

# Microaggressions at the University of Mississippi

*A report from the UM Race Diary Project*

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## PREFACE

Several years ago, one of us (W.J.) was speaking with former Chancellor Dan Jones when the topic turned to racism on campus. “Is there racism at the University of Mississippi?” Dr. Jones asked. Rather than interpret his query as doubting the presence of racial animosity, we assumed Dr. Jones was prompting someone to document it. The result is this report, which we believe represents the first effort to estimate the extent and effects of racial, ethnic, gender-related, and sexual microaggressions experienced by University of Mississippi students. We are submitting to academic journals more-detailed companion studies on the nature, location, and impact of these microaggressions.

We view this work as complementing the administration’s many efforts to create a welcoming, all-embracing campus. However, we caution that the following accounts may be unsettling to read. The term *microaggressions* does not necessarily refer to incidents that are small, but to those that are commonplace—thus ultimately corrosive. As a result, this document may feel daunting if not overwhelming. However, we also respect that from the perspective of underrepresented and marginalized students, chronic exposure to microaggressions can feel overwhelming every day.

As social scientists, we believe in evidence over speculation. We also know the futility of resolving any social problem without understanding its true nature. Accordingly, our intent is to document important and sometimes overlooked aspects of campus life by using established social-scientific research methods. We hope that our work contributes to the larger effort to promote the academic success and personal well-being of everyone at the University of Mississippi.

## SUMMARY

This document reports students' everyday experiences with incidents involving race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation at and near the campus of the University of Mississippi in Oxford. During the 2014-2015 academic year, 621 undergraduate students reported 1,381 incidents of *microaggressions* involving *microassaults* (explicit putdowns), *microinsults* (unconscious rudeness and insensitivity), and *microinvalidations* (unconscious negation or nullification). These incidents occurred throughout the campus in classrooms, in Greek houses and dormitories, and in public spaces such as the Grove and the Student Union. Many students were appalled by what they witnessed, particularly when the perpetrators were parents or alumni. While some students confronted microaggressors, others seemed too stunned to know what to do. Microaggressions pose the risk of emotional, cognitive, and physical harm to vulnerable students, and threatens to alienate prospective students. The continued presence of microaggressions on campus also poses potential financial and reputational risks to the University.

## INTRODUCTION

When civil rights pioneer James Meredith integrated the University of Mississippi (UM) in 1962 to become its first African American student, the reactions of many white Mississippians were not subtle. Journalists documented “a maelstrom of savagery and hatred” (Eagles 2009, p. 340) as hundreds of students and outsiders threw bricks and fired shotguns to protest Meredith’s presence. But in the days that followed, subtler forms of resistance emerged. Students ostracized Meredith by refusing to speak to him (Cohodas, 1997). Some banged doors in his dormitory to unnerve him. Others refused to walk into a room if he was holding the door for them (Meredith, 1966). Social scientists now classify these and other incivilities as *microaggressions* —“brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership” (Sue 2010, p. 24).

Over the years, the nature of discrimination in America has changed. In the past, overt discrimination was the norm. In the 19th century, for example, Jim Crow segregation, the theft of ancestral Native American lands, and refusal to allow Chinese immigrants to enter the United States were all sanctioned by law. Today, this *de jure* (by law) discrimination is illegal. But *de facto* (in fact) discrimination continues, and one mechanism by which it persists is microaggressions, a concept popularized in 2010 by Columbia University psychologist Dr. Derald Wing Sue.

This paper documents racial and other microaggressions at the University of Mississippi (UM) based on 1,383 student diary entries submitted online as part of the Race Diary Project, a research effort designed to document, and ultimately improve, living and working conditions for UM students, faculty, and staff. We begin by defining microaggressions, explaining where and why they occur, and discussing how students respond to them. Then we analyze some of their likely effects, both on individuals and on the university, and present concluding thoughts.

### Types of microaggressions

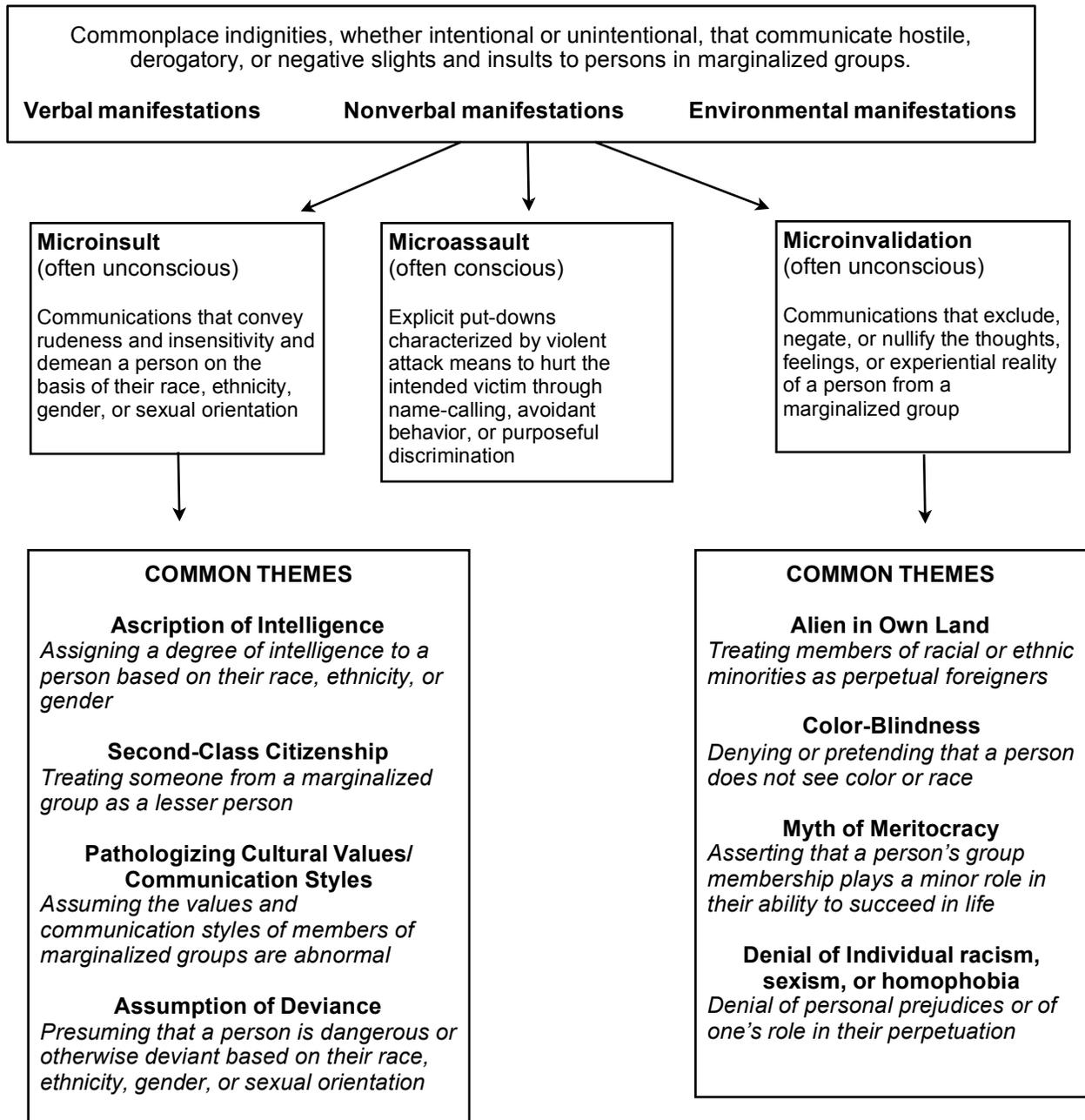
There are several ways to classify microaggressions (Sue 2010). Microaggressions between individuals can be *verbal* (e.g., through spoken or written words) or *nonverbal* (e.g., through body language). If they are expressed as a symbol (e.g., a swastika) that conveys a message to anyone who sees it, the microaggression is *environmental*.

