graduate school, I will not have the structure and guidance to tell me what to look for or what to read. I will have to seek out new information on my own. That feels daunting but also extremely important. I want to compile reading lists for myself to make sure I do not grow stale. I will have to build new relationships with White people and people of color who can help me discuss what I have read and continue my learning and reflection.

When I think about being an ally, the process of completing this dissertation has really made me think about the use of White privilege within allyship. I confront my mom, my brother, my wife, my brother-in-law, friends, co-workers, and people on

Facebook about things they say that appears problematic and racist. I know I have to keep doing that and do it all the time and every time I see it. But, I also question whether that is enough to create any form of permanent change. In other words, is that enough of a risk to my White privilege? For example, if I pushed an anti-Whiteness agenda at my job and they fired me, I would eventually get another job. It would be unpleasant to be fired, but my White privilege would not be changed, so was any White privilege actually risked? Thereby, do I need to seek out ways that would risk my privilege in a greater capacity to effect any real change? The Activism Orientation Scale (AOS; Corning & Myers, 2002) asks, "How likely is it that you will engage in an illegal act as part of a political protest?" When I first read that I thought it was very extreme. After completing this research process, it feels less extreme to me. I ask myself if that is the level of risk to White privilege that White individuals need to take in order for more meaningful change to happen. Maybe it does not have to be an aggressive illegal act, but something that may lead to an arrest, such as a sit-in or protest. When I look back at the Civil Rights Movement, I wonder if White individuals who were arrested and experienced physical harm made more of a difference than White individuals who did not take those same risks?

My research team helped me think about what is an actual risk to White privilege. Two research team members suggested that Casey took no risk of her own when she tried to help a woman of color who was being berated by a White man in a grocery store parking lot. At the time, I thought Casey had performed well as an ally. Her description made it appear that she was afraid for her own safety and that by engaging she was taking some risk. However, my research team stated that she had not acted as an ally because

she never engaged with the White male. Thereby, the White man was free to perpetuate his aggression again and nothing had changed. After listening to the research team, my viewpoint changed as I now agreed with their analysis. If she had confronted the White man would others have come to her aid if he became physically aggressive toward her? If so, would that have challenged him in a way to alter his behavior in the future? When I think about my original reaction to Casey's action in the parking lot, it makes me more conscious of the propensity for White aspiring allies, including myself, to miss the mark and to think we have risked White privilege when we actually have not. I'm learning that I have a considerable amount of White privilege and knowledge of Whiteness compared to my White peers and that I need to take significantly more risks in challenging Whiteness.

5.8 Practical Implications for Counseling Psychology

The findings from this dissertation have practical implications for counseling psychologists. From a clinical perspective, White clinicians may benefit from a better understanding of their culture. Gaining greater consciousness of White culture and White privilege should help White clinicians in their work with clients of color as well as White clients. In working with clients of color, gaining a more conscious understanding of White culture, including beliefs in White supremacy and White superiority, should help White clinicians better understand how they are perceived by their clients of color. As hooks (1995) suggested, White individuals typically do not understand how Whiteness makes itself felt in the lives of people of color; which is potentially due to the fact that many White individuals deny they have a culture (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Trepagnier,

2008). Thereby, understanding how White culture has impacted clients of color should also help White clinicians understand the experiences of their clients of color in greater depth.

White clinicians may also use findings from this dissertation to help their White clients gain greater awareness of their White culture and White privilege as well. Helping White clients increase consciousness of their culture and privilege may help them gain greater insights into their own identity. It should also help White clients live a more fulfilling life. According to Katz and Ivey (1977) "Whites must identify with their culture and their Whiteness, not as a luxury but as an integral part of who they are. To deny or reject any part of our being hinders us from becoming a fully developed and whole person (pp. 487)".

One of counseling psychology's core values is a belief in social justice and advocacy for just causes (Packard, 2009). For many counseling psychologists, social justice advocacy takes the form of outreach, allyship trainings, and other forms of training and psychoeducation. Being that White individuals are typically unaware of their White cultural values (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016; Sue, 2004), White supremacy (Leonardo, 2009), and their race-based privilege (McIntosh, 1997), the results from this dissertation have the power to inform advocacy and outreach activities that strive to make the different components of Whiteness more conscious to White individuals. Specifically, outreach, advocacy, and psychoeducation can be used to further explicate White privilege into ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage, with the hope of generating more personal responsibility for White privilege. Additionally, outreach, advocacy, and psycho-education can use the results of this dissertation to

broaden the popular understanding of White supremacy to include beliefs in individualism and White individual's beliefs in White superiority. Lastly, the results of this dissertation can be used to inform trainings for aspiring allies, with a focus on helping White individuals recognize how they use their White privilege within allyship.

