

**DIFFERENTIAL PERCEPTIONS OF
PREJUDICE:
AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL
ATTRIBUTION**

by

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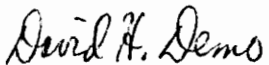
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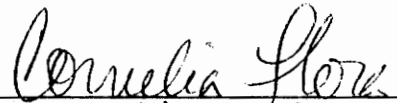
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Abstract

Studies have found disparate perceptions of race relations and discrimination between black and Asian students at institutions of higher education. A linkage is made between perceptions of race relations and attributions of prejudice as a motivation. Attribution theory is developed as a foundation for theoretical understanding of the attribution of prejudice. Both theoretical and empirical literature is reviewed to provide a rationale for expecting blacks to attribute, and therefore perceive, more prejudice than Asians. Several social factors are also identified which could serve as additional reasons to expect blacks to attribute prejudice more frequently than Asians.

Results from a questionnaire tapping prejudice attributions are analyzed for significant group differences. Those differences are then analyzed by ordinary least-squares multiple regression. Support is found for the contention that blacks have a greater tendency to make prejudice attributions than do Asians. Support is found for the hypothesis that perceptual differences between blacks and Asians are partially due to differences in the tendency to attribute prejudice. Perceptual differences are also found to be partially due to citizenship status and race. A greater salience of race for blacks and blacks' greater tendency to attribute prejudice are suggested as reasons for observed differences in the perceptions of black and Asian students. The greater salience

of race for blacks is discussed as a possible effect of structural inequality, or as a cultural artifact originating in past inequality.

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Introduction

Previous research on prejudice¹ has addressed what many feel to be its antecedents. Prior work has focused upon stereotyping, in/outgroup behavior and the extant social and cultural factors which affect the expression of prejudice. All of this research has significantly contributed to the understanding of prejudice.

However, the underlying assumption of previous research is that prejudice may be explained as a trait which exists within the perpetrator. The existence of such a trait is obviously of interest. However, this approach removes the significance of prejudice from the social realm and locates it in the psychological.

Without the exhibition of prejudice in social interaction, its existence is ephemeral. The social significance of prejudice may stem from three sources: the factors which create prejudice on the part of actors; the exhibition of prejudice in the form of discrimination²; and the impact of its perception upon an observer or object. It is in the perception which leads to the latter with which this research is concerned.

¹ Prejudice may be defined as "a generalized belief ...applied to all members of a particular group" (Marger, 1991).

² Discrimination may be defined as "the denial of access to societal rewards on the basis of group membership" (Marger, 1991).

The definition of a situation determines the perception of that situation. In instances of prejudice, that definition may be seen as emanating from the perceived intention of the actor, since it is expressed in terms of that intention. The observer's or victim's knowledge of that intention depends upon the process of attributing motivation, i.e. prejudice.

This research attempts to determine whether the race of the attributor affects the attribution process. Specifically, this research analyzes the relative tendencies of black³ and Asian college students to make dispositional attributions in general, and prejudice attributions in particular. Analyses determine the degree to which these tendencies differ significantly. Further analysis determines the impact of race and other variables on attributions.

In turn, differences between these two groups' perceptions of race relations on their campus are scrutinized relative to their prejudice attributions. The differences in perception are analyzed to determine whether they are significant. The analysis goes on to illuminate the effect of race , attributional tendencies, citizenship status and other

³ The term 'black' is used throughout this paper as a label of racial heritage. Although race has dubious legitimacy as a social reality, the more correct usage of a label of ethnicity could not be used with accuracy. Neither the ancestral or cultural heritage of subjects nor of those persons studied in reference may be firmly established, therefore negating the applicability of labels of ethnicity.

variables on perceptions of race relations.

Some treatments of prejudice assume that prejudice is some general personality trait which engenders dislike of dissimilar persons and groups. An underlying assumption is that prejudice is generally applied to all groups and persons dissimilar to the actor. This is referred to as the theory of the generality of prejudice (see Seeman, 1981 for a detailed treatment).

Arguments proposing a purposive foundation for prejudice embody the opposing view. The most widely used of these arguments is that prejudice is a reaction to economic competition. This is best seen in theories espousing a view of split-labor markets.

This research has potential significance for this debate. If prejudice is not attributed differentially by black and Asian students, this has implication for the view that prejudice is generally applied. If the difference in perception is not due to a greater tendency of blacks to attribute prejudice, then it is likely due to black students being subjected to prejudice more often than Asian students. If this is the case, the generality theory of prejudice may be inaccurate.

Further significance stems from implications for both attributional and social psychological treatments of prejudice. Both spheres of research have neglected to seat

the analysis of prejudice within the context of the interaction. It is hoped that by illuminating more of the dynamic nature of the prejudice phenomenon, this research may engender further research designed to take into account the roles of both actor and object in determining the nature of the interaction.

Finally, this research also has implication for the manner in which representatives of authority handle reports of prejudice. In higher education, reports are often referred to administrators who attempt to determine the validity of accusations of prejudice. If this research does find some evidence of a racially specific tendency to make prejudice attributions, then such efforts would have to take into account the differences in perception which such a difference would imply. If, on the other hand, this research should find that there are no differences between the attributional tendencies of the two groups, that would imply that one group is indeed subjected to greater prejudice than the other group. Obviously, administrators would then have to make increased efforts on behalf of that group.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

The results of two studies of campus climate suggest an interesting pattern. A study done at the University of Maryland - Baltimore County (Ehrlich et al., 1987) asked respondents whether discrimination was still a problem on campus. Seventy-six percent of black respondents answered affirmatively. The corresponding figures for Asian and white students were twenty-six percent and thirty-six percent, respectively.

A study done at the University of Virginia (Covert, 1990) asked whether race relations posed a problem on campus. Approximately seventy percent of the black students surveyed responded affirmatively. For non-black minorities⁴, the corresponding figure was forty-six percent and for whites, forty percent.

These studies used items which are not directly comparable. However, both tap perceptions of prejudice on campus. Of particular interest is the variation in the

⁴ The actual respondent group included in the figure for non-black minorities included Asians, Hispanics and Native Americans. However, approximately ninety to ninety-five percent of those responding in this group were of Asian heritage, a fact which should give legitimacy to the inclusion of these data (this information is based upon a conversation with Dr. Covert).

perceptions of black and Asian students⁵. The task at hand is to attempt to understand the reason for such disparate "pictures" of social reality between two groups traditionally targeted by prejudice.

2.1 Perception and Definition

The perceptions in question correspond to a situational definition. What the items in the two studies did was to ask respondents to make a definition of the situation with regard to the degree to which prejudice characterized campus interactions. As this definition is ultimately made in terms of prejudice, it is dependent on the determination of prejudice as a frequent motive for actions taken on campus. That determination is the result of a process of attributing motivation. Thus, there is a linkage between the perception

⁵ As is obvious, there is a large variation in the perceptions of Asian students in these studies. A similarly large variation is not apparent in the perceptions of either black or white students. This inconsistency in pattern points to several plausible explanations for the Asian variations. The first of these involves definition, and the comparability of the items. It is possible that Asian students differentiate conceptually between discrimination and race relations whereas black and white students do not. Therefore, Asians at UMBC and UVa may have similar perceptions of discrimination and similar perceptions of race relations, but this similarity is not apparent due to the nature of the items.

Another possibility deals with the makeup of the Asian samples. The UMBC sample may differ from the UVa sample in some important characteristic (perhaps citizenship status) which affected the perceptions of the Asian subjects. As a result, the samples may not be directly comparable.

of prejudice and the process of prejudice attribution.

A difference in the frequency of prejudice attributions should accompany the observed difference in black and Asian students' perceptions. With regard to attributions, two possible explanations emerge for the observed difference in perception. One rationale holds that the varying frequency with which these groups attribute prejudice, and thereby perceive it, is directly reflective of a difference in the frequency with which black and Asian students actually experience prejudice. That is, black students at these institutions may actually encounter more behavior which could be attributable to prejudice than are Asian students.

The other argument would hold that the difference in perception is due to a difference in the tendency to make prejudice attributions. In other words, when confronted with the same behavior, black students may be more likely than Asian students to make an attribution of prejudice.

Either of these explanations is plausible. However, in order for blacks to be exposed to greater prejudice as in the first scenario, prejudiced individuals should have greater reason to dislike and/or oppress blacks. It would be relatively difficult to find theoretical or empirical evidence to suggest that this is the case. Therefore, it is the convention of this research that the difference in the perceptions of black and Asian students is due to a greater

tendency on the part of blacks to attribute prejudice.

In attempting to justify this convention, it is necessary to do two things. One must gain a basic understanding of the attribution process. One must also answer the question of whether there is reason to expect blacks to attribute prejudice more often than Asians.

2.2 Attribution

Attribution theory is an important paradigm in psychological social psychology. The works of Fritz Heider form the primary theoretical foundations of this body of literature. However, the works of E.E. Jones and H.H. Kelley may be even more important as foundations for formulations of attribution processes.

Heider's most important contribution to the area came with the publication of The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (1958). It was therein that Heider began to question the manner in which people infer causality in social events. He referred to this process as the "naive analysis of action" (Heider, 1958). However, Heider's work was mostly conceptualization, and very little in the way of actual testable theory resulted from his work (Crittenden, 1983).

E.E. Jones took many of the ideas presented by Heider and expanded upon them, creating what is known as the theory of correspondent inference (Jones and Davis, 1965). A

correspondent inference is an inference about an individual's intentions and dispositions based upon the evidence of his/her behavior. In other words, it is an induction of an individual's motives and beliefs which follows directly from his/her actions.

H.H. Kelley also refined concepts first presented by Heider, especially that of the attributor as sort of an amateur scientist. Kelley (1967) theorized that people may make attributions based upon the same principles as in an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). In this process, individuals attempt to determine whether there is covariance between a perceived cause and the behavior in question. When possible causes and actions show similar patterns of variance, attributors tend to infer causality.