Whether they are verbal, nonverbal, or environmental, microaggressions can also be classified by the group they target. *Racial* microaggressions victimize African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, and so forth. *Ethnic* microaggressions are directed against a nationality (e.g., Syrians, Vietnamese) or a religious group (e.g., Hindus, Muslims). Females can be victimized by *gender* microaggressions, and LGBT individuals by *sexual orientation* microaggressions. A person with more than one identity can be targeted by more than one microaggression. For example, a Jewish woman may be confronted with microaggressions because of her ethnicity as well as her gender. While microaggressions directed against minority groups are of paramount concern to social scientists, it is also possible for whites, males, and members of other majority groups to be targeted by microaggressions from persons of color, females, and so forth.

Finally, all microaggressions can be characterized by how they operate. *Microassaults* are actions that reflect obvious prejudice (e.g., displaying a swastika or calling an African American “nigger”). *Microinsults* are rude or insensitive actions that demean a person’s heritage or identity (e.g., dismissing a Jewish holiday, or questioning the ability of a female student to excel in a male-dominated field). *Microinvalidations* represent the negation of a person’s thoughts, feelings, or experienced reality (e.g., dismissing a person’s claim that he has experienced anti-Muslim hostility, or restricting a survey about dating experiences to heterosexuals only).

Microinsults and microinvalidations typically align with certain themes, as shown in Figure 1. Table 1 expands on those themes by giving examples of associated racial, ethnic, gender, or sexual microaggressions and possible messages to victims.

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 FIGURE  
 TYPES OF RACIAL, ETHNIC, GENDER, OR SEXUAL  
 MICROAGGRESSIONS



(Adapted from: Sue 2010)

TABLE  
THEMES, EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS, AND UNSPOKEN MESSAGES  
COMMUNICATED THROUGH MICROINSULTS AND MICROINVALIDATIONS

	THEME	EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS	POSSIBLE UNSPOKEN MESSAGE SENT TO VICTIM
MICROINSULTS	Ascription of intelligence	(To Asian) "You must be good at math. Can you help me with this calculus problem?" (To African American) "I'm so surprised you're a science major!"	You don't have to work hard to be good at math; everyone knows Asians are naturally gifted in math and science. African Americans are not good analytical thinkers.
	Second-class citizen	Calling on white students in class more than students of color Accepting an idea offered by a male student after rejecting the same idea when offered by a female Consistently referring to couples as "husbands and wives"	Students of color have little to contribute. Females don't belong in this class.  I don't accept nontraditional sexual partnerships.
	Pathologizing cultural values/communication styles	(To Latino or Asian) "Speak up! We want to hear what you have to say." Referring to an assertive female as a bitch while praising an assertive male as a leader (Upon hearing a woman is a lesbian) "Funny—she doesn't look like a man-hater!"	Your cultural norms aren't important. You're in America, so assimilate to our norms. Women shouldn't have a voice.  Man-hating is the only conceivable reason a woman could be attracted to another woman.
	Assumption of deviance	Assuming an African American student cheated when he got the highest test score in the class Explaining the rules of basketball to a female slowly and deliberately like an adult might talk to a child Suspecting that a male student will start flirting with his male classmates after he comes out as gay.	African Americans are rule-breakers.  Women don't know much about sports and are inferior athletes.  All gay men are promiscuous.
MICROINVALIDATIONS	Alien in own land	(To Chinese American born in the United States) "Where are you from?" "Teach me some words in your language!"  "You (your clothes, your foods, etc.) look so interesting!"	You're not a <i>real</i> American.  It's your responsibility—not mine—to educate me about your culture. You are exotic compared to the white American norm. (I don't think about how white Americans might seem to your group.)
	Color-blindness	"I don't see color."  "I don't care whether you're black, white, green, or purple..."	I don't recognize the historical and cultural uniqueness of your group. Race is trivial. Differences in the experiences of people across actual racial groups are as inconsequential as differences across made-up groups.
	Myth of meritocracy	"People should pull themselves up by their bootstraps." "It's a level playing field out there."	Giving people benefits just because their group is disadvantaged is unfair. Discrimination isn't a serious obstacle, so it's your fault if you don't achieve.
	Denial of individual racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, or homophobia/transphobia	"I'm not racist, but I don't like to associate with black people"  "I'm not sexist. It's just that men make better leaders (managers, teachers, bosses, etc.)."	I don't like to think of myself as being racist, but I don't think of whites and blacks as being equal. I'm not willing to support a female leader (manager, etc.), even though they've had far fewer opportunities than men.