The results from this dissertation may also provide practical implications for how counseling psychology programs train their students. Leonardo (2009) argued that the critical analysis of Whiteness should focus more on the process by which domination and privilege are secured and less on the state of being privileged. Findings from this dissertation helped to describe the process by which domination and privilege are secured, which includes the socialization process of Whiteness. Graduate training courses in counseling psychology should incorporate theories of White culture and White socialization, along with theories about White privilege, into their curriculum. Theories of White privilege should include discussions about ingroup advantage and outgroup disadvantage. Including theories of White culture and White socialization into course curriculum within counseling psychology programs should also lead to further research in these topic areas.

Additionally, Sue (2017) suggested that counseling psychology training programs should focus on preparing allies to move toward action, as well as manage the risks to their White privilege that they may encounter, such as lack of support from family. Results from this dissertation attempted to highlight how aspiring allies move out of positions where they have become immobilized by managing their fear of losing privilege. Lastly, Cross and Reinhardt (2017) hypothesized that counseling psychology programs may reinforce color-blind ideology. Evidence in this dissertation not only

helped to expose color-blind ideology, but the socialization process that contributed to it. By identifying the socialization process, hopefully counseling psychology programs will be better able to understand if the culture and process within their programs reinforces color-blind ideology.

5.9 Recommendations and Future Directions for Counseling Psychology

In 2017, *The Counseling Psychologist* published a Major Contribution that examined Whiteness and allyship. Four prominent counseling psychologists of color offered their recommendations for future research into the study of Whiteness and allyship (Cross & Reinhardt, 2017; Helms, 2017; Sue, 2017). Each author provided a somewhat different recommendation that this dissertation attempted to address.

If Whiteness is the product that produces racism, future research may want to investigate whether or not aspiring allies should be fighting racism or whether they should be engaged in fighting Whiteness. Yeung, Spanierman, and Landrum-Brown (2013) found that White students who were enrolled in a course that utilized critical Whiteness pedagogy increased their awareness of race and White privilege and even displayed behavioral evidence of becoming an ally. In future research, counseling psychologists may want to investigate whether or not antiracism or anti-Whiteness is the better method for disrupting systems of oppression and discrimination. Results can inform whether or not antiracism or anti-Whiteness is the preferred training strategy moving forward.

Helms (2017) defined Whiteness as a socialization process and stated that future research needed to examine the socialization process in greater detail. Results from this

dissertation attempted to highlight the socialization process of Whiteness, which was identified in previous research as the White habitus (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). The socialization process is potentially one of the more important processes within Whiteness, as it may instill and maintain the ideology of White superiority and Black inferiority. Thereby, socialization also may produce color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014: Sue; 2004). Extant research within counseling psychology has focused on color-blind racism but has not focused as much on the process that created it. Based on results from this dissertation and extant theories, the socialization process may also play a predominant role in making Whiteness invisible (Sue; 2004). As Sue (2011) and Helms (2017) have called for the need to make Whiteness visible, calling attention to the process that hides it may be one strategy for decoding it into something easier to see. Counseling psychologists should direct future research into examining the many distinct White habituses where Whiteness socialization occurs. Future research should also investigate the different mechanisms of the socialization process, including how socialization excludes people of color from White habituses. Findings from future research into the mechanisms of the socialization process will help inform graduate training for clinicians, teachers, and future researchers.

Cross and Reinhardt (2017) suggested that counseling psychologists investigate culture and, in particular, White culture. According to DiAngelo (2016), the product of socialization is culture. Thereby, Whiteness socialization yields White culture. This dissertation helped to shine a light on White culture in an attempt to make it more visible to White individuals as well. However, many aspects of White culture were not fully explicated by this dissertation and should be a focus of future research by counseling

psychologists. Whereas this dissertation focused on the ideology that is part of White culture, future research should focus on understanding how White individuals experience White culture on a daily basis. DiAngelo (2016) described how White culture is depicted within the media and other outlets. Future research should examine the different outlets that infuse White culture into our daily lives and if White individuals are aware of it on a day to day basis.

Sue (2017) shared his belief that graduate training programs do not prepare potential White allies for the personal risks they may encounter, and that they do not help develop the skills that White allies will need to combat systemic issues. He stated that potential allies may face isolation and exclusion from friends and family members, which was exactly what Betty described happened to her. This dissertation attempted to examine and recognize the process of being White and an ally, which entailed managing the risk and rewards of White privilege within allyship. As Sue (2017) stated that being an ally means moving to action, results from this dissertation also tried to highlight how allies may get stuck and immobilized in their desire to act as an ally. Results from this dissertation also attempted to highlight the risks and rewards of being an ally, as well as the factors that may lead to an ally becoming stuck. Future research should continue to investigate the role that White privilege plays in effecting and preventing aspiring allies from moving to action. Future research should also potentially consider investigating how visible all forms of White privilege are to aspiring allies and if there is an association between social justice ally identity development and visibility of White privilege. Lastly, Sue (2017) contended that most graduate training programs adhere to a White Eurocentric perspective. With one of counseling psychology's core values being a need

to focus on the holistic frame of reference, including a person's social and cultural environments (Packard, 2009), it appears to be an appropriate time to focus on the culture of Whiteness and how that impacts training programs, research, teaching, and clinical work within counseling psychology.