There have been a number of other important theoretical contributions. Among others, Nisbett and Valins (1987), Weiner (1987) and Bem (1967; 1972) theorized about the nature of self-attributions. Much of the work on self-attribution has dealt with attributions of success and failure and their impact upon psychological functioning and subsequent behavior. Often, attribution theorists have dealt with questions of bias in self-attribution and causal attribution (e.g. Kelley, 1972b; Bradley, 1978; Mehlman and Snyder, 1985). These efforts have concentrated upon the implications of self-esteem enhancement for attribution processing.

There has also been work on the differences between an actor's attributions about his/her actions and an observer's attributions about those same actions. Jones and Nisbett (1987) presented the conception that an actor tends to consistently attribute his/her actions to external causes. Environmental and situational stimuli are focal points in his/her analysis of the situation. Conversely, observer's attributions tend to place greater emphasis upon internal dispositions of the actor. The observer focuses upon the behavior of the actor in causal analyses. Environmental and situational factors serve only as background information.

The focus of attention then determines the nature of the attribution made. Actors would tend to attach causality to factors external to themselves, since they focus upon environmental and situational factors. Jones and Nisbett (1987) referred to this as a tendency towards external causality. Conversely, observers' focus on dispositions of the actor(s) would result in a tendency to make attributions of causality to characteristics internal to the actor(s). This was referred to as internal causality.

Critics of attribution theory pointed out that the overarching models of attributional analysis (i.e. correspondent inference and Kelley's covariance approach) were too ideal. The primary focus of these critiques was the fact that both models presume a complete analysis of attributional

evidence. In correspondent inference, the attributor needs to analyze the effects of the actor's behavior upon him/herself, the impact of societal expectations on the actor and the value of the actions for the actor. In Kelley's model, there is the necessity of assessing the nature of previous behavior of the actor and societal expectations with regard to the behavior in question. In turn, both models require an analytical synthesis of all of these data, resulting in the final attribution. In many, if not most, situations, knowledge of the actor is only partial, sufficient time is not available for complete analysis, or such extensive appraisal is not necessitated by the nature of the incident.

Kelley (1972a) dealt with the idealized nature of attributional models. He presented the possibility that conceptions of causality present before the event may provide a template against which current situations may be compared. These opinions are organized into cognitive structures known as causal schemata (1972a). Schemata allow "economical and fast attributional analysis, by providing a framework within which bits and pieces of information can be fitted in order to draw reasonably good inferences" (Kelley, 1972a). Fiske and Taylor (1984) define schemata as "cognitive structures that represent an individual's organized knowledge about a given concept or stimulus domain". It is highly likely that the information which went into correspondent inferences and

covariance analyses of previous incidents plays a large part in making up the content of schemata.

2.2.1 Group Influences on Attributional Behavior

Attribution theory has been criticized as an overly individualized treatment of social behavior. Deschamps (1983) made theoretical elaborations which brought more social behavior into the sphere of attribution theory. Particularly important among Deschamps' criticisms was the fact that attribution theory had been solely concerned with the individual as attributor, virtually isolated from the social sphere.

Past attributional schemes treated the attributor as acting in terms of personal bias and/or interest, with little or no attention to attributors as extensions of their groups. Deschamps presented a theory of social attribution as an attempt to deal with these problems. The critical point was to consider the attribution process as influenced by the network of groups and social categories to which the attributor belongs.

Similarly, Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) took issue with the individualistic bias of attribution theory. After a review of the attribution literature, they concluded that, in many cases, attributions are made to individuals as a function of the social groups or categories to which they belong. The

actor is assessed as an extension of his/her group by the attributor.

Empirical support may be found for both ideas. Hewstone's and Jaspars' assertion of attributional influence by the actor's group can find confirmation in research done by Duncan (1976) and Wiley and Eskilson (1978). Duncan presented subjects with videotaped vignettes showing both black and white actors shoving another actor. Subjects attributed the black actor's behavior to aggression and violent tendencies while they more often attributed the behavior of whites to playfulness. Wiley and Eskilson asked teachers to make attributions regarding children's scholastic performance from school records. They found that situational explanations were used more often for black students than for white students.

Deschamps' idea of influence by the attributor's group membership is more directly germane to the present research. Again, empirical evidence may be found which gives support for this assertion. Of the most interest are studies which deal with the attribution of prejudice.

It should be noted that the studies dealt with in this review focus upon either ethnicity or cultural background. As such, they are not directly applicable to the proposed study, which deals with racial classifications. However, it is not a great leap of faith to assert that the findings presented herein may be assumed to work in a similar fashion for racial

groups as well. It is acknowledged that there may be greater differences within the racial classifications than between them, which necessarily cuts down on the accuracy of judgement in terms of groups specificity. However, it would also seem likely that there would still be appreciable differences between the racial groups in terms of the process of attributing prejudice.

Perhaps the most directly germane finding came from research done by Rodin, Price, Bryson, and Sanchez (1990). Using a vignette methodology, they presented subjects with various situations which showed different types of discriminatory behavior, i.e. exclusion, derogation and preferential treatment. Exclusion may be defined as occurring when a place or activity is reserved for one group. Derogation was defined as the assertion that one group is not as good as another. Preferential treatment was defined as occurring when members of one group are given preference over another group for a limited resource.

Rodin et al. found secondary effects of gender upon attributions, secondary in that these effects were not the primary focus of the research. These effects suggest that interests and consciousness determined by group membership does indeed flavor one's prejudice attributions. The basic implication was that women attributed gender-based prejudice to men more often than they did to women. Similar effects

were not found in men's attributions. This likely implies a greater sensitivity of disadvantaged groups to behaviors potentially motivated by prejudice on the part of a more powerful actor.

In another study, Rodin, Price, Sanchez and McElligot (1989) used a similar vignette methodology. However, the salient variable in this study was the controllability of the social flaw upon which the discrimination was based. Rodin et al. presented subjects with vignettes which varied in the type of personal characteristics which triggered the actor's discriminatory behavior. Experimental conditions were obesity, flawed appearance and flawed speech. The controllability of the flaws was varied as follows: obesity due to overeating vs. obesity due to hormonal imbalance; flawed appearance due to sloppy dress vs. flawed appearance due to a facial birthmark; and flawed speech due to stuttering vs. flawed speech due to the use of slang.

The important information presented in this study came in the degree to which males and females and males attributed prejudice to the actor. In twelve out of fourteen experimental conditions presented in the results, the mean prejudice rating of women was higher than that of men. The only conditions in which women did not attribute greater prejudice were for controllable flawed speech and uncontrollable flawed appearance. Once again, this suggests

that group membership, in this case membership in a marginalized group, does lead to a greater tendency to attribute prejudice.

Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) presented black and white youths with written descriptions of racial discrimination. They then asked the subjects to attribute causality to negative characteristics of black stimulus victims or discrimination by white agents of the 'system'. They found a significantly greater tendency on the part of black subjects to attribute causality to the system. White subjects also made attributions of causality to the system, but at a much lower frequency.

Mann and Taylor (1974) suggest that groups in different social contexts within the same society may focus on different characteristics as a basis for person and causal perception. They presented French Canadian and English Canadian subjects with vignettes portraying job interviews where the person interviewed was denied the position. They varied the group identity of the interviewee on both ethnic and class dimensions.

Both groups of subjects made similar attributions, however the focus of the subjects' attributional analysis differed by group membership. They found that French Canadian subjects made attributions more on the basis of ethnicity, whereas English Canadians placed more emphasis on social

class. These data imply that each group focuses upon different aspects of their common social environment in order to determine intention and causality. That focus may be determined by the salience of a particular social factor for the specific groups. That salience may in turn be determined by the experiences of that group within the context of inequalitarian societies.

A total assessment of attribution as affected by group membership would be based upon combining Deschamps' ideas with those of Hewstone and Jaspars. The conception which develops is one which places attributions within the context of relations between the attributor's group and that of the actor.

In cases where the actor is of the same group, common group interests may influence the attributor's assessment. Similarly, an actor from a group with good relations with that of the attributor might receive the "benefit of the doubt" (i.e., a situational attribution). Actors from groups with poor relations with that of the attributor may be expected to have their actions placed in the most negative light.

This develops a picture of attribution along the lines of ingroup and outgroup behavior (Tajfel, 1982). Ingroup members behaving negatively and outgroup members behaving positively are usually subject to situational attributions. Causality is usually attributed to personal dispositions in instances of

positive behavior by ingroup members and negative behavior by outgroup members.

Now the question which arises is whether there is reason to expect differences between blacks and Asians in the nature of their group relations with whites. Indeed, there would seem to be a greater amount of conflict between blacks and whites than between Asians and whites. There is also an interesting possibility which arises with consideration of the nature of the Asian population of the U.S.

Of the six largest Asian groups in the U.S., only the Japanese are below 75% in proportion of foreign-born. Therefore, the great majority of Asians in the U.S. are immigrants. It would seem probable that the choice to immigrate to a nation would in part be based upon some positive perception of that nation, its people, culture and/or institutions. That perception would probably translate to a desire on the part of immigrants to link themselves to that nation in every aspect. This could lead to a sense of identification with that nation.

Additional impetus for the positive assessment of a host nation could lie with the degree to which the immigrant group achieved success within that system. The attainment of high status and income for an immigrant group would reaffirm the degree to which that group perceived the host nation as positive. This would also create an identification with the

host nation.

In addition, that success would increase the amount which the immigrant group had in common with that nation's mainstream, as relative success would likely characterize the mainstream of any nation. This would lead to a further sense of identification with the host nation and its people. Such a tendency towards identification with the mainstream of U.S. society and its institutions is likely for Asian immigrants to the U.S.