(Adapted from: Garibay 2014)

### Effects of microaggressions

Microassaults, whether blatant (e.g., burning a cross on an African American's lawn) or subtle (e.g., serving Muslim customers more slowly than whites), are typically intentional. As a result, they are quite naturally stressful to the victim of the offensive comment or action. On the other hand, microinsults and microinvalidations are often inadvertent; it's easy to demean someone's heritage or negate their experiences without meaning any harm. But that doesn't necessarily mean they're not stressful to the recipient. Because these slurs and slights can appear to be subconscious and the perpetrators usually seem well-intentioned, they force a victim to determine whether a "loaded" comment or action was deliberate or inadvertent; to reevaluate their personal or professional relationship with the perpetrator; and to choose when and how to resist or accommodate the insult. The cumulative impact of this so-called emotional labor can be substantial (Hochschild 1983). Chronic exposure to microaggressions constitutes clinically significant risk factors for emotional problems (depression, anxiety), cognitive disruption (diminished learning and problem-solving), behavioral effects (skepticism, rage, hypervigilance), and biological consequences (increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, depressed immune function) (Sue 2010). These conditions can impair underrepresented students' ability to enroll, concentrate on their schoolwork, make satisfactory progress through their curricula, and graduate on time.

### UM's racial history

Since 1962, UM has made halting but tangible progress toward creating an inclusive campus environment. The university established an African American Studies program in 1970, stopped unfurling a massive Confederate flag at football games in 1982, and in 2010 replaced Colonel Rebel, a mascot fashioned after a white-suited plantation owner, with an anthropomorphic black bear (Combs et al. 2016). At the same time, on a campus where prominent memorials and place names continue to "create a visual landscape that overwhelmingly validates the ideology of racial dominance" (Combs et al. 2016, p. 6), university officials have seemed reluctant to alienate students and alumni who voice support for Old South iconography, including the very name Ole Miss—a term slaves used to refer to the wife of a plantation owner (Royals 2014).

In light of UM's racial history, and widespread scholarly interest in creating inclusive campus spaces (for helpful review articles, see: Hurtado 1992; Harper & Hurtado 2007), we sought to document the extent to which microaggressions continue to play a role at the flagship university of the only state whose flag contains the Confederate emblem. We saw an opportunity in 2014 after several young white men were caught shouting racial slurs after placing a noose around the neck of a life-sized statue of James Meredith on campus. The symbolic lynching, which sparked international headlines, prompted UM officials to decry the vandalism as a regrettable but aberrant act that did not reflect the values of the larger campus community (Combs et al., 2016). The implication was that acts of campus intolerance were rare. We saw the Race Diary Project as a way to determine whether this suggestion was backed by empirical evidence.

### METHODS

After obtaining IRB approval, we used Qualtrics data collection software to design a two-part survey. Students registered for the project online through a link publicized through posters and campus newspaper stories about the Race Diary Project. They followed the link to Survey 1, which solicited identifying and demographic information, including their email addresses. After registering, students received an email message containing a link to Survey 2, which asked them to write about racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual interactions they had witnessed on campus, and their reactions. Students' names and other identifying information were kept confidential. The two surveys appear as Appendix A and Appendix B of this document. The surveys are also available on request from Dr. Kirk Johnson ([kirkjohnson55@gmail.com](mailto:kirkjohnson55@gmail.com)) as files that can be imported and used by scholars whose institutions have Qualtrics accounts.

Data were collected throughout the 2014-2015 academic year, from August 23, 2014, to April 23, 2015. This period coincided with several notable news events on campus and across the country, including: the “noosing” of the James Meredith statue on the UM campus (2/16/14); the police killings of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri (8/9/14) and of Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina (4/4/16); the murder of nine churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina (6/9/15); the internet airing of a racist chant by fraternity members at the University of Oklahoma (3/7/15); the sexual assault of a 19-year-old woman on a crowded beach in Panama City Beach, Florida (3/10/15); and ongoing news about Secretary Hillary Clinton’s email scandal. This period also coincided with the August 2014 release by then-Chancellor Dan Jones of a comprehensive action plan for addressing race and diversity on the UM campus. Among other measures, the plan, based on recommendations from students, faculty, and administrators, recommended creating a new administrative position of vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion; contextualizing the campus’s many symbols of Mississippi’s history; and creating a Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT) (Anon. 2014).

In November 2016, the diary portion was downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet and coded by 14 graduate and advanced undergraduate UM sociology and anthropology students. A complete analysis of our data is being published as an academic paper.

## **FINDINGS**

Below we summarize the content of 1,383 diary entries submitted by 621 students in undergraduate sociology, psychology, social work, political science, and EDHE classes. While not all students in these classes submitted diary entries, the 621 who did represented just 3% of the 23,096 students enrolled in the 2014-2015 academic year. Thus, it seems likely that the 1,383 diary entries represent only a small fraction of the many incivilities experienced by students but not reported via diaries.

While we asked students to record campus incidents, some students wrote about events that occurred elsewhere. Because these off-campus experiences tell us something about the broader social milieu that helps to shape students’ responses to on-campus events, we have analyzed all diary entries regardless of geographic location.

### **Positive encounters**

We invited students to record positive interactions as well as microaggressions, and many did. Some 67 (4.9%) entries spoke of students showing empathy and concern for persons in marginalized groups. Here is one such act of kindness:

Today while in line for breakfast in the union a black girl who was trying to purchase her breakfast was having trouble with her card. She started to pull out the cash she had and the white guy behind her told her not to worry about it and that he'd take care of it. She thanked him and left and he paid for both of their meals. He seemed to be in no rush and she already had cash there available so I feel like this was a pure act of kindness. The difference between his and her skin color and sex didn't matter to him at all. He just wanted to offer a helping hand.