5.9.1 Additional Future recommendations

From a methodological perspective, Sue (2017) questioned whether White individuals are capable of conducting Whiteness research. It is the opinion of this author that White individuals should conduct Whiteness research only under the leadership and guidance of people of color. The three women of color who made up the data analytic team provided insights that the White principal investigator would never have garnered on his own. Too many studies on Whiteness have not included a racially diverse research team. Is it not within the spirit of allyship to have researchers of different racial backgrounds working with each other and learning from each other? Conversely, what does it say if only White researchers work together to study Whiteness? Intentionally or unintentionally, White researchers working only with other Whites models an isolated viewpoint that socialization and the White habitus work to maintain. Future Whiteness research should strive to be conducted by a racially diverse research team that is also supervised, mentored, and accountable to researchers of color.

5.10 Limitations

Results from this dissertation helped corroborate previous theory and research and elicited new findings. However, the results should be understood within the scope of this

dissertation's limitations. This study attempted to recruit participants who identified as both White and an ally. Edwards (2006) stated that allies need to be identified by members of oppressed groups. This dissertation struggled to recruit participants who were identified and referred by members of oppressed groups. As such, the participants in this study self-identified as allies. Eventually, the participants were re-labeled by the principal investigator as aspiring allies, due to their lack of endorsement by a member of an oppressed group. Despite their lack of endorsement by people of color, all participants revealed a cognitive desire to be an ally and participate in this dissertation. The re-classification of participants as aspiring allies allowed this dissertation to learn the struggles that aspiring allies of different ally identity development levels encountered in their pursuit of working toward combating racism and Whiteness. However, working with aspiring allies of different ally identity levels was not the original intent of this dissertation; the original intent of this dissertation was to work with allies of higher identity development levels to ascertain their understanding, or lack of awareness, of Whiteness.

A second limitation of this dissertation relates to methodology. IPA states that for a graduate-level project, including a dissertation, three to six participants are an ideal number (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). This dissertation recruited and analyzed data for 10 different participants. The increased number of participants may have made the copious amount of data difficult for a graduate student to manage. The copious amount of participant data allowed for the identification of broad themes but may not have allowed for the identification of more specific details within those themes. Future research should consider using IPA methodology to research each individual construct of

Whiteness, which may allow for a deeper dive into those constructs to fully extrapolate their details.

5.11 Conclusion

The present study expanded current research and theories by exploring what it means to be White and what it means to be White and an aspiring ally. Results from this dissertation helped to define Whiteness by first identifying the underlying components that entail it, including White culture, White privilege, color-blind racism, and the White skin of the White bodies who inhabit Whiteness. Findings provide evidence that the ideology of Whiteness, whether conscious or unconscious, includes a belief that Whites view themselves as superior to people of color and that Whites view people of color as inferior. Findings also brought attention to the characteristics of White culture and its role in maintaining racism and White privilege. Results from this dissertation also helped to inform the debate about the visibility of White privilege by providing data that suggests that most White individuals view their privilege as outgroup disadvantage and remain unaware of their ingroup advantage. The present study also offered the unique perspective that the identity development of aspiring allies may be impacted by their desire to risk or retain White privilege. If the field of counseling psychology is truly committed to social justice efforts and multiculturalism, then inclusion of White culture and White supremacist ideology needs to be included into training and curriculum. Graduate student training appears insufficient to produce racial and social justice allies if the ideology of Whiteness and the role of White privilege within allyship are not

understood and taught comprehensively. Future research should continue to investigate these topics to better inform the training of current and future counseling psychologists.

APPENDICES

5.12 Recruitment Flyer

U N I V E R S I T Y OF K E N T U C K Y R E S E A R C H

SEEKING PARTICIPANTS

for a research study about white individuals who are

allies for social and racial justice

Researchers at the University of Kentucky are seeking participants for a study that investigates how individuals who identify as an ally for social and racial justice understand what it means to be white.

Participants will be asked to take two electronic surveys, which should take approximately 20-30 minutes to finish. It is also possible that you will be asked to complete two follow-up interviews that will last between 60 and 90 minutes.

You may be eligible to participate:

- If you are 18 years of age or older
- Identify as white and an ally for social/racial justice
- Are comfortable discussing your experiences of being white and being an ally

If you are interested in participating, have questions, or for more information, please contact:

Brett Kirkpatrick, M.S., Ed.S.

Email: bki242@uky.edu

Phone: 347-907-0013

UK Research

An Equal Opportunity University

5.13 Recruitment Email

Hello [insert name],

I hope you are doing well. I am currently in my 3rd year of a doctoral program in counseling psychology. I am currently preparing for my dissertation, which will focus on White people who are allies for racial justice. Therefore, I am searching for potential participants who are White and who are allies and was wondering if you know any individuals that fit these two characteristics. I hope this does not feel like an odd request. I know it may appear self-serving for a White person to study other Whites but the greater good in my opinion will be to learn how to teach Whites not to be racist in the future. If you know someone you think identifies as White and an ally please send them the attached recruitment flyer and ask that they contact me directly via email or phone if they are interested in participating.