While Asians in the U.S. probably don't see themselves as whites, they may identify white Americans (who comprise most of the mainstream) as relatively like themselves and also may identify with the society whose institutions seem to work so well for them. As a result, whites may hold a marginal 'in-group' status with Asians in America. It is unlikely that many blacks in America have a similar view of whites. Tajfel states that ingroup members' actions are typically attributed to external causes. This could result in a tendency by Asians to attribute the behavior of whites to external causes, which would preclude the possibility of Asian attributions of prejudice in situations of interaction with whites. On the other hand, blacks may be more likely to attribute the behavior of whites to dispositional factors, a situation which could increase the likelihood of prejudice attributions.

This possibility deals with a comparison of the relations

between blacks and whites with the relations between Asians and whites. Another possibility emerges from the literature which generates a more direct comparison of blacks and Asians, and indirectly dealing with the nature of their respective relations with whites. The findings of Mann and Taylor suggest that members of two groups may focus on different characteristics of an actor or event as causal evidence. The object of focus for a group would be the available point of focus with the most salience for that group. The findings presented by Rodin et al. suggest that prejudice may be more salient to one group than another if the first group has a greater history of oppression than does the second.

The operative question then becomes whether there is evidence which would suggest that blacks in the U.S. have faced greater oppression than have Asians in the U.S. There is considerable evidence which could support such a contention. A number of the more important of these reasons will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 Social and Historical Factors

There are a number of factors which could give the appearance that blacks have faced greater oppression in the U.S. than have Asians. Of this evidence, one of the most obvious points deals with the institution of slavery. Africans were kidnapped from their homelands and then

subjected to inhumane and brutal conditions while in slavery. On the other hand, Asians were often indentured laborers and also subjected to brutality, but their situation is not seen as so dire as that which confronted blacks in slavery.

Also of importance are accounts relating the history of discrimination and prejudice against blacks as compared to that against Asians. Although there is a significant history of discrimination against Asians in the U.S., more attention is given to dealing with the problems of blacks in America. Accounts of the experiences of blacks during slavery, the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement, to name a few, are readily available. Similar accounts of Asian experiences during any of the significant periods of immigration or even the widely known period of Japanese internment are infrequent and only known to a few at best. As a result, blacks are exposed much more frequently to accounts of prejudice and discrimination against them than are Asians. This could result in a greater sensitivity to prejudice on the part of blacks.

Another point concerns prejudice and the nature of stereotypes. Stereotypes form the greater part of the content of prejudice (Marger, 1991). Quite often, a victim of prejudice will define a situation based upon the use of a stereotype as the basis of an actor's behavior. The perpetuation and reinforcement of stereotypes is carried out

by primary reference groups and the media. In many cases, the media serves as the primary means of transmission.

Based upon the infrequency of representations of Asians as compared to blacks in the popular media, stereotypes of blacks are more accessible than are those of Asians. This could translate to greater sensitivity on the part of blacks in terms of stereotypes, since stereotypes of blacks are more frequently represented. Furthermore, of the stereotypes about Asians, many of them are 'positive' in nature. This may result in Asians having a lack of concern with regard to the perpetuation of stereotypes, as well as with regard to persons acting on those stereotypes.

A final point should be made about the relative social and economic standing of Asians in the U.S. Asian groups have achieved great success in the U.S., often surpassing the achievements of white Americans. On the other hand, blacks in America consistently rank the lowest in almost all aspects of socioeconomic achievement. As oppression would be perceived as an impediment to achievement, it would seem that Asians have faced significantly less oppression than have blacks.

All of these factors could easily give the impression that blacks have faced greater oppression in the U.S. than have Asians. As a result, signs of prejudice may be more salient to blacks than to Asians. This could easily translate to a greater tendency to attribute prejudice on the part of

blacks than on the part of Asians.

Also important in explaining the expectation of more frequent prejudice attributions by blacks than by Asians would be evidence on the possible greater salience of race (and therefore racial prejudice) to blacks than to Asians. One of the more important points refers to the previous discussion of national origin. The great majority of blacks in the U.S. are American born. Contrastingly, the majority of Asians in the United States are foreign born, with the exception of Japanese-Americans.

While the societies from which Asians came are by no means homogeneous, they still lack the heterogeneity of the U.S. Additionally, what heterogeneity there is exists along ethnic lines, with virtually no racial differentiation. In comparison, the racial composition of the U.S. is quite varied, and race serves as one of the primary bases for stratification. As a result, Asians in the U.S. (with the exception of Japanese Americans) may be less aware of race as a personal characteristic while blacks may exhibit an extreme awareness of its salience.

Another consideration is the existence of an extensive subjective culture dealing with questions of 'the black experience' in American society. Literary works by such authors as James Baldwin, Maya Angelou and Richard Wright explore what it means to be black in America. The speeches,

essays and letters of black leaders such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Marcus Garvey are widely available to blacks. All of these deal with questions of race in America and the implications of these questions for blacks. A comparable body of work may not be found for even those Asian groups which have been in the U.S. for generations. This could easily orient the attention of blacks to race and prejudice much more than Asians.

These arguments are theoretically and empirically unsubstantiated, so far as their effects upon the attributions of blacks and Asians. However, they can be shown to exist. As such, they could logically lead one to expect a difference in attributional tendencies.

2.3 Statement of the Problem

Emerging from the findings of the studies at UMBC and UVA is the question of why black students would have negative perceptions of race relations more readily than would Asian students. The negative perception of race relations must be linked to the attribution of prejudice. There must be such an attribution for a situation to be perceived as indicative of problems in race relations.

With this in mind, the observed differences in the perception of race relations may reflect the attribution of prejudice by black and Asian students in one of two ways. The

first is that the greater perceptions and accompanying more frequent attributions of prejudice by black students are the direct result of the greater exposure of black students to prejudice and discrimination. The opposing argument is that the difference in perception does not necessarily correspond to an actual difference in exposure to prejudice. Rather, this difference may result from a difference in attributional style, leading to variation in the tendency to attribute prejudice. The view of the latter argument is the basis for the first hypothesis of this research:

1. The differences between black and Asian students in identifying prejudice as a problem on campus is due to the greater tendency of black students to attribute behavioral causality to prejudice.

The differences in attributional style which result in greater prejudice attributions by black students could be the result of two different, though non-exclusive, phenomena. The first and more general of these involves the relative tendency for blacks and Asians to make dispositional attributions. This could be the result of processes such as those described by Tajfel and implied by Hewstone and Jaspars, and Deschamps.

While Asians in the U.S. probably don't see themselves as whites, they may identify white Americans (who comprise most of the mainstream) as relatively like themselves and also may identify with the society whose institutions seem to work so well for them. As a result, whites may hold a marginal 'in-

group' status with Asians in America. It is unlikely that many blacks in America have a similar view of whites. As a result of that in-group status, Asians may view negative acts by whites as caused by external forces. This leads directly to the second hypothesis of this research:

2. Black students have a greater tendency than do Asian students to attribute causality to dispositional factors in instances of intergroup contact.

The other, more specific difference in attributional style deals with the likelihood of making actual prejudice attributions. Members of two groups may focus on different characteristics of an actor or event to make causal attributions. The object of focus for a group would be the available point of focus with the most salience for members of that group. There is also evidence that the greater the history of oppression for a group, the more likely that group is to attribute prejudice. There is considerable evidence which could give the appearance that blacks have faced greater oppression in the U.S. than have Asians. The relative frequency of stereotypical representations of blacks and the accessibility to accounts of prejudice against blacks versus the rarity of such accounts of anti-Asian sentiment and behavior could create the impression of relatively greater racial oppression against blacks. This impression, within the context of the evidence for varying group focus and the likely

greater salience of race and racial prejudice for blacks in the U.S. due to the existence of a racially oriented subjective culture and the influence of citizenship status lead to the third hypothesis:

3. Black students are more likely than Asian students to attribute behavioral causality to prejudice rather than other dispositional or situational causes.

The dependent variable for hypothesis one is the attribution of prejudice by subjects. The dependent variable for hypothesis two is the attribution of causality to dispositional/internal factors as opposed to situational/external factors. The dependent variable for hypothesis three is the perception of race relations as a problem on campus. A number of independent variables are included to deal with respondent characteristics which may affect the results.

Race is the primary independent variable for this research. The more important distinction is to be made between blacks and Asians. White respondents were included in the sample to provide a baseline for comparison.

As was discussed earlier, an important source of variation between blacks and Asians is nationality. With this in mind, it would be a mistake to omit citizenship status as an independent variable. This may be a primary source of variation between the racial groups in terms of attributional

content. Of course, it is also possible that this is not the case.

These are the primary independent variables in this research. Several other independent variables are also included. Another important independent variable is socioeconomic status (SES). Socioeconomic variables may differ between racial groups. Variations in the experiences of blacks and Asians may be associated with variations in SES. While SES probably doesn't affect the cultural content of attributions, it is possible that it affects the experiences of minorities, which may determine their perceptions. Another possibility is that SES may affect other, more structural, variables which, in turn, affect attributional tendencies, content and foundations.

A similarly important independent variable which emerged in the literature review was gender. Rodin et al. (1989; 1990) found that women perceived more prejudice than did men. Their sample was made up of whites, so this may or may not be true with minority subjects. As was the case with citizenship status, it would be a mistake to omit gender, due to its role in shaping the experiences of women and men.

Also important would be respondents' prior experience of discrimination. This would account for previous sensitization to prejudice and discrimination by prior exposure. Second, and perhaps more important, would be to deal with respondents'

prior history of prejudice attributions. That is, in effect, what an item asking about prior experience of discrimination would illuminate.