One student wrote of being pleased by how warmly his fraternity brothers treated an African American friend who was visiting the campus<sup>1</sup>:

I was nervous at first because I feared a lot of people may not take to kindly to this guy with colored skin they did not know coming into a house party. I was wrong. Everyone

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<sup>1</sup> Most entries have been edited for length, and we have used pseudonyms to preserve anonymity. Otherwise, entries appear verbatim.

was very inviting to him and made sure he was having a good time. People went out of their way to introduce themselves and make sure he was involved in conversation. I was very pleased with this experience. It proved to me that the stereotypes about my fraternity are absolutely false and that the color of a person's skin should never be a factor of whether or not someone is permitted into a party or not.

Similarly, a freshman wrote that her initial concerns about an African American student living on an otherwise all-white dorm floor were unfounded:

When I first moved in at the beginning of the year, I wondered how this girl would feel as the only non-white on the floor. Would she and her roommate get along? Would she be accepted by everyone on the floor? Would she feel out of place? I am happy to report that she and her roommate are still sharing the same room. They get along well. The African American has been accepted by everyone on the floor. She is a sweet girl who we have all become friends with. I think since she was accepted, regardless of race, she never felt out of place. This is her university, too.

Likewise, a white student who decided to join a historically black fraternity found a warm welcome:

I thought that the members of the fraternity would make fun of him for trying to join as a white guy. The exact opposite happened and they embraced and accepted him into their organization. Now, he loves it. He told me has no regrets about joining and he said that it was one of the best choices he has made since he got to Ole Miss. It actually makes me very happy to hear this. I love hearing stories about racial acceptance and considering it was one of my really good friends, it made it that much better.

One student expressed relief that the passage of time seems to have softened some of the stigma suffered by members of sexual minority groups, particularly in the South. She wrote of a conversation with a friend who had just come out as bisexual:

I was asking her questions and she said that it has been hard to come out and especially to certain people, mainly who are within greek life. However, she said that the LGBTQ community within Oxford is growing and is very open to listen and be supportive. She said that while living in Oxford can be different that she is noticing a change and that people are becoming more open. I have also talked to my homosexual male friend and he has expressed these same beliefs. I believe this is very important to point out because it shows the continuous change within our community and on campus.

In some cases, students' empathy was prompted by witnessing a disturbing event. One student reported going to the aid of an African American student who had been assaulted by white men in a passing truck:

I was walking back from the library rather late and ahead of me at the four way by Kincannon was an African American male walking across the street. As he was coming across a Ford F-150 full of white men had driven by and as they were coming by they launched a milkshake onto this guy. Once I approached the African American I proceeded to walk with him to help him clean the milkshake off. He was clearly embarrassed with the situation so he did not want me helping him at all, but I made sure he knew how pathetic I thought that was on the white guys' parts and that I was extremely sorry that had happened to him. After seeing something like that happen I was just disgusted with how people treat different races differently and as something lower than themselves. Hopefully people of all races will come together soon enough and not judge people simply off race.

Another student recoiled upon hearing homophobic slurs:

Two males were driving around the square and yelling homophobic slurs through their windows at two individuals who were on the corner between two bars. This made me feel uncomfortable because the two being yelled at were not homosexual and it would be inappropriate in the first place to shout these slurs at any individual at any time.

### **Local microassaults (*conscious explicit putdowns*)**

UM's reputation for academic and research achievements is on the rise (University of Mississippi, 2017a). But it is the university's reputation for intolerance that is reflected in many diary entries. The diaries contained 51 (3.7%) references to students being called *nigger* and 11 (0.8%) incidents of females being called *bitch*. Most of these reports reflected microassaults—deliberate, purposeful discriminatory statements or actions directed at strangers in an attempt to embarrass or humiliate. An example:

Sometimes I feel Whites think Blacks are obligated to exit the sidewalk when walking to let them through. I've witness several times on campus of this happening. On one specific day, the black was called a nigger and to next time move out the way.

An entry about a Middle Eastern assault victim shows the use of *nigger* as a universal epithet:

So we have some racist assholes on this campus. There's no denying that, especially after the events of this past weekend involving the [Fraternity #1] pledges. For some reason unknown to man, this group of new pledges saw a non-white pledge from another fraternity in a restroom and thought it would be cool or funny or okay to jump him and call him names using racial slurs. The guy was a pledge at [Fraternity #2], and his name is Hassan.<sup>2</sup> Hassan is a Middle Eastern kid; I really don't know what country his family is from, but from his level of skill with English and his accent, I'm assuming this guy was born and raised in the United States. So these racist, white pledges saw this guy from [a different fraternity] with a different skin color and attacked him, calling him "sand nigger."

In every case, microaggressors seemed to use the slur casually with little apparent regard for its incendiary potential as "the most noxious racial epithet in the contemporary American lexicon" (Kennedy 2002: 23):

There was a football game on, probably NFL. From down the hall, I hear someone, presumably white, yell, "get that nigger!" followed by a bunch of voices cheering.

Similarly, some students had been victimized repeatedly by microassaults:

This has happened more than once, and it happens to white girls a lot. Someone called me a basic bitch. The term basic bitch or basic white girl is used a lot these days to describe a girl who does something that most girls tend to do like drinking a pumpkin spice latte or eating panera, or it could be based on how they talk and what they wear. I do not like when people use this term because i feel like it is stereotyping and its categorizing people and its very hurtful because no one wants to be called basic or a bitch. Its just rude and demeaning.