If you have any questions about any of this please let me know.

Thanks,

Brett Kirkpatrick, M.S.

University of Kentucky

Bki242@uky.edu

(c) 347-907-0013

5.14 Informed Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

What Does It Mean To Be White: Defining Whiteness Through the Lens of White Allies

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you identify as White and are over the age of 18. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of about 10 people to do so.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Brett Kirkpatrick, Ed.S., M.S. who is a doctoral candidate at the University of Kentucky, Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology. He is being guided in this research by Danelle Stevens-Watkins, Ph.D. and Candice Hargons, Ph.D.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to explore how White individuals understand and experience being White and make sense of Whiteness. In conducting this study, we hope to develop a clear and comprehensive definition of Whiteness. A clear and comprehensive definition of Whiteness will include understanding the intersection of different inclusive of gender, class, and sexuality to name just a few. Additionally, we hope to understand how White individuals who are allies for racial justice balance being White and an ally, as these identities diverge in certain respects. Gaining a more in depth understanding of Whiteness may inform how courses and trainings about multiculturalism and racism are conducted.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You should not take part in this study if you are under 18 years of age or a self-identified race other than White.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The research procedures will be conducted online, at UK Dickey Hall, or in a private room of your choice, such as your home, office, or conference room. You will be asked to complete two questionnaires, which should take you no more than 20 or 30 minutes to complete. It is also possible that you will be asked to complete two interviews, which will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. The two interviews will be separated by one month. You may also be asked to 'member check' the findings towards the end of the data analysis process. Member checking involves reviewing the results of data analysis to

determine if the results authentically capture your experience. Member checking helps increase the trustworthiness of results. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is approximately 120-180 minutes over the next year.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be asked to take two questionnaires and potentially engage in two interviews. The two questionnaires will ask you questions about race and racism in society as well as your desire for social activism. The interviews will ask you to share your experiences being White, having White privilege, living with White culture, and to describe how you understand Whiteness in general. The interviews will be audio recorded and later transcribed. You will have the opportunity to review and offer comments about your transcript. Aside from telling us about your experiences and providing feedback about the transcripts, there are no other expectations of you.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You may not get any direct benefit from participating in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may in the future help increase the overall understanding of Whiteness, which will help inform how multicultural competence and multicultural humility are understood and taught. Additionally, you may enjoy talking about these issues and feel satisfied that you are helping to add to the existing literature about an important issue.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

You do not have to take part in the study and can discontinue your participation at any time. If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to participate. You can stop at any time during the study and still retain the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no alternative choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

Individuals that choose to participate will do so on a volunteer only basis. There are no available funds to pay participants.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

We will make every effort to keep all research records that identify you secure and confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. During the study, all study materials will be securely stored in a safe at the personal residence of the principal investigator. Electronic files will be saved on an encrypted jump drive. All documents on the encrypted jump drive will be password protected. Encryption provides a higher level of security because it is harder to break into than a general password. This study proposes the use of both passwords and encryption. Personal information will be de-identified and saved on a separate file from files which contain your results of the questionnaires or interviews. Only the researchers on this protocol will have the password for these files. The jump drive will be stored in a safe at the personal residence of the principal investigator. Once the audio files are uploaded from the audio recorder to the server they will be deleted from the audio recorder. All names and locations will be altered to maintain privacy and confidentiality for all participants. Informed consent documents, other hand-written notes, and transcriptions will be electronically recorded on documents that are password protected and stored on a USB drive which will be locked in a safe at the principal investigator's home.

Please be aware, while we make every effort to safeguard your data once received from the online survey/data gathering company, given the nature of online surveys, as with anything involving the Internet, we can never guarantee the confidentiality of the data while still on the survey/data gathering company's servers, or while en route to either them or us. It is also possible the raw data collected for research purposes may be used for marketing or reporting purposes by the survey/data gathering company after the research.

We will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to share your information with other people. If during the course of the interview you report information about a child being abused or if you report information regarding potential

harm or danger to yourself or someone else we are required to share that information. Also, we may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

If you decide to take part in the study, you have the right to discontinue your participation at any time. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individuals conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your participation in the study is more risk than benefit to you. You will be notified if you are going to be withdrawn from the study.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

There is a possibility that the data collected from you may be shared with other investigators in the future. If that is the case, the shared data will not contain information that can identify you unless you give your consent. If the results of the study are published, identifying information such as your name, will not be included in any reports.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator Brett Kirkpatrick, M.S., Ed.S. at (347) 907-0013 or bki242@uky.edu or his two faculty advisors: 1) Danelle Stevens-Watkins, Ph.D. at (859) 257-7889 or d.stevenswatkins@uky.edu or 2) Candice Hargons, Ph.D. at 859-257-4224 or Candice.crowell@uky.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity at the University of Kentucky between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri. at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

_____ _____

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study Date

_____

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

5.15 Interview Protocol

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.

    a. How do you identify? Things like ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion or spiritual identity, age, and any other aspect of your identity are all on the table.