The final two independent variables are age and academic status. They both take into account the relative degree to which subjects have had the opportunity to be exposed to discrimination and prejudice. Of the two, academic status is the more important, since the amount of time spent in college may correspond directly to a potential for exposure to prejudice. This is because, in many cases, the subject's entry to college corresponds to the point at which they achieve some degree of independence from home. This may then result in a greater exposure to harmful experiences including prejudice and discrimination.

The stimulus material was structured to account for differences in the tendency towards internal or external causation as well as the tendency towards prejudice attribution specifically. Subjects were presented with stimulus materials which varied in the degree to which situational factors may have played a role in causing the actor's behavior. If there is a greater tendency for internal causation on the part of black students, then they would tend to ignore obvious situational factors and continue to make dispositional attributions. If Asian students tend more towards external causation, they would ignore obvious

dispositional cues and make attributions of situational causality. In terms of hypothesis two, the stimulus material was written in such a manner that each of the four primary stimulus items could have been perceived as a case of prejudice.

Chapter 3 Methods

3.1 Stimulus Materials

The stimulus material was in the form of a questionnaire. There were four written vignettes, accompanied by questions intended to compile information on independent variables. Also included were several unrelated questions, intended to distract respondents from questions dealing with race and discrimination. The vignettes constituted the stimulus for the attribution in which this research is interested.

The vignettes represented four distinct situations localized to the subject campus. The vignettes focused the action of the scenes upon the subjects. The identities of the other participants in the interaction were ambiguous, in an effort not to sensitize subjects to questions of race. In a number of cases, subjects asked the color of the others in the vignettes⁶. The instructions were that respondents assume that the actors were typical students, faculty and staff at the subject institution.

All of the vignettes tested hypothesis one. The behaviors described could all be construed as signalling some sort of prejudice. Additionally, the vignettes tested

⁶ Interestingly, all of those who asked this question were black. This could suggest a greater salience of race for blacks.

hypothesis two. One of the four described scenes with obvious situational signals. Another had obvious dispositional signals. The remaining two vignettes were ambiguous. The actual vignettes were as follows:

1. You have been working at the Dietrick General Store for the past two semesters. As midterms approach, you are feeling anxious about one particular exam and ask your supervisor for Friday night off so that you can study for the exam on Monday. Your supervisor says that you can't be spared. Later that day a coworker makes the same request that you did and is granted time off. When you complain to the supervisor about this, his justification is that your coworker has seniority. You respond that not only was your coworker hired a semester after you were, but also asked for time off after you were turned down. Your supervisor seems to get angry. "Look," he says. "I'm tired of you pestering me. Get back to work and just be glad that you have a job!" What caused the supervisor's behavior?

2. You are studying in the library late one evening. Three students whom you don't know are walking down the aisle and see you. As they approach the table at which you are seated, you look up from your notes. "What do you think you're doing here?" one of them asks. "I bet you can't even read! Why don't you get off campus!" All three laugh and turn away. Why did the three students behave that way?

3. It's Friday and everyone in your class just learned that there is a paper due Monday. You and another student have been assigned the same topic. After class, you go to the library to find references for your paper. When you go to find the book that is the most important reference for your paper, you discover the other person in your class with the same topic taking the book off the shelf. You ask, "I've got the same topic that you do."

Maybe we can share the book." He looks at you for a moment, and then shakes his head. "I'm not doing too well in class, and I've got to get a good grade on this paper. I'm going to work on it for the whole weekend and I'll need the book the whole time. Sorry." Why didn't the student share the book with you?

4. You were supposed to turn in a homework assignment in class today. You had done about half of the assignment before you had gotten ill last night. When the instructor entered the room, you approached him and explained what had happened. The instructor shook his head and replied, "I don't understand why you students can't meet deadlines. If you hand in your homework late, I will have to take points off. After class, you noticed another student asking for an extension on the assignment. After argument, the instructor agreed to give this student an extension without penalty. Why didn't the instructor give you the extension?

The choice of written vignettes was based upon their use as stimulus materials in some of the empirical studies reviewed. Rodin et al. (1989; 1990) as well as Mann and Taylor (1974) used written vignettes in their studies of attribution. This form also would seem to be the most appropriate, convenient and unobtrusive way to tap the attribution process.

Subjects were told that they were participating in research on behavioral perception. The research was identified as part of the researcher's thesis. The subjects were to read the vignettes and they were to attempt to determine what caused the other individuals' behavior in the interactions described. The actual instructions were as

follows:

This questionnaire is part of a study to determine the manner in which people perceive behavioral causality. It is being carried out by Ellington Graves of the Department of Sociology in an effort to complete his Master's thesis. Your responses are totally anonymous. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire or the associated research, he may be reached at 953-1847 or 231-8971.

Directions: You are asked to read the following items carefully. Assume that each situation is happening to you, as indicated in each vignette. You possess all of the personal characteristics (such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.) which you now possess. Upon completion of each item, please attempt to determine the cause of the other person(s)'s behavior in each incident. Make your determination based upon your immediate perception of the incident. Do not write what your reaction would be. If you feel that some aspect of the situation (for example, peer pressure, drugs, etc.) was the primary cause then write 'situational' and name that cause. If you feel that some personal motive of the actor was the cause, then please name that motive (for example, rudeness, selfishness, etc.). After identifying the primary cause of the actor(s)'s behavior, please attempt to explain what there was about the incident which may have influenced your conclusion.

Responses were open-ended for two reasons. The first of these reasons was to insure that there would be no signal to the respondents that the desired response would involve prejudice. The second of these reasons was so that subjects could also tell what there was about the vignette which served as a signal for their attribution.

The form of the questionnaire came as the result of the

pre-test of an earlier version which had seven vignettes. Revisions were made based upon the results of that pre-test, for which the sample consisted of twenty-six graduate and undergraduate summer school students at the subject institution. Pre-test subjects were selected from passers-by in the campus student center. The pre-test questionnaires were coded by the researcher. A sample of the questionnaires was check coded by another graduate student. The correlation between the two codings was .955.

The results of the pre-test led to several changes in the format and content of the instrument. The number of vignettes was reduced from seven to four, to shorten the time needed to complete the questionnaire and to omit items which either did not tap prejudice attributions or led to misunderstandings about the nature of the incident. Additional changes made included the addition of a question to the end of each vignette which identified the actor(s) to whom attributions were to be made. There were also changes in the instructions which were meant to reduce the number of uncodable answers and to reduce the time for completion.

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The sample consisted of 144 undergraduate and graduate summer school students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and

State University. This choice of institution was due to the convenience of access for the researcher. The decision to use summer school students was due to time constraints and convenience.

The initial data collection was done in undergraduate summer school classes. This approach obtained a low number of Asian respondents, and there was a decision to seek a supplementary sample of Asian students. The university library was the site of a purposive sample of Asian students, to serve this purpose. The final sample consisted of forty-eight blacks, forty-eight Asians, forty-six whites and two Native Americans. The small number of Native American respondents led to the exclusion of their responses.

The black sample was made up of twenty-seven males and twenty-one females. This yielded a gender ration (M:F) of 1.2857. The black population⁷ at VPI & SU during the 1991-92 academic year had a gender ratio of 1.1578, and during the first summer session, there was a gender ratio of 1.2838. The mean academic status of black subjects was approximately third year/junior. The corresponding figure for the black population during the first summer session was also third

⁷ The data presented here are estimated from information provided by the VPI & SU Office of Institutional Research. Additional information on the percentage of foreign students who are Asian was obtained from Cranwell International Center. This information approximated that proportion at approximately 70%.

year/junior. Additionally, the mean age of black respondents was approximately 21 years. This is in keeping with the traditional age range of most college juniors. The mean annual family income of the black sample was in the range of \$15 - 30,000. The median annual family income of the U.S. black population in 1987 was \$18,098 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). These data, although not directly comparable (e.g. the use of mean and median figures for income), do present a rationale for accepting the black sample as somewhat representative.

The white sample had a gender ratio (M:F) of 1.095. This is as compared with 1.4107 during the academic year and 1.4018 during first summer session. The mean academic status of the white subjects was approximately third year/junior. The corresponding figure for whites during the academic year was approximately third year/junior, and the same is true for the first summer session. The mean age was approximately 21. Annual family income \$30 - 50,000, a figure in line with the 1987 median family income of \$32,274 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). Although the white subsample did not correspond to the population as well as did the black subsample, one may make a similar case for the use of this group as somewhat representative of white students at VPI & SU.

Of particular note is the makeup of the Asian sample in

terms of citizenship status. 37.5% of the Asian respondents were U.S. citizens; the remaining 62.5% were foreign citizens. Relative to the Asian population of the U.S., this is not problematic since, of the six largest Asian groups in the U.S., only the Japanese have fewer than 75% foreign-born (as explained in section 2.2.1). The corresponding figure for the academic year Asian population is 40.9% and for the first summer session the percentage is 47.6% of the Asian enrollment. It is quite likely that this greater percentage of foreign Asian students is the result of the use of a purposive sampling method, as well as the choice of the library for the site of that undertaking. The fact that the majority of the foreign Asian students are graduate students could reasonably result in a greater concern on their part with maintaining structured study schedules. This could lead in turn to a greater likelihood that foreign Asian students would be found in the library.

With regard to other factors regarding the Asian population, there is relative consistency with sample characteristics. The gender ratio (M:F) for the Asian sample is 2.6923, with corresponding figures of 2.0947 and 2.4371 for the academic year and first summer session, respectively. The mean academic status for the sample was senior, due in part to the large number of graduate students. The mean academic status for Asian students during the academic year was third

year/ junior and during first summer session was approximately fourth year/senior. The mean annual family income for the sample was in the range of \$15 - 30,000, as compared with a median annual family income for Asians of \$28,808 in 1980 (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1988).