Microassaults can occur in response to a provocative statement or action, but victims typically do very little to evoke them, as in the above example. A second entry illustrates how a student can face insults simply for being in the wrong place at the wrong time:

I walked in the C-store in Martin Hall to get a snack before heading to my dorm room, and there was a crowd of about 10 black people sitting in there. They were all listening to music and laughing but nothing seemed out of the ordinary. As I was about to pay for my

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<sup>2</sup> A pseudonym.

snack at the cash register, I heard one boy "cat-calling" me and whistling. They all started laughing and joining in calling me names like "baby" and "sugar". I casually ignored it like I would with any boys doing that. They obviously didn't take kindly to me ignoring them because then they started telling me i was a "stuck up bitch" and that "I wasn't as good as I thought I was." I still never said anything to them and walked out but I felt insecure and worthless for being degraded like that.

This example also shows that members of marginalized groups can also be perpetrators. When it comes to microaggressions, social scientists usually think of white people as perpetrators and persons of color as victims. In the above account, however, the African Americans are men, who have less power and influence compared to women.

Here is another example of a microassault by a black student against a white student:

I was walking out of Bevard and there was an African american male and female that was walking out behind me. The African male open the door for me and the other female but when a homosexual white male was about to walk out he let go of the door. The female that the African male was with asked him why he do that but he replied "I'm not bout to hold any door for no fag. I really don't want to be near one."

This is a poignant twist on James Meredith's experience. In 1962, white students rejected Meredith's courtesy of holding the door open for them (Meredith 1966). Now a black student rejects the courtesy of holding the door for a white student.

### **Local microinsults (*unconscious rudeness and insensitivity*)**

- *Ascription of intelligence*

Ascriptions of intelligence to Asian students were common. Here is an example:

My (freshman Caucasian) friend came in my room was telling my roommate and I that she found out what she made on one of her tests. She said she had made an 80 on it, but she wasn't too worried about it because everyone else failed it. She proceeded to tell us that her teacher brought up possibly taking some questions off of the test if everyone did bad, but one person made a 100. After my friend told us this, she ended with "It was probably an Asian. They're freakin' smart."

Conversely, some students assumed that their African American classmates were ignorant, even in the face of evidence to the contrary:

I was sitting in my anatomy and physiology lab today. One of my partners is a white female that is in a sorority, the other is an African American woman who is not in a sorority. We all work together pretty cohesively, but I have noticed small hints coming from my caucasian partner that she doesn't value the ideas of my other partner. It has never been super obvious, but today I really noticed it. We were doing a quiz all together and we were able to use our books. I would look up the answers and so would my African American partner as a form of checking to make sure the other is finding the correct information. My African American partner would find the answer before I would almost every time, but my white partner wouldn't click the correct answer until I found it, and if I found it first she wouldn't wait for my other partner to back me up. So basically, she believed me when I gave her an answer, but didn't think that my other partner would deliver correct information.

Theories about the presumed intellectual superiority of white people, and the intellectual deficiencies of the so-called lesser races, are nearly as old as the United States. In fact, one of the first Americans to suggest such a hierarchy was Thomas Jefferson in 1785 (Jefferson 1832). Although scientists have debunked any genetic basis of intelligence since the 1930s, old ideas

die hard, as evidenced by the 1994 publication of the controversial book, *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein & Murray 2010)--and the two diary entries above.

- *Second-class citizen*

All hierarchical rankings--whether by social class, age, race, gender, or sexual orientation--produce second-class citizens. Here is an entry by a Latina student who seems to have internalized a lesser status from her ethnicity and gender, a combination that, as she explained in a follow-up email to us, is compounded because she feels she is unattractive:

I feel as though some guys react differently to me because of the way I look. I was near the student union at the bus stop located at women's terrace. I was walking back to my room from math class, a guy driving a black pickup truck yelled something out the window. I new he was talking to me because as I raised my head and look left and right the guy was staring at me with this smirk on his face. I couldn't tell what he said because I was focused on getting to my room. Although I couldn't hear what he said I knew it was mocking from the tone of the voice. As I stared at him, he took off down the street. I couldn't believe someone could be rude, but I reminded myself to ignore it and go on. I try not to let things like this get to me and not give someone the satisfaction of reacting the way they want me to.

- *Pathologizing cultural values/communication style*

One of the most common examples of how students are pathologized for their cultural values relates to step-dancing. Each year, historically black Greek organizations at UM host step shows in front of the Student Union. In these tightly choreographed group dances, up to several dozen students stomp their feet and clap their hands in African- and Caribbean-inspired rhythms in a percussive display of unity. To the participants, step shows are a point of cultural pride. However, some audience members feel differently:

On September 9 [a historically black] sorority hosted Union Unplugged. Usually when the predominately African american organizations host it they stroll. During the strolling remarks were made on the social media app Yik Yak. Comments such as "Fried Chicken outside of the Union" with a picture of all of the African american students out on the union plaza. Another derogatory comment was made saying " I'm all for you colors doing your mating dances and calls just leave the grove and the squirrels alone they don't deserve that nonsense #respectthesquirrel"

- *Assumption of deviant status*

Finally, assumptions about race and deviant behavior--such as the association between African Americans and criminality--are centuries old. Though they lack scientific justification--scientists believe that criminal tendencies appear in any disadvantaged group--they were used to justify excessive legal punishments known as Black Codes during Jim Crow segregation, and extralegal actions such as lynching. Perhaps because of the recent proliferation of police shootings, African American students seemed to be aware of assumptions about their behavior:

My best friend, a white female, and I have two classes together. We also live and the same dorm and we have our first hour together. She was feeling a bit sick and between our first and second class together she has psychology. She asked me to use her ID and get her a drink from starbucks--which is normally fine since I get Einstein's myself and sit around for about an hour and a half. I couldn't bring myself to do it. We aren't allowed to use each other's IDs and I had this fear that I would be accused of theft. Mostly because I'm black. Even though the chances of it happening are slim, since it's Starbucks and is almost always packed, i was still to afraid to do it. I don't want people to assume things I do are criminal because of the color of my skin.