2. What does it mean to you to be White? If it helps, feel free to describe a situation, story, picture, or event that describes what it means for you to be White.

    How do you experience being White in your everyday life? Again, feel free to describe situations or events.

    When did you first realize you were White? And again, feel free to use situations or events to describe the experience.

    How do your other demographic characteristics - such as gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, etc. – affect what it means for you to be White? Helped you learn about being white? Or coincide?

3. Describe what White privilege means to you. If it helps, feel free to describe situations, stories, pictures, or events that describes White privilege.

    How do you experience White privilege in your everyday life? Again, feel free to describe situations or events?

    When did you first realize that you had white privilege? What was that like?

    (How did you learn about White privilege? Was there a situation or experience that

    helped you learn about your privilege?)

4. What does it mean to you to be White and an ally. If it helps, feel free to describe situations, stories, pictures, or events that describe what being a White ally means to you.
    (What is it like to be White and an ally?)
    (Difficult or easy?) (thoughts and feelings about being an ally in any situation described).

    How do you experience being white and an ally in your everyday life?

    What experiences, events, situations helped lead you to become an ally?

    How do you manage having White privilege and being an ally?

    What are the positives and/or negatives of having privilege and being an ally?

5. What does White culture mean to you. If it helps, feel free to describe a situation, story, picture, or event that describes White culture.

   Describe how you experience White culture in your daily life. If it helps, think about experiences in the news or on social media.

6. If Whiteness were an ideology what would it represent? If it helps, feel free to describe a situation, story, picture, or event that describes what Whiteness is.

   What do you think is the relationship between Whiteness as an ideology and racism? Which do you think came first?

   What do you know about the history of Whiteness – where did it originate?

   What do you think is the purpose of Whiteness?

   Has Whiteness changed over time? If so, how?

   After thinking about Whiteness as an ideology, is it better to combat Whiteness or combat racism if we want to end social injustice and oppression of racial groups?

REFERENCES

Ansley, F.L. (1997). Race and the core curriculum in legal education. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 214-219). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Atkins, S.L., Fitzpatrick, L.R., Poolokasingham, G., Lebeau, M., & Spanierman, L. (2017). Making it personal: a qualitative investigation of White counselor's multicultural awareness development. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 669-696. Doi: 10.1177/0011000017719458

Ayvazian, A. (1995). Interrupting the cycle of oppression: the role of allies as agents of change. *Fellowship*, 61(1-2), 6.

Barrett, J. R. & Roediger, D. (1997). How White people became white. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 402-406). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Beer, A.M., Spanierman, L.B., Greene, J.C., & Todd, N.R. (2012). Counseling psychology trainees' perceptions of training and commitments to social justice. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59(1), 120-133. doi: 10.1037/a0026325.

Bell, D.A., Higgins, T., & Suh, S. (1997). Racial reflections: dialogues in the direction of liberation. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp.

106-111). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2014). Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Brookhiser, R. (1997). The way of the WASP. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 12-15). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Brookhiser, R. (1997). Others, and the WASP world they aspired to. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 360-367). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Campbell, J. & Oaks, J. (1997). The invention of race: Rereading white over black. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 145-151). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Case, K. (2012). Discovering the privilege of whiteness: white women's reflections on anti-racist identity and ally behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(1), 78-96.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory*. Washington, DC: Sage.

Clark, D.A., Spanierman, L.B., Reed, T., Soble, R., & Cabana, S. (2011). Documenting

weblog expressions of racial microaggressions that target American Indians. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education,* 4(1), 39-50. doi: 10.1037/a0021762.

Clark, D.A., Kleiman, S., Spanierman, L.B., Isaac, P., & Poolokasingham, G. (2014). "Do you live in a teepee?" Aboriginal students' experiences with racial microaggressions in Canada. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 7(2), 112-125. doi: 10.1037/a0036573.

Cleaver, K.N. (1997). The antidemocratic power of whiteness. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J.(Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 157-163). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Constantine, M.G. & Sue, D.W. (2007). Perceptions of microaggressions among Black supervisees in cross-racial dyads. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54(2), 142-153. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.54.2.142.

Corning, A.F., & Myers, D.J. (2002). Individual orientation toward engagement in social action. *Political Psychology*, *23,* 703-729. Doi: 10.1111/0162-895X.00304

Crenshaw, K. W. (1988). Race, reform, and retrenchment: transformation and legitimation in antidiscrimination law. *Harvard Law Review*, 101(7), 1331-1387. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/1341398

Crenshaw, K.W. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black

feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139-167. Retrieved from http://chicagobound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/issl/8

Crenshaw, K.W. (1993). Mapping the margins: intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(1241), 1241-1299.