There are numerous problems apparent with the whole sample. The most notable problem deals with the degree to which the findings of this study may be generalized to the population of black and Asian students at VPI & SU. While the sample does not deviate greatly from the population on the characteristics which were available for comparison, with such a small sample there is still considerable concern with the degree to which the sample is representative of black and Asian students at VPI. Additionally, the fact that the study was done during summer school could lead to problems of generalizability. Overall, the nature of the sample creates several problems in terms of the conclusiveness of the findings. However, the sample should be sufficiently representative to allow some analysis of trends.

3.3 Data Analysis

The first task in analyzing the data is the coding of the questionnaires. The coding scheme was devised during the coding of the pre-test questionnaires. This was then carried over to the coding of the primary sample. The vignettes were

coded as situational/external, general disposition and prejudice, depending upon the attribution made by the respondent. The attribution was determined through analysis of the open-ended responses.

Coding was carried out by four graduate students, based upon the directions of the researcher. The directions were as follows:

Read each response carefully. Code each response according to the following: situational/external - 1; general disposition - 2; prejudice - 3; uncodable - 9. Situational/external attributions are those which place causal responsibility upon any factors external to the actor(s) in question. This would include aspects of the immediate situation, experiences prior to the immediate situation and/or the actions of other participants in the interaction. General disposition attributions are those which attribute causal responsibility to any internally-located motive or quality of the actor(s) in question, with the exception of prejudice. This would include references to such responses as rudeness, meanness, stupidity, etc. Attributions of prejudice are those which make reference to racism, prejudice and/or bias based upon race, ethnicity and/or nationality. Included among these would be responses which include such phrases as "because of my race", "because I am black/Asian", etc. Uncodable responses are those which cannot reasonably be interpreted as falling into one of the above categories, including responses which make no attributions at all.

In order to test the coders' understanding of the directions and the initial intercoder reliability, the same ten questionnaires were coded by all four coders. The

correlation between the four was .961. Those items upon which there was disagreement were analyzed by the researcher in order to clarify the directions given to the coders. the result was an addition to the directions, as follows:

Statements which refer to bias or favoritism, but which make no specific references to race, nationality and/or ethnicity, are to be coded as general disposition attributions.

With this point addressed, it was felt that no further clarification was needed. Each of the coders was given a batch of questionnaires to code independently, in order to minimize the time needed. Upon completion of the coding, a second reliability check was carried out using a random sample of ten coded questionnaires. These were coded by a fifth person and the results were compared to those of the primary coders. The correlation between the primary coding and the check coding was .989.

Methodological sources refer to the check coding of a percentage or sample of the coded questionnaires by the check coder. North et al. (1963) state that multiple coding of a representative sample of questionnaires could be advantageous. Cartwright (1953) allows for check coding of a "certain percentage" of data in order to determine reliability. Warwick and Lininger (1975) state that the percentage of questionnaires to be check coded should depend upon the difficulty of the code itself. Judging from the relatively

high initial intercoder correlation, the difficulty of the code is relatively low. With this in mind, the number of questionnaires in the check code sample may be justified.

The results were then analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, the open-ended responses were analyzed by the researcher to determine if there were any factors described by subjects which show any group specificity. Quantitatively, the attributions (i.e. prejudice attributions and attributions of internal causality) were analyzed to determine whether the differences between groups were significant. The item tapping respondents' perceptions of race relations was also analyzed for significant differences between groups. In instances where significance was found, the independent variables were regressed on the dependent variable of interest, using ordinary least squares regression. Knoke (1975) discussed the use of OLS regression with a dichotomous dependent variable, as is the case with the race relations item in this study. He found that the difference achieved through the use of logistic regression is not significant so long as the data is not grossly skewed to one cell or the other of the dependent variable, which is true in the present study.

There were a number of specific manipulations performed with regards to certain variables. The first of these was the creation of a scale corresponding to the attribution of

prejudice and one for the parents' education portion of the SES items. The attribution scale was made by aggregating the standardized responses of each subject to the vignettes. The resultant scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .7028$. The education scale was created by aggregating the items on father's education and mother's education. This yielded a reliability $\alpha = .7679$.

3.4 Sources of Error

The most important source of possible error lies with the sampling and the sampling procedure. The use of a sample from one institution and including only summer school students results in a sample which limits the generalizability of the results. Similarly, the use of a sample which was not directly comparable to the target population impairs the degree to which the data may be considered representative of that population. These problems could be resolved by performing the study at several institutions, and the use of larger, random samples to insure a greater cross-section of the target population, which would in turn insure a more representative sample.

Chapter 4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The results will be presented in several sections. The first section will present qualitative analyses of the open-ended responses to each vignette. The quantitative analyses will then be presented beginning with descriptive statistics for hypothesis one. The following sections will present the same statistics for hypothesis two and hypothesis three. In cases where the descriptive statistics show significant differences between the groups, the results of regression analyses will be given.

It should be noted that a few independent variables were omitted from the final analyses. Both age and citizenship status were left out for the regression analyses. Age was left out due to a large correlation with academic status, resulting in a significant multicollinearity. This was revealed when regression analyses were done and the addition of both age and academic status resulted in anomalous coefficients. Since both age and academic status are related measures dealing with aspects of time, it was decided that only one would be sufficient for the purposes of this research. Due to the fact that the academic environment is an important aspect of this research, it was decided that academic status was the more important of the two.

Also causing some problems was citizenship status. This variable was the culprit of a number of problems, the most significant of which involved its effect upon race's influence on both the attribution and perception variables. This effect was due to the fact that only the Asian sample had a significant proportion of foreign citizens. In fact, almost two-thirds of the Asian sample were not U.S. citizens. Furthermore, the foreign Asian sample also made up the great majority of the foreign respondents (80%). This strong association of citizenship status with race led to a decision to omit the variable. This was not problematic in terms of the analysis of the attributional data, since there was no significant, or even near significant difference, between Asians and Asian-Americans on the attribution of prejudice. However, it did pose a problem with regard to the analysis of the perception of race relations. The appearance of a near significant difference between Asian and Asian-American respondents in perceptions of race relations created a dilemma. This was dealt with by changing the dummy coding of race to include separate categories for Asian and Asian-American respondents. This was accomplished by coding Asians as a control group.

In order to allow a clear understanding of the results presented later, it is necessary to present the actual coding scheme used for those variables which are reported. The

coding was as follows:

Race - coded as 0 for Asian and 1 for blacks. Whites were included in the bivariate analyses, but were not included in the regression analyses.

Black - dummy variable, coded the same as race.

Asian - dummy variable, coded as 0 for foreign Asians and blacks and 1 for Asian-Americans.

Gender - coded as 0 for male and 1 for female.

Academic Status - coded as 1 for first year, 2 for second year/sophomore, 3 for third year/junior, 4 for fourth year/senior and 5 for graduate student.

Annual Family Income - coded as 1 for below \$15,000, 2 for \$15 - 30,000, 3 for \$30 - 50,000, 4 for \$50 - 100,000 and 5 for above \$100,000.

Parents' Education - two items, one on father's education and one on mother's education. They were coded as 1 for no high school, 2 for some high school, 3 for completed high school, 4 for some college, 5 for completed college and 6 for professional/graduate school.

Previous Experience of Discrimination - coded as 0 for 0 times, 1 for 1 - 5 times, 2 for 6 - 10 times and 3 for 11+ times.

Perception of Race Relations - coded as 0 for no (not a problem) and 1 for yes.

Attribution Scale - an aggregated scale made up of standardized scores from individual items on prejudice attributions. The individual items were coded as 0 for no prejudice attribution and 1 for prejudice attribution.

4.2 Qualitative Analyses

Subject responses to the vignettes were varied, both between groups and within groups. However, there were responses which may be given as examples of typical responses. There were also a number of item-specific trends which were evident in those responses.

Many responses to vignette 1 suggested some degree of favoritism for the other employee. However, both black and white respondents made frequent mention of dislike towards them, as well as positive bias for the coworker. Asian respondents made such claims only in a few instances. The following are examples of responses to vignette 1:

Vignette 1

White - "I would say the supervisor's behavior was caused by internal motives. I get the impression he dislikes me; especially since he said I was lucky to have a job. I feel the supervisor is very biased towards the other employee."

Black - "Racism!!! I have come to this conclusion because I am the only black working and the other co-workers get special privileges that I am excluded in."

Asian - "Maybe the supervisor is more friendly with the other person and goes out of the way to do favors or maybe he has some obligation."

Vignette 2 showed no such consistency with regards to response content. In fact, each group showed a tendency towards a certain type of response. Black students often responded that the actors must have been acting on the basis

of some stereotypical beliefs about blacks in college. On the other hand, several white respondents referred to feelings of inadequacy on the part of the three students portrayed in the scene. From a totally different perspective, many Asian respondents referred to peer pressure, or some need for the primary actor to impress the other two students. The following examples were among typical responses:

Vignette 2

White - "These students are probably making fun of me because they themselves feel inadequate as students. They see me as someone who is dedicated and studying late. The three students lash out at what they wish they could do themselves."

Asian - "The need to be accepted by others of the same age group. The student who talks to me just wants his friends to think that he is bold and dares to do anything imagined. To this kind of people, the more troubles they can cause to others, the more they think they are cool."

Black - "Ignorance. There is probably a perception that since I'm black and here at college, I got here through some type of quota system."

Vignette 3 showed great consistency across groups in terms of response content. A great number of respondents made reference to an atmosphere of competition at Virginia Tech. This spirit was purported to lead to selfishness on the part of Virginia Tech students, as evidenced by the behavior of the student in the vignette. Among the responses given, the following exhibit typical characteristics:

Vignette 3

Asian - "The college environment (especially here at Tech) is very competitive and impersonal. Tech fosters an atmosphere of everyone out for themselves. If you can't cut it, tough luck. The students here don't really seem to care about learning, but instead on just getting a grade."