**Local microinvalidations (*unconscious negation or nullification*)**

- *Alien in own land*

In the above anecdote about “Hassan,” the fraternity pledge who was assaulted by members of a different Greek organization, fraternal rivalry may have been a motivating factor. But because the victim spoke perfect English and appeared to have been fully assimilated, the attack also suggests that the victim was a stranger in his own country. This fits a long pattern of exclusion. Unlike immigrants from the United Kingdom or western Europe, the physical distinctiveness of Asian peoples has long been considered an insurmountable barrier to assimilation, especially by white nativists. President Woodrow Wilson, like many observers of his time, expressed concern about assimilability of Chinese and Japanese people, “who do not blend with the Caucasian race...” Thus, he wrote in 1912, “I stand for the national policy of exclusion” (Baum 2006: 167). As sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) document in *The Social Construction of Reality*, ideas about social groups become immensely powerful once they are advanced by an authority figure such as a U.S. president.

- *Myth of meritocracy*

One of my friend's had a party to welcome everyone back to school, and there was some guy I'd never met there. The guy made a comment in which he implied that African Americans are lazy and mooch off of the government.

The stranger at this party assumes that African Americans have inherent deficiencies. To this student, these built-in character flaws (laziness, willingness to be on the public dole) explain African Americans' disproportionate rates of poverty and related social problems. This reasoning sidesteps a host of ways that people of color have been systematically stripped of economic opportunities by powerful institutions, including the federal government (Katznelson 2006, Rothstein 2017). Because it implies that a person's success in life derives solely from individual merit, it evokes the myth the the United States is a meritocracy rather than a nation where an estimated 35 to 45 percent of a person's wealth is inherited from his or her parents (Kopczuk & Lupton 2005).

- *Color-blindness*

We were surprised that no students in our study claimed to be color-blind, because many well-intentioned white people claim not to see color. Their hope, apparently, is that if they don't notice someone's skin color, they won't notice race. Thus they won't be racist. This is problematic in at least two ways. First, everyone sees color. Even people who have been blind from birth use a person's skin color to make assumptions about them. In other words, even blind people aren't color-blind (Obasogie 2013). But there's a second problem: “I don't see color” sounds nobly egalitarian to most white people. But having brown skin means that the culture, history, concerns, and experiences of a Native American or African American are markedly different from a white person's. Thus to a person of color, claiming to be color-blind can sound like an attempt to sweep those differences under a rug. Asian American psychotherapist Sam Louie (2016) has a reply when people say, “I don't see color.” He says, “Then you don't see me.”

- *Denial of individual racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, or homophobia*

One student found herself in a class where African Americans sat with other African Americans, and whites sat with whites. The professor decided to mix up the seating:

It made the class uncomfortable and very awkward. Nobody in our class has a problem with the other race, we just like to sit where we feel comfortable in the learning environment.

This student apparently didn't understand the contradiction in her comment: if sitting "where we feel comfortable" means sitting next to people of the same race, then students do in fact have "a problem with the other race."

### Where microaggressions occurred

We speculated that microaggressions would be particularly prominent at the Grove, where enthusiasm for southern tradition runs high during football tailgating parties that *The New York Times* refers to as "outdoor ritual mayhem" (Hamilton 2006). We also expected that students would report many microaggressions within the confines of historically white sororities and fraternities, many of which began as a mechanism for wealthy white Christian students to maintain their elite status after the Civil War as universities began to admit students of color and lower-income whites (Ross 2015).

In reality, microaggressions occurred in a variety of public and private spaces on and off campus:

- *In living spaces*

My ex-roommate (white, female) (she has since moved out) was discussing the Ferguson situation with me one day in our room. She stated that "they" (African Americans) were all getting what "they" deserved (from the cops). She believed the boy [Michael Brown] deserved what happened to him, and she was glad the cops had started "using their guns the right way."

I live in an all girls dorm on campus. We have many African American people who work in and for the dorm. The custodians that work in the dorm consist of middle to old age African American women. One night I was in the bathroom with a couple of girls who had just got back from being out and they had food and ended up spilling it all over the place and started to just throw it on the ground. Afterwards, they began to walk away and leave all the food all over the bathroom. I eventually ended up saying you guys should probably clean this up, thats disgusting. One of the girls responded with "thats what the black people are for" and all of the other girls laughed and agreed.

Everyone has prejudices, psychologists tell us. It may not be socially acceptable to broadcast them, but that only means we're careful about revealing them on what social scientists call the *frontstage*--public places where whites interact with nonwhites, including strangers. Backstage--safe protected places where whites are surrounded by other whites, especially friends and family--is a different story. There, racist comments "are usually tolerated if not encouraged--and sometimes even expected" (Picca and Feagin 2007: 91). Thus, we expected to find reports of microaggressions in students' private or semi-private living spaces, including dorm rooms, hallways, and bathrooms, as in the diary entries above.

In the following example, a student was perplexed after hearing a microinsult that demeaned a gay man behind his back:

I was coming out of my apartment building, headed to class, and I heard a group of students refer to another student that lived in the building as a faggot. The student in question was not even gay, he was just feminine in the way that he carried himself. I found this to be extremely close minded because being called a fagot can be really detrimental to a person's self confidence, Even is he was gay, it is not our place as students to judge his lifestyle or sexual preferences. i had met the student in question several times around the complex, and he seemed to be very nice and outgoing, he was feminine yes, but he was a good person, and for me personally, I couldnt handle the closed mindedness of the people choosing to call him a faggot.

In another diary entry, the mere assumption that a man is gay made him the target of vandalism at his apartment complex:

My old roommate and I make remarks to each other that can be interpreted as homosexual quite frequently so as to make our friends and other people uncomfortable. One of his neighbors frequently heard the conversations as we passed her going up or down the stairs. Last week as we were leaving to go to a bar to watch football, we passed her, her boyfriend, and the rest of their friends on the stairs, he tried to confront us about our sinful ways. My old roommate and I told them that we are free to live how we choose and did not tell them that we are both straight and only make the comments to make others uncomfortable. When they brought up religion, I told them jokingly that any protestant religion was false and based off of whatever made people happy instead of the truth. I told them Catholicism was the only true Christian religion as I am Catholic. They did not take it as a joke and became irate. We came back on found that someone had written the word "FAG" on the hood of my car in spray-paint.