Creswell, J.W., Hanson, W.E., Plano Clark, V.L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research design. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35(2), 236-264. Doi: 10.1177/0011000006287390.

Cross, W.E. & Reinhardt, J.S. (2017). Whiteness and serendipity. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 697-705.

DiAngelo, R. (2016). *What does it mean to be white? Developing white racial literacy*. New York: Peter Lang.

Dalton, H. (2005). Failing to see. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 15-18). New York: Worth Publishers.

Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Critical White Studies: Looking behind the mirror*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Dowling, M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen. A review of different

phenomenological approaches. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 44, 131-142.

Dyer, R. (2005). The matter of whiteness. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 9-14). New York: Worth Publishers.

Eatough, V. & Smith, J.A. (2017). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In: Willig, C. and Stainton-Rogers, W. (eds.) Handbook of Qualitative Psychology 2nd Edition. London, UK: Sage, pp. 193-211.

Edwards, K. (2006). Aspiring social justice ally identity development: a conceptual model. *NASPA Journal*, 43(4), 39-60. doi: 10.2202/1949-6605.1722

Feagin, J. & Vera, H. (2005). Confronting one's own racism. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 133-138). New York: Worth Publishers.

Flagg, B. (1997). The transparency phenomenon, race-neutral decision making and discriminatory intent. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 220-226). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Frankenberg, R. (1997). White women, race matters: the social construction of whiteness. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 632-634). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Frederickson, G. (1997). White images of Black slaves (Is what we see in others sometimes a reflection of what we find in ourselves?). Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 38-46). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Haimerl, A. (2016). After leaving her beloved red hook, a new Yorker learns to live – and belong – in the motor city. *The Village Voice*. Retrieved from: http://www.villagevoice.com/news/after-leaving-her-beloved-red-hook-a-new-yorker-learns-to-live-and-belong-in-the-motor-city-8549681

Hallewood, P. (1997). White law and lawyers: the case of surrogate motherhood. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 195-198). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Hayman, Jr., R.L. & Levit, N. (1997). The constitutional ghetto. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 632-634). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Hardiman, R. (1982). *White identity development: a process-oriented model for describing the racial consciousness of white Americans* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. (8210330)

Helms, J. E. (1984). Toward a theoretical explanation of the effects of race on

counseling: A Black and White model. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 12(4), 153-165.

Helms, J. E. (1993). *Black and White racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*. Greenwood Press.

Helms, J.E. (2017). The challenge of making Whiteness visible: reactions to four Whiteness articles. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 717-726. doi: 10.1177/0011000017718943

Heppner, P.P., Wampold, B.E., & Kivlighan, D.M. (2008). Research design in counseling (3rd ed.). U.S.: Brooks/Cole.

hooks, b. (1995). *Killing rage ending racism*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Howard, P.S. (2004). White privilege: for or against? A discussion of ostensibly antiracist discourses in critical whiteness studies. *Race, Gender & Class*, 11(4), 63-79.

Houshmand, S., Spanierman, L.B., Beer, A.M., Poteat, V.P., & Lawson, L. (2014). The impact of a service-learning course on White students' racial attitudes. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 18(2), 19-48.

Hughey, M.W. (2010). The (dis)similarities of white racial identities: the conceptual framework of 'hegemonic whiteness'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(8), 1289-1309. Doi: 10.1080/01419870903125069

Ichioka, Y. (1977). The Early Japanese Immigrant Quest for Citizenship: The Background of the 1922 Ozawa Case. *Amerasia Journal*, *4*(2), 1-22.

Ignatiev, N. (1997). The point is not to interpret whiteness but to abolish it. *Race Traitor: Journal of the New Abolitionist*, 1-6. Retrieved from racetraitor.org.

Jensen, R. (2005). White privilege shapes the U.S. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 115-118). New York: Worth Publishers.

Johnson, A. (2005). Privilege as paradox. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 103-108). New York: Worth Publishers.

Jones, J. (1997). Back to the future with the bell curve: Jim crow, slavery and G. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 179-185). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Jones, J. (1997). Back to the future with The Bell Curve: Jim Crow, slavery, and *G*. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 179-185). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Katz, J.H. & Ivey, A. (1977). White awareness: the frontier of racism awareness training, *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 55(8), 485-489.

Kivel, P. (2005). How white people can serve as allies to people of color in the struggle to end racism. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 139-148). New York: Worth Publishers.

Kordesh, K.S., Spanierman, L.B., & Neville, H.A. (2012). White university students' racial affect: understanding the antiracist type. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6(1), 33-50. doi: 10.1037/a0030102.

Langdridge, D. (2008). Phenomenology and critical social psychology: directions and debates in theory and research. *Social and Personal Psychology*, 2/3, 1126-1142. Doi: 10.1111/j.1751-9004.00114x

Leonardo, Z. (2009). *Race, Whiteness, and Education*. New York: Rutledge.

Lewis, J.A., Neville, H.A., & Spanierman, L.B. (2012). Examining the influence of campus diversity experiences and color-blind racial ideology on students' social justice attitudes. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 49(2), 119-136. doi: 10.1515/jsarp-2012-6291.