Black - "He is selfish which is very typical of the type of student at Virginia Tech. The students are cold, isolated, reclusive and stale. This environment doesn't cater to liberal study. Everyone is out for themselves."

White - "The student did not share the book because he sees school as a competition and feels that sharing the book would give me a chance to outdo him. If he deprives me of a major resource for the paper, he will be one step ahead."

Responses to vignette 4 showed no real group-specificity in the nature of subject responses. There were two overall trends in response types. The first of these dealt with attributions of causality to the fact that the subjects supposedly asked for the extension before the class began. Many respondents said that this could have been poor timing on their parts, since the instructor may have been worried about the fulfillment of his/her duties for the class or the possibility of showing students other than the respondent that extensions would be given. The other type of response dealt with the nature of the two requests for an extension. In these cases, respondents placed causal responsibility either upon the validity of the other student's excuse, the ability

of that student to argue his/her case and/or the hackneyed nature of the respondent's excuse. Typical examples of responses are as follows:

Vignette 4

Black - "Again I would feel uncomfortable with the professor's response to my situation. Race might be a factor in his response."

Asian - "He seems very unfair. He maybe didn't give me an extension because I asked before all the other students. If I ask again, maybe he will reconsider. The situation is the cause."

White - "Because the other student argued with the professor about the situation, and virtually nagged him, the professor probably didn't want to deal with arguing and so gave the extension to avoid the hassle."

Analysis of the content of open-ended responses discovered three general trends. The first of these concerned the frequency of references to race, both of respondents and individuals portrayed in stimulus materials. Another trend concerned efforts on the part of respondents to explain behavior described in the stimulus materials in terms of their own shortcomings (that is, the respondents'). The final trend concerned attitudes towards authority.

In prejudice attributions, black respondents referred much more frequently to their race and the race of the actors portrayed in the vignettes than did other respondents. Black students often included such statements as "because I am black". They also made qualifying statements such as "if they

are white" or "if they are from a different race". Very few Asian students made reference to either their race or the assumed race of actors in the vignettes. Only a few white students made statements such as "if I were a minority".

In the second case, white students showed a much greater tendency to attribute causality to their own shortcomings for the behavior of vignette actors. This was especially true in situations where the actors possessed some sort of authority. In the case of vignette 1, a number of white students questioned their abilities to fulfill the duties of the job described. They made statements such as "I may not be a good worker". While both black and Asian respondents made similar statements, they did not make them with the same frequency as did white respondents. Similarly, in responses to vignette 4, white students questioned their prior performance in the instructors class. The instructor's behavior was justified by such statements as "perhaps I don't do well in this class" or "maybe I've turned work in late before". Again, these statements were duplicated by both Asian and black students, but not with as great a frequency.

Finally, Asian students showed a tendency to attribute causality to simple exercises of authority in vignettes 1 and 4. Responses to vignette 1 included such passages as "he's the boss and can do anything based on his judgement", "you questioned his authority" and "you talked back to him".

Neither white nor black respondents made such statements with any appreciable frequency. Asians made similar statements in response to vignette 4. Examples of justifications for the instructor's behavior included "he just didn't think my excuse was valid" and "he thought I was covering up irresponsibility". While this is similar to the trend pointed out for white students, the attribution is to the judgement of the actor, not on the past behavior of the respondent.

4.3 Results

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics relative to the first hypothesis. When asked whether race relations posed a problem at VPI, the subjects responded affirmatively in the percentages shown. The overall chi-square shows that the differences between all three groups are appreciable. The between groups chi-squares show significant differences only between blacks and other groups, i.e. whites and foreign Asians. Those percentages identified with superscripts correspond to the between group chi-squares shown. Those groups which share letters are those for whom the statistic is valid (this convention is followed in subsequent presentations). The between-groups chi-square for blacks and Asian-Americans did not near a significance level of .05 (sig.=.2780). However, this may be due to the small number of respondents in the Asian-American sample (n=16).

 Table 1
 Frequencies and Chi-Squares for Perceptions of Race
 Relations

<u>RACE RELATIONS A PROBLEM</u>	YES
BLACK	(39) 84.6% ^{AB}
ASIAN-AMERICAN	(16) 68.76
ASIAN	(23) 34.51 ^B
WHITE	(39) 56.4 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 19.36915$	SIG = .0007
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 6.59810$	SIG = .0102
^B BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 15.31039$	SIG = .0001

 Interestingly, a greater proportion of whites perceived race relations as a problem than did foreign Asians. In fact, more whites perceived negative race relations than did all Asians, since the percentage of the combined Asian groups responding affirmatively was 46.2. This parallels the results of the UMBC study (Ehrlich et al., 1987), and the percentage is relatively close to that of the UVa study (Covert, 1990).

While the between groups chi-square for Asians and Asian-Americans did not reach a significance level of .05 (sig=.0668), it is highly possible that a larger sample of both Asian-Americans and Asians might result in acceptable significance. Between groups chi-squares calculated for Asian-Americans and Asians with regard to prejudice attributions and internal/external attributions did not show a similar difference, therefore no distinction will be made between the two groups for those data.

Table 2 shows the percentages of each group which made

 Table 2
 Frequencies and Chi-Squares for Prejudice Attributions

<u>VIGNETTE 1</u>	PREJUDICE
BLACK	(48) 54.2% ^{AB}
ASIAN	(46) 19.6 ^B
WHITE	(46) 4.3 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 31.64280$	SIG = .0000
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 25.54369$	SIG = .0000
^B BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 10.59856$	SIG = .0011
 <u>VIGNETTE 2</u>	 PREJUDICE
BLACK	(48) 64.6% ^{AB}
ASIAN	(45) 31.1 ^B
WHITE	(44) 22.7 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 19.01381$	SIG = .0001
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 14.62945$	SIG = .0001
^B BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 9.12244$	SIG = .0025
 <u>VIGNETTE 3</u>	 PREJUDICE
BLACK	(47) 19.1% ^{AB}
ASIAN	(46) 2.2 ^B
WHITE	(45) 2.2 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 12.14009$	SIG = .0023
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 5.16384$	SIG = .0231
^B BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 5.32360$	SIG = .0210
 <u>VIGNETTE 4</u>	 PREJUDICE
BLACK	(48) 45.8% ^{AB}
ASIAN	(46) 13.0 ^B
WHITE	(46) 8.7 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 22.11512$	SIG = .0000
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 14.38817$	SIG = .0001
^B BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 10.55855$	SIG = .0012

prejudice attributions. The valid sample sizes for this item are in parentheses. The percentages shown are the valid percentages, that is percentages calculated with the omission of uncodable and/or missing data.

As may be seen, there is considerable difference between the percentages of each group which attributed prejudice. Out of a total of 191 possible prejudice attributions by blacks over all vignettes, there were 88 attributions of prejudice. This amounts to 46.07% of all attributions by blacks. The corresponding figures for Asians and whites are 30 out of 183 or 16.4% and 17 out of 181 or 9.39%.

In terms of specific vignettes, vignette 2 triggered the most prejudice attributions by all groups. This is not surprising when one considers the fact that this vignette was the most blatant example of potentially prejudiced behavior. Similarly, vignette 3 triggered the fewest attributions of prejudice. Again, this is not remarkable, as vignette 3 presented a situation which was perhaps the most benign of the four.

The responses of blacks to the remaining two vignettes were closer to the extreme of vignette 2 rather than vignette 3. Conversely, the responses of whites tended towards the benign extreme. Asians tended to respond more in the middle range, showing no tendency towards either extreme.

The overall chi-squares for all four vignettes show that the differences between all three groups are highly significant, with only vignette 3 dropping below the .001 level. The between groups chi-squares also show significant differences, but only between blacks and the other two groups.

 Table 3
 Frequencies and Chi-Squares for Internal Attributions

<u>VIGNETTE 1</u>	INTERNAL
BLACK	(48) 85.4%
ASIAN	(46) 78.3
WHITE	(46) 82.6
OVERALL $\chi^2 = .83102$	SIG = .6603
<u>VIGNETTE 2</u>	INTERNAL
BLACK	(48) 87.5
ASIAN	(45) 82.2
WHITE	(44) 75.0
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 2.41435$	SIG = .2990
<u>VIGNETTE 3</u>	INTERNAL
BLACK	(47) 74.5
ASIAN	(46) 80.4
WHITE	(45) 77.8
OVERALL $\chi^2 = .47741$	SIG = .7876
<u>VIGNETTE 4</u>	INTERNAL
BLACK	(48) 64.6% ^A
ASIAN	(46) 43.5
WHITE	(46) 23.9 ^A
OVERALL $\chi^2 = 15.76502$	SIG = .0004
^A BETWEEN GROUPS $\chi^2 = 14.11677$	SIG = .0002

 The between groups chi-squares for Asians and whites were not significant, with only that for vignette 1 nearing significance at the .05 level (sig.=.0539). Except for vignette 3, the between groups chi-squares for blacks and whites exceeded that for blacks and Asians. That exception is due to the different sample sizes for whites and Asians, since the same number of whites and Asians made prejudice attributions for vignette 3. However, the chi-squares between

blacks and Asians are still highly significant.

Table 3 shows comparable data relative to hypothesis two. While there are differences between groups in terms of attributions of internal causation, the differences are not great in most cases. Overall attribution figures show this more clearly. Black respondents made attributions of internal causation 149 out of 191 times, or 78.01%. Corresponding figures for Asian, white and Native Americans are 130 out of 183, or 71.04% and 117 out of 181, or 64.64%, respectively.