By far the most egregious microaggressions in living spaces occurred in Greek organizations, where 35 sororities and fraternities are home to 35% of the UM student body (greeks.olemiss.edu). Several incidents involved white students who recycled well-worn racial tropes. Here are two examples submitted by white students. The first is from a female who was appalled to learn that a historically white fraternity house was sponsoring a hip-hop party, thus helping to perpetuate African American stereotypes:

We showed up at the Fraternity house simply to observe exactly what these students thought they were doing. Of course, we could not get into the party because we were not on the guest list, but we were able to get a full view of everything we needed to see. White, upperclass Fraternity guys and sorority girls dressed in baggy jeans, jerseys, gold chains, and grills.

The second is about a white fraternity member who seemed eager to invite African American students to recreate a slavery scenario:

In a fraternity house, the idea of t-shirts for an event came up. A boy said "we are going to invite all the black fraternities and sororities and then send them to a cotton field and make them pick the cotton for our shirts, the only downside is that we'll have to whip them". The entire room went silent and a few other boys laughed but most people just didn't know what to say about this offensive topic. He then continued to say how they would have to be kicked out before the actual party started.

Greek houses can be exclusionary spaces where students of color are not tolerated, as suggested by the following two entries:

I was at a fraternity party and was hanging out with friends when I saw a black guy not being let in the gate because of his race. He wasn't with any white people which may have contributed to it or with any girls. They wouldn't let him come in because he wasn't in their fraternity but usually any white guy can walk in as long as they know someone. However, they didn't bother to ask him.

I have a lot of friends in one fraternity, and they always tell me the latest news about rushing new members. So one of them was telling me how a lot of the members really like this one potential new guy, but that he's asian and his last name clearly shows it. So he told me that in order for them to give him a bid, they had to change his last name on all the greek records because one of the rush chairs would not knowingly allow an asian to join the fraternity.

In other cases, having members of color seemed to diminish a Greek organization's social standing:

I was sitting outside with two girls. One of the girls was African American, and the other was white. The African American girl, who we can call "C", mentioned wanting to join a sorority. Immediately, the other girl ("K") jumped in and explained that the dream C had of joining a Panhellenic sorority was basically impossible. I didn't like how okay K was with this. She just said it was probably not going to happen, and didn't seem to be disgusted or concerned that this was happening. C looked confused and hurt as she slowly started to realize why this was impossible. The conversation continued, and K made a comment that minority women usually only got into the lower tier sororities on campus.

Gay men were at risk as well:

One of my good guy friends is gay. He is open about it and so kind to everyone he is around. He pledged a fraternity and was a little quite about his sexuality just to make friends easier. One night at a party someone told his pledge brother he was gay, he beat up my friend and called his unpleasant names.

One entry illustrates an apparent "hierarchy of differentness" at a historically white fraternity where associating with an African American is judged to be worse than being gay:

I had a fraternity party that I was going to, and as a member, I was going to bring a date. My peers knew that I am gay, so it was not too shocking that I was bringing another man. While I was there, one of my other brothers who is also gay had brought his respective male date, but I did not think that anyone would react to the fact that my date was black. We weren't even seeing each other, but it was shocking that I got looks and whatnot for something I thought was quite mundane. I never realized what people in inter-racial relationships go through, or the double stigma of inter-racial gay relationships. I felt so off put and embarrassed by the whole thing that we didn't dance at all at the party, and I felt very guilty for being intimidated by it.

At one sorority, Jews were not welcomed any more than African Americans were:

When I was rushing my friend told me about how a sorority house was rude to her because of her race. My friend is Jewish, which is not a popular religion out here. I am not sure how her being Jewish came up, but she told me as soon as she mentioned her religion the girls ignored her and did not give her any attention. To be honest, she is just like any other girl, except her racial preference differs among others. She is from a place where it is very common to be Jewish, so she never felt left out there. She is one of my best friends out here but to some people she should not belong in the south.

Given their exclusionary origins, it is perhaps unsurprising that historically white Greek organizations can foster in their members a sense of entitlement that spreads beyond the house walls. One Latina discovered this fact of campus life while walking to class:

So I am part of the Latin American Student Organization, and as every end of the semester, all the officers gather and pick a place to go eat and celebrate then of the semester, anyways, I was sitting next to a friend of mine, and she looked really sad, so I asked what happened, and she started breaking out in tears, and she told us, that on her way to class, a truck full of "frat boys" threw a full cup of water at her, and water got all over her. She was so mad, and so helpless because no one really did anything. She couldn't see the license plate of the truck or anything. She says if she sees the truck she will recognize it.

The animosity toward underrepresented students was too much for some Greek members. The gay man above who discovered racist attitudes at a fraternity party wrote that the incident gave him misgivings toward Greek organizations in general:

It really made me reconsider a lot of the flippancy that exists towards racial issues, and I ended up leaving the fraternity soon after that since I know I am quite unwelcome.

Another student confided similar apprehensions to his fraternity brother:

I was talking with one of my fraternity brothers and he told me that he doesn't feel comfortable going here anymore. I asked him why and he said he feels a growing sense of racism and hate here at the university. This really hurts me because he is a good friend and brother.

- *In the classroom*

Because they are public spaces with adult instructors or graduate students who can enforce civility norms, we expected few reports of microaggressions in classrooms. But those assumptions were short-lived. Students in a range of disciplines targeted marginalized groups with microassaults and second-class citizenship-related microinsults. In some cases, the microassaults were blunt:

An African American girl in my class shared this story with me. It was her first day of history class and she had arrived early to get a good seat. There were already some people in the class and she knew she wanted to make friends so that she would have someone to study with for tests and whatnot. She sat down next to a white female and said hello. The female looked at her, immediately stood up and said "I don't sit next to niggers," and proceeded to move seats. Everyone who was in the class heard this racial slur and some even laughed. No one stood up for her.