Mahoney, M.R. (1997). Residential segregation and white privilege. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 273-275). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Mahoney, M.R. (1997). Racial construction and women as differentiated actors.

Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 305-309). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Malott, K.M., Paone, T.R., Schaefle, S., Cates, J., & Haizlip, B. (2015). Expanding white racial identity theory: a qualitative investigation of whites engaged in antiracism. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 93, 333-343.

Malterud, K., Siersma, V.D., & Guassora, A.D. (2016). Sample size in qualitative studies: guided by information power. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1753-1760.

McIntosh, P. (1997). White privilege and male privilege: a personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 291-299). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Morrow, S.L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 250-260.

Morrow, S.L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 250-260.

Morrow, S. L. (2007). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: Conceptual foundation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, *35*, 209 – 235.

Munin, A. & Speight, S.L. (2010). Factors influencing the ally development of college

students. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 43(2), 249-264.

Neville, H. A., Lilly, R. L., Duran, G., Lee, R. M., & Browne, L. (2000). Construction and initial validation of the color-blind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAS). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *47*(1), 59-70. Doi: 10.1037//0022-0167.47.1.59

Neville, H.A., Yeung, J., Todd, N., Spanierman, L.B., & Reed, T. (2011). Color-blind racial ideology and beliefs about a racialized university mascot. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education,* 4(4), 236-249. doi: 10.1037/a0024334

Neville, H.A., Poteat, V.P., Lewis, J.A., & Spanierman, L.B. (2014). Changes in white college students' color-blind racial ideology over 4 years: do diversity experiences make a difference? *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 61(2), 179-190. doi: 10.1037/a0035168.

Neville, H.A., Spanierman, L.B., & Lewis, J.A. (2012). The expanded psycho-social model of racism: a new model for understanding and disrupting racism and White privilege. In Fouad, N.A. (Eds.), *APA Handbook of Counseling Psychology: Vol. 2. Practice, Interventions, and Applications* (333-360). doi: 10.1037/13755-014.

Nilsson, J. E., Marszalek, J. M., Linnemeyer, R. M., Bahner, A. D., & Misialek, L. H. (2011). Development and assessment of the social issues advocacy scale. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 71*(1), 258-275.

O'Brien, E. (2001). *Whites Confront Racism: Antiracists and their Path to Action*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Packard, T. (2009). Core values that distinguish counseling psychology: personal and professional perspectives. The Counseling Psychologist, 37(4), 610-624. Doi: 10.1177/0011000009333986.

Patton, L.D. & Bondi, S. (2015). Nice White men or social justice allies?: using critical race theory to examine how White male faculty and administrators engage in ally work. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 18(4), 488-514. doi: 10.1080/13613324.2014.1000289.

Pinterits, E.J., Poteat, V.P., & Spanierman, L.B. (2009). The White privilege attitudes scale: development and initial validation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 56, 417-429. Doi: 10.1037/a0016274.

Ponterotto, J. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: a primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 126-136. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.126.

Poteat, V. P., & Spanierman, L. B. (2010). Do the ideological beliefs of peers predict the prejudiced attitudes of other individuals in the group? *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 13(4) 495–514. doi: 10.1177/1368430209357436

Poteat, V. P., & Spanierman, L. B. (2012). Modern racism attitudes among white

students: The role of dominance and authoritarianism and the mediating effects of racial color-blindness. *The Journal of social psychology*, *152*(6), 758-774.

Powell, A.A., Branscombe, N.R., & Schmitt, M.T. (2005). Inequality as ingroup privilege or outgroup disadvantage: the impact of group focus on collective guilt and interracial attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 31(4), 508-521.

Roberts, D.E. (1997). The genetic tie. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 186-189). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Roediger, D. (1997). The first world in whiteness: early twentieth-century European immigration. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 354-356). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Ross, T. (1997). The rhetorical tapestry of race. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 89-97). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Rowe, W., Bennett, S. K., & Atkinson, D. R. (1994). White racial identity models: A critique and alternative proposal. *Counseling Psychologist, 22,* 129–146.

Sacks, K.B. (1997). How did Jews become White folks? Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 395-401). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Scott, D. A., & Robinson, T. L. (2001). White male identity development: The key model. *Journal of counseling & development, 79*(4), 415-421.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2012). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, method, and research.* Washington DC: Sage.

Smith, L., Kashubeck-West, S., Payton, G., & Adams, E. (2017). White professors teaching about racism: challenges and rewards. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 651-668. doi: 10.1177/0011000017717705

Smith, L. & Redington, R.M. (2010). Lessons from the experiences of White antiracist activists. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 41(6), 541-549.