With particular attention to specific vignettes, there are a few points of interest. Vignette 3 shows a surprising variation. Both Asians and whites actually made more attributions to internal, dispositional causes than did black students. In vignette 1, whites made more internal attributions than did Asian respondents. Also of interest is vignette 4. This vignette is the only one with an overall chi-square which achieves any significance. The between groups chi-square for blacks and whites is very significant, exceeding the overall chi-square. The between groups chi-square for blacks and Asians does not achieve significance at the .05 level, but does not exceed .05 greatly (sig.=.0649). It is possible that a larger sample would increase the significance to an acceptable level. In terms of the readily observable differences between the internal attributions of blacks and Asians for vignette 4, the number of internal

attributions differed by over twenty percentage points. For the other three vignettes, the difference between blacks and Asians is relatively small.

Tables 1 and 2 show significant differences between racial groups in perceptual and attributional tendencies with regard to prejudice. Table 3 shows no consistent differences in internal attributions. Therefore regression analyses will only be shown for hypotheses 1 and 3. Additionally, these analyses exclude whites, as they were included to provide a basis for comparisons of black and Asian responses during preliminary analyses.

Table 4 shows the results of an ordinary least squares regression with prejudice attributions as the dependent variable. Table 5 shows the results of a least squares regression with the perception of race relations as the dependent variable. The attribution scale which served as the dependent variable in Table 4 is an independent variable in the regression in Table 5.

The regression shown in Table 4 had no betas which neared significance, with the exception of race. The added explanatory power of the other independent variables did not even justify the degrees of freedom lost with their inclusion, as evidenced by betas lower than the corresponding zero order correlations. These results show that the only variable which has any power of prediction for prejudice attributions is the

Table 4
Differences Between Blacks and Asians
in Attributional Behavior

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Zero-Order Correlation</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Race	.448	2.98701	.47563***
Gender	.022	-.40724	-.06253
Academic Status	-.224	-.07435	-.02659
Annual Family Income	.115	.18936	.07239
Parents' Education	.074	-.14022	.08679
Experience of Discrimination	.192	.03082	.00917

n = 85

Adjusted R² = .16141
F = 3.69468 (.0028)

*** p < .001

(Note: Figure in parentheses is the significance of the F statistic.)

race of the respondent. As respondent's race changed (i.e. from Asian to black), the standardized attribution scale value increased by .47563 standard deviation when controlling for all other variables. Race alone accounted for 16% of the variance in attributional behavior on the part of black and Asian students.

Table 5 shows an ordinary least squares regression of the independent variables on the respondents' perceptions

Table 5
Sources of Variation in Perception
of Race Relations by Blacks and
Foreign Asians

<u>Variable</u>	Zero-Order	<u>b</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Attribution Scale	.362	.03071	.22139
Black	.413	.61699	.64442***
Asian	.022	.45680	.39635*
Gender	.116	-.05442	-.05490
Academic Status	-.091	.08875	.21034
Annual Family Income	.241	.01327	.03420
Parents' Education	-.070	.04266	.17641
Experience of Discrimination	.396	.11985	.22139*

n = 68

Adjusted R² = .32336
F = 5.00230 (.0001)

*** p < .001

* p < .05

of race relations at VPI. Previous experience of
discrimination, citizenship status and race yielded
significant betas. Respondents' academic status and
attributional tendencies were near significance at .0768 and
.0939 respectively. No other independent variables had
significance better than .10.

The results in Table 5 show that the most significant

predictor of a respondent's perception of race relations was race. The next most significant predictor was citizenship status, followed by parents' education. These variables, in addition to those nearly-significant variables named above, affect the perceptual tendencies of black, Asian and Asian-American respondents. The importance of academic status may be problematic due to the correlation of higher academic status with race. Due to the fact that the majority of the foreign Asian respondents were graduate students, this could have skewed the results through multicollinearity.

As race moved from Asian to black, the tendency to perceive race relations as a problem increased. As citizenship status moved from foreign to American, the perception of race relations became worse. As the tendency to attribute prejudice increased, the perception of race relations again became worse. Finally, as the number of times a respondent had experienced discrimination increased, the perception of race relations grew more negative.

4.4 Discussion

There is considerable evidence for the confirmation of hypothesis three. Black students attribute prejudice more frequently than either Asian or white students. Race is the sole variable included which significantly affects the tendency to attribute prejudice.

There is no evidence to support hypothesis two. There are no consistent differences between subject groups in the tendency to attribute causality to dispositional factors. Hypothesis two is unsupported.

There are significant differences between blacks and Asians in their perceptions of race relations at VPI. Race is the most significant variable in predicting the perception of race relations. However, the significance and near significance of other variables imply that hypothesis three did not quite touch on the complexity of the phenomenon.

4.4.1 Attributional Tendencies

The evidence for racial differences in the tendency to attribute prejudice is strong. The results suggest that black students more often attribute prejudice than do Asian students, at least at VPI. The questions which remain involve two levels of analysis. There is a need to account for the fact that race is such a strong factor in the attributional behavior, at least with regards to prejudice. There is also a need to account for the proportion of variance not accounted for by race, which only explains approximately 18.9% of the variance in this study.

Why should race affect the attribution of prejudice in such a manner? There are the rationales which were presented earlier, which pointed out the possibility that race might be

more salient as a personal characteristic for blacks than for Asians. Open-ended responses and inquiries about race by the black subjects in this study present evidence that this indeed is the case. Frequent references by black respondents to their own race and that of stimulus actors suggests a greater consciousness of and concern with race.

This is not due to the national origin of subjects, as was suggested earlier. Not only Asians, but Asian-Americans and whites had fewer references to race than did blacks. Nor could it be the result of the previous experience of discrimination, as that variable was not significant when regressed upon the attribution of prejudice. There must be some other factor involved.

With regard to the tendency to attribute prejudice, it is not possible at this time to exclude socioeconomic variables as among the causes. Although the variables used as indicators of SES were not significant predictors of the tendency to attribute prejudice, the fact that many of the foreign Asians included in the sample were from low SES backgrounds may have led to a lack of impact for SES upon their prejudice attributions. Because of this, the significance of low SES for American subjects may have been lost. Further study is necessary to know for certain.

Another possibility involves the importance of 'blackness' in various aspects of the black subculture. The

existence of an expansive and widely accepted rhetoric dealing with racial identity and racial solidarity is unique among the subject groups. Such a characteristic could lead to greater salience of race for blacks as opposed to other racial groups. Again, this relationship calls for further investigation as confirmation.

A final possibility deals with specific aspects of attributional behavior. There may be differences in the attributional processing between the groups. Weary, Stanley and Harvey (1989) theorized that cultural differences in language and cultural meaning systems can influence attributional processes. Kruglanski et al. (1978) also suggested that attributional content might be specific to cultures. The implication is that the same behaviors may mean different things in different cultures, and the attribution resulting from a behavior would be dependent upon the associated meaning.

There may be some race- and/or culture-specific tendencies toward recognition of contextual and/or behavioral factors which signal prejudice. One example of this could involve the existence of attributional schema dealing with prejudice and discrimination. Asian culture originate in racially homogeneous societies, and as a result, there may not be a library of knowledge from which prejudice schemata may be formed. The lack of such schemata could impair Asians'

ability to attribute prejudice. Similarly, there may be a tendency on the part of one group or the other to prefer various types of attributional evidence (e.g. consistency evidence, consensus evidence, etc.).

4.4.2 Perceptions of Race Relations

The difference in perception cited previously is reproduced here. The difference is the distinction made between Asians and Asian-Americans. Without that distinction, the results are quite similar to those found by Covert (1990) and Ehrlich et al. (1987). Neither Covert nor Ehrlich et al. distinguished between foreign- vs. American-born Asians. It is unknown whether their samples contained foreign Asians. It is probable that they did have appreciable numbers of foreign Asian respondents. Therefore, this research is at least comparable.

The first primary hypothesis of this study predicted that blacks would perceive race relations in a more negative light than did Asians, and that this difference in perception would be due to differences in the tendency to attribute prejudice. This prediction was not rejected, but supporting evidence was relatively weak. The regression of the attribution scale on the perception of race relations as a problem yielded a beta which did not meet the .05 significance level (sig.=.0939). However, this only slightly exceeded acceptable significance,

and still bears consideration in the results.

Hypothesis one was, however, incomplete with regards to detailing the nature of the perceptual differences between blacks and Asians. Not included in the 'equation' were race, citizenship status, academic status and the previous experience of discrimination, all of which had appreciable effect on the perception in question. Of these, race yielded the most significant beta, followed by citizenship status and previous experience of discrimination.

Academic status may be misleading. As mentioned previously, there is a large correlation of academic status with race, due to the fact that the majority of foreign Asian students were graduate students. This may have artificially inflated the effect of academic status. As a result, academic status will not be addressed in the following arguments. On a similar note, the effect of citizenship status is probably similar to that put forth in the earlier discussion of national origin and will not be dealt with extensively in the following explanations.

What remains to be illuminated are the effects of race, attributions and the number of times a respondent had experienced discrimination. If the differences in perception were due totally to differences in the tendency to attribute prejudice, the effect of race would disappear with the addition of the attribution variable. This is not the case.

In fact, race remains the most significant variable.

Additionally, just in case the attribution variable did not completely account for a respondent's tendency to attribute prejudice, the number of times the respondent had experienced discrimination was also included. This variable is, in effect, an accounting of past prejudice attributions, since, in order for the respondent to conclude that discrimination took place, he/she had to make a prejudice attribution. It would then seem that this variable, in concert with the attribution variable, would account for any differences in perception between the two groups, if the differences in perception were due solely to differences in the tendency to make prejudice attributions. As with the attribution variable, this is not the case, and race yields the most significant beta.

The question to be answered is why does race remain significant even when the tendency to attribute prejudice is taken into account? The most immediate answer would be that blacks and Asians are exposed to two totally different social environments. The differences in perception may not be totally due to perceptual tendencies, but instead may also be traced to differences in what is to be perceived. It may be true that blacks at VPI experience more interactions which may be potentially defined as problematic in terms of race relations. That is, they encounter more behavior which may

potentially be perceived as motivated by prejudice. This, coupled with the greater tendency of blacks to attribute prejudice, could easily result in much greater perceptions of race relations as a problem. The significance of past experience of discrimination is evidence that this is part of the explanation.

Another possibility is that a greater salience of race for blacks could lead to an increased motivation to look for possible situations of negative race relations. A greater tendency to look for problems would easily translate to seeing more problems. This could lead, in turn, to greater perceptions of race relations as a problem.

The remaining point for clarification is the source of that heightened salience. A likely explanation is that black culture in America directs the consciousness of blacks to questions of race. The points made earlier about the existence of an extensive subjective culture dealing with race and questions of race bear evidence for this argument. It is probable that this overriding concern with race is symptomatic of a powerful impact of race in the lives of blacks in America. That impact is greater for blacks than for other groups, resulting in a greater salience of race and racial identification for blacks as a group.

There are two possible explanations for the greater salience of race. The first of these is that the salience of

race is left over from past times of inequality. The possible effect of black subjective culture on the perception of race relations could lend credence to such an idea. Much of the material making up black subjective culture originated during periods of black struggle against segregation and racism. Some would argue that this struggle ended in the 1960s and much of racial inequality has been replaced by class inequality. It would not be unreasonable to believe that the greater salience of race is an "artifact" of that time, transmitted through black subjective culture. It is not unreasonable to link this explanation to the claims of paranoia which were referred to above.

The final possible explanation for the observed phenomena is that blacks perceive race relations as more of a problem than do Asians because, for blacks today, it is more of a problem. The structure of inequality based on race in America may be more real for blacks than anyone else, giving them a unique point of view. That point of view translates to a greater sensitivity to issues of race and prejudice.

4.5 Conclusion

Black students have been shown to have a greater tendency to attribute prejudice than do Asian students, at least at VPI. However, the greater perception of prejudice and racial tension on the part of blacks is not solely due to a greater

tendency to attribute prejudice as a motivation. Race, national origin and previous experience of prejudice are also important determining factors. One implication is that black students are exposed to more prejudice and discrimination than are Asian students. Another implication is that blacks have a heightened sensitivity to race, resulting in a perceptual vantage point which is reflective of that sensitivity.

The results of this research have a number of implications for future study and present approaches to dealing with prejudice and discrimination, at least in higher education. The greater tendency for blacks to attribute prejudice could be what is often referred to by those doubting the validity of reports of prejudice as 'paranoia' and 'oversensitivity'. It is likely that there is no such paranoia, but rather that such a tendency is reflective of some aspect of black culture in America. However, at least at VPI, that attributional tendency is not the sole source of blacks' negative perceptions of race relations. The possibility that blacks are faced with greater prejudice and discrimination is a serious one, and the probability that such a problem exists must be considered with great care. An additional important question to be confronted is whether the greater salience of race is a cultural artifact of past racial inequality or some mechanism of coping with current racial inequality.

The most obvious ramification for future research is in

presenting new ideas and questions for future study. Most of the explanations for these phenomena have not been studied and provide opportunities for new research. Also important for further study is the fact that this research has shed light on heretofore neglected phenomena. That fact alone gives it significance, but there is also the point which it makes with regard to the inherently interactive nature of prejudice. The tendencies illuminated in this research indicate that no interaction may be ruled out as an instance of prejudice until the object of that action determines so for him/herself. Future study of prejudice should at least keep this point in mind if not embed further research in an interactional frame of reference.

In terms of specific implications for higher education, conclusions are not easy to reach. Obviously, emerging hypotheses, as well as evidence giving credence to the hypotheses of this research, have far-reaching consequences. But what does this mean for efforts at dealing with prejudice in higher education, and how should administrators deal with prejudice in the future?

The foremost contention is that attempts at "objective" assessment of reports of prejudice and discrimination are not valid. Often such cases are labeled as "misunderstandings", given that there are usually conflicting reports of the actor's motivation from the actor and the victim. This

research shows that it may not be a simple case of misunderstanding, but rather one of different meaning. With this in mind, assessing such incidents could be problematic. Efforts at accurately dealing with reports of prejudice would have to be influenced by the knowledge that members of different groups have different interpretations of events, and persons from a culture or group different from that of the victim may not be capable of assessing those interpretations.

This research also has significant implications for theories regarding the purposive nature of prejudice. The evidence that black students experience more prejudice than do Asian students leads to an increased possibility that there is some rational and purposive basis for discrimination and prejudice. Of course, such a hypothesis would need to be substantiated, but the ramifications of such a phenomenon are interesting. One would need to know what the purposive basis of prejudice is, as well as the sources of that purpose and whether prejudice is purposive for all groups and cultures.

The combined implication of the results and the explanations of them point to the existence of a structure of inequality which contextualizes the experiences of blacks and Asians. The points made earlier about the relative placement of blacks and Asians in the social structure of the U.S. have great importance in understanding this point. The vantage point of blacks is apparently substantially distinct from that

of Asians. Quite likely the vantage point of Asians is distinct from that of whites, but that is a point to be made in further study. As a result of this difference in perspective, blacks and their experiences may be shaped by forces of inequality which in turn may shape their culture. This culture is then expressed in the learning of greater sensitivity to prejudice and discrimination in order to effectively deal with the inequality from which they result. The old adage "All men are created equal. It's just that some are more equal than others." may hold true in America once again.

Conversely, the perceptions of blacks in the U.S. may be indicative of the influence of past conditions of inequality. Such a lag in the perception of social realities, a "time warp to the '60s" if you will, could be problematic for race relations in the U.S. A preoccupation with race in a society concerned with other matters could lead to black isolation in an otherwise inclusive society.

Appendix
Questionnaire and Basic Percentages

1. You have been working at the Dietrick General Store for the past two semesters. As midterms approach, you are feeling anxious about one particular exam and ask your supervisor for Friday night off so that you can study for the exam on Monday. Your supervisor says that you can't be spared. Later that day a coworker makes the same request that you did and is granted time off. When you complain to the supervisor about this, his justification is that your coworker has seniority. You respond that not only was your coworker hired a semester after you were, but also asked for time off after you were turned down. Your supervisor seems to get angry. "Look," he says. "I'm tired of you pestering me. Get back to work and just be glad that you have a job!" What caused the supervisor's behavior?

(n = 141)
18% Situational
56% General Disposition
26% Prejudice

2. You are studying in the library late one evening. Three students whom you don't know are walking down the aisle and see you. As they approach the table at which you are seated, you look up from your notes. "What do you think you're doing here?" one of them asks. "I bet you can't even read! Why don't you get off campus!" All three laugh and turn away. Why did the three students behave that way?

(n = 139)
19% Situational
42% General Disposition
40% Prejudice

3. It's Friday and everyone in your class just learned that there is a paper due Monday. You and another student have been assigned the same topic. After class, you go to the library to find references for your paper. When you go to find the book that is the most important reference for your paper, you discover the other person in your class with the same topic taking the book off the shelf. You ask, "I've got the same topic that you do. Maybe we can share the book." He looks at you for a moment, and then shakes his head. "I'm not doing too well in class, and I've got to get a good grade on this paper. I'm going to work on it for the whole weekend and I'll need the book the whole time. Sorry." Why didn't the student share the book with you?

(n = 140)
22% Situational
70% General Disposition
8% Prejudice

4. You were supposed to turn in a homework assignment in class today. You had done about half of the assignment before you had gotten ill last night. When the instructor entered the room, you approached him and explained what had happened. The instructor shook his head and replied, "I don't understand why you students can't meet deadlines. If you hand in your homework late, I will have to take points off. After class, you notice another student asking for an extension on the assignment. After argument, the instructor agreed to give this student an extension without penalty. Why didn't the instructor give you the extension?

(n = 142)
56% Situational
21% General Disposition
23% Prejudice

Background

1. Are you a U.S. citizen? (n = 144) 76% yes
24% no

If not, of what nation are you a citizen?

2. Is your racial group black, Asian, white, Native American or other?

(n = 144)
33% black 32% white 33% Asian 1% Native American

3. If you do not identify as a member of a racial group, in what racial group would others place you? (If you answered number two, skip to the next question.)

___ black ___ white ___ Asian ___ Native
American

4. Are you a member of a non-racially-based ethnic group such as Hispanic or Jewish? ___ yes ___ no
If so, please specify your ethnic group.

2. What is your age?

(n = 143)
2% below 18
16% 18
13% 19
10% 20
20% 21
0% 22
38% above 22

3. What is your gender?

(n = 142)
60% male
40% female

4. What is your academic classification?

(n = 143)
2% first year
9% second year/sophomore
27% third year/junior
31% fourth year/senior
31% graduate

5. What would you estimate as your family's annual income?

(n = 141)
18% below \$15,000
21% \$15,000 - \$30,000
28% \$30,000 - \$50,000
23% \$50,000 - \$100,000
10% above \$100,000

6. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?

(n = 141)
8% below high school
4% some high school
21% completed high school
17% some college
26% completed college
24% graduate/professional school

7. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

(n = 143)
8% below high school
10% some high school
17% completed high school
23% some college
29% completed college
13% graduate/professional school

8. Have you ever been a victim of racial, ethnic or gender discrimination, either here at VPI or elsewhere?
(n = 141)
58% yes
42% no

9. If so, how many times?
(n = 136)
42% 0 times
71% 1-5 times
13% 6-10 times
16% 11+ times

10. How would you characterize your political orientation?

moderate
 liberal
Rep.)
 conservative
Dem.)

11. If you are going to vote in the upcoming presidential election, for whom will you vote?

George Bush (or other
 Bill Clinton (or other
 Ross Perot
 other
 will/can not vote

11. Do race relations pose a problem at VPI?
(n = 119)
63% yes
37% no

12. What is your religious affiliation?

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Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ellingha Sauer", written over a horizontal line.