Soble, J. R., Spanierman, L. B., & Liao, H. Y. (2011). Effects of a brief video intervention on White university students' racial attitudes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *58*(1), 151-157. doi: 10.1037/a0021158

Spanierman, L. B., Beard, J. C., & Todd, N. R. (2012). White men's fears, White women's tears: Examining gender differences in racial affect types. *Sex Roles*, *67*(3-4), 174-186. doi: 10.1007/s11199-012-0162-2

Spanierman, L.B., Poteat, V.P., Whitaker, V.A., Schlosser, L.Z., & Avalos, M.R. (2017). Allies for life? Lessons from White scholars of multicultural psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 618-650.

Spanierman, L. B., & Soble, J. R. (2010). Understanding Whiteness: Previous approaches and possible directions in the study of White racial attitudes and identity. *Handbook of multicultural counseling*, *3*, 283-300.

Spanierman, L.B. & Smith, L. (2017). Roles and responsibilities of White allies: implications for research, teaching, and practice. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 606-617. doi: 10.1177/0011/000017717712

Spanierman, L.B. & Smith, L. (2017). Confronting White hegemony: a moral imperative for the helping professions. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 45(5), 727-736. doi: 10.1177/0011000017719550

Sue, D.W. (2003). *Overcoming our racism*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Sue, D.W. (2004). Whiteness and ethnocentric monoculturalism: making the "invisible" visible. *American Psychologist*, 59(8), 761,

Sue, D.W. (2006). The invisible Whiteness of being: Whiteness, White supremacy, White privilege, and racism. Constantine, M.G. & Sue, D.W. (Eds.), *Addressing Racism: Facilitating Cultural Competence in Mental Health and Educational Settings* (15-30). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Sue, D.W. (2011). The challenge of White dialectics. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 39(3), 415-422. doi: 10.1177/0011000010390702

Sue, D.W. (2017). The challenges of becoming a White ally. *The Counseling*

Psychologist, 45(5), 706-716. doi: 10.1177/0011000017719323.

Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (2008). *Counseling the culturally diverse: theory and practice.* New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Todd, N.R. & Adams, E.M. (2011). White dialectics: a new framework for theory, research, and practice with White students. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 39(3), 353-395.

Todd, N. R., Spanierman, L. B., & Aber, M. S. (2010). White students reflecting on whiteness: Understanding emotional responses. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 3*(2), 97-110. doi: 10.1037/a0019299

Todd, N. R., Spanierman, L. B., & Poteat, V. P. (2011). Longitudinal examination of the psychosocial costs of racism to Whites across the college experience. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *58*(4), 508-521. doi: 10.1037/a0025066

Trepagnier, B. (2006). *Silent racism: How well-meaning white people perpetuate the racial divide*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

Tummala-Narra, P. (2007). Skin color and the therapeutic relationship. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 24(2), 255-270. Doi:10.1037/0736-9735.24.2.255.

Vandiver, B. J., Cross Jr, W. E., Worrell, F. C., & Fhagen-Smith, P. E. (2002). Validating

the Cross Racial Identity Scale. *Journal of Counseling psychology*, *49*(1), 71-85.

Van Tassel, E.F.. (1997). "Only the law would rule between us": antimiscegenation, the moral economy of dependency, and the debate over rights after the civil war. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 152-156). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

The United States Census Bureau. (2018). About race. Retrieved from: https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

Wertz, F.J. (2005). Phenomenological Research Methods for Counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 167-177. Doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.167

Wildman, S. M. & Davis, A.D. (2005). Making systems of privilege visible. In Rothenberg, P. (Eds.), *White Privilege: essential readings on the other side of racism* (pp. 95-102). New York: Worth Publishers.

Wright, Jr., L. (1997). Who's Black, Who's White, and Who Cares. Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.), *Critical White Studies* (pp. 164-169). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Yeung, J.G., Spanierman, L.P., & Landrum-Brown, J. (2013). "Being white in a

multicultural society": critical whiteness pedagogy in a dialogue course. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6(1), 17-32. Doi: 10.1037/a0031632

VITA

Brett Kirkpatrick

Education:

2012-2014	Master of Science in Counseling Psychology
	Loyola University Maryland; Baltimore, MD
1997-2001	Bachelor of Science in Psychology
	Davidson College; Davidson, NC

Experience:

7/2018-7/2019	University of Maryland, Baltimore County Counseling Center
8/2017-6/2018	Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women,
August 2016-	Eastern State Hospital
August 2015-	University of Kentucky-Counseling Center
1/2016 -5/2016	University of Kentucky-Counseling Psychology Program
8/2015-5/2016	James W. Stuckert Career Center
5/2011- 6/2012	Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. (Community Mental Health)

Scholastic and Professional Honors:

May 2017	Helen Thacker Graduate Fellowship in Educational & Counseling Psychology: $1,000
June 2013	Kolvenbach Summer Research Grant Recipient: $3,500

Publications:

Hargons, C., Mosley, D. V., Meiller, C., Stuck, J., **Kirkpatrick, B**., Adams, C., & Angyal, B. (2018). “It feels so good”: Pleasure in last sexual encounter narratives of Black university students. *Journal of Black Psychology.*