In another class, white students openly claimed that whites were intellectually superior to African Americans, even though the African American students in the class seemed to take their education more seriously than the students who were bragging:

In Psychology class the other day, we were talking about IQs and how different races get different scores based off of many years recording them. Our teacher was showing us how whites average a better score than blacks, just based on knowledge and school system. The African Americans in our class were getting kind of upset about it and these white boys were just being jerks making rude comments about how its true and how whites have always been the smarter race. I could hear them joking about it under their breath about how we will always "dominate" in a school based system because we were born "smarter" and better educated... [T]hose boys hardly are in class compared to the black people they were making fun of, which also sit in the front row of the class.

These weren't the only white students who had internalized stereotypes about African Americans:

I was in Biology class and the teacher asked for a show of hands of who had not tried a certain food. A few black students raised their hands and 2 white males behind me said, "of course they haven't tried it, they're too busy eating fried chicken" he said it loudly too, it wasn't just a whisper.

In an anthropology class, male students used a gender exercise as an opportunity to share their unflattering opinions of women. The experience stunned a female classmate:

We were in our anthropology class and our teacher decided to do an in-class assignment on gender perception. She first asked how males would typically describe females. The answers I heard were extremely offensive. Guys my age began to shout out words like "pathetic", "slutty", "dependent", "dumb", "whiney", "annoying", "incapable" and "whores". I was so taken aback. I could not believe that men my age would say such horrible things about women. The worst part was that it was right in front of us.

One student witnessed an exercise in a theater class that triggered unfavorable comments about Asians:

In theater class we were viewing different masks and explaining how we thought and felt about the different masks. The character had kind of closed eyes but was not Asian. However some of the class mates yelled Chinese as soon as the mask came up and then started saying more statements that were offensive. Eventually the teacher asked them to stop and not to add anything else to unless it was constructive and relative to the class.

A student confessed to having harsh ideas about Muslims until a student from the Middle East enrolled in her class:

I had a bad experience with Arabian people my sophomore year in college. Now, I looked at them in disgust but I try to treat everyone fairly. I was in tennis class and it was a kid just visiting with one of his friends. I was a little scared, but the guy was super friendly. The whole time I was saying to myself, "PLEASE DO NOT BE IN MY GROUP". Long story short he was and on my team, the whole time I did not talk to him, and I barley looked at him. Later, when I got home I thought about how I treated this new guy, he had did nothing wrong to meet and he seemed like a very kind person. It made me think about how I would feel if someone was treating me the same way, and how it would make me feel. I wanted to say sorry, but he dropped the class before I had the chance.

Unlike women and most racial and ethnic minority group members, LGBTQ students are not always identifiable. This invisibility means that students may be more willing to commit microaggressions against them on the assumption that everyone in the room is heterosexual. The following comment may have been made under this presumption of shared sexual orientation:

There was recently an assault crime in corinth, ms and i brought it up in our pol 101 class when we were talking about laws against hate crime. i spoke and said it was sad and someone else said "no its not, gays deserve it."

Occasionally, students identified microaggressions from their professors. Here is an example from a student whose male professor doubted her seriousness of purpose because of her appearance:

One of my classmates got back an exam and got an EXTREMELY poor grade on it. I'm talking like in the teens out of 100 points. She's white, has blonde hair and is in a sorority. When she got her test back she was outraged because she studied and after comparing her test with classmates, she actually knew the answers and did mostly the correct work. When she met with the professor during office hours to discuss her test, she was told "Oh, you're just going to be a teacher right? Looking at you, I didn't think you really cared for this course." This was an upper level science class required for her major (NOT a teaching one). She was confused when this happened and proceeded to tell him her major and previous grades in related and pre-requisite courses. He then told her he didn't believe her and had her pull up her past grades on his computer to show him that she indeed knew what she was doing in this course. He took it one step further by commenting how based on her appearance and mannerisms that she automatically didn't care for this class and didn't need it and therefore he didn't actually grade her on her performance but on preconceptions on what kind of student she is. Even in class when females would try to ask questions, he was short and rude actually disregarded what they said most times. But when a male did the same thing, he'd be buddy buddy with them and joke and so on. It was extremely frustrating to sit in his class for an entire semester.

The second example of a professorial microaggression was reported by a white gay male student who wrote that his African American professor demeaned him for his sexuality and consistently graded him and the other white students lower than their African American classmates:

On a day I was absent, the instructor made a joke at my expense that I was feminine. As a gay man, it was really demeaning to hear that the instructor was so offensive and belittling towards me, and especially since I viewed myself as a good student in the class. My friends told me what he had said, and that is utter bullshit that a homophobe has wanton power to discriminate and assign students poor marks because of their sexual orientation. Again, because he didn't say, "I am assigning student X poor marks because he is gay" I had little recourse, but even if he did, it is unlikely that people would really listen to the discrimination I suffered.

The reverse--students directing microaggressions against their professors--was more common than professors directing microaggressions against students. In one entry, white students openly ridiculed their Asian professor:

My teacher is Asian. I've never specifically asked him, but his last name makes me think he is Chinese. I really respect his courage and tenacity to come to the US and to teach at a university, but his English is very limited and his pronunciation is not very good. Because of this, it is incredibly difficult to understand him in class. Sometimes I leave class feeling exhausted - almost like trying to learn something while listening to it in another language - because it is so hard to decipher what he is saying. I believe other students are frustrated as well and that is probably why they mutter things in class, but lately, the muttering and talking behind his back has gotten worse. Recently, students have been asking questions really loudly and then laughing at the professor when he repeats the question back to clarify it. A friend who sits next to me often says things like, "he just said that?" in an angry tone when the teacher repeats a question. In the last week or two, people have started speaking loudly to each other in class while he is talking. Many times, he asks us for the answer and will write it down even though it is sometimes incorrect. Then, if someone goes back to correct him and tells him the answer is wrong, he will fix it, no questions asked. The other day my friend snorted and said "he doesn't even know the answers?" I feel like this whole situation is probably more due to the frustration we all have that we can't understand the teacher, but I often wonder if the students would be behaving the same way if the teacher spoke English and could understand what they were snorting about and muttering under their breath.

In another entry, a student's aversion toward an African American professor was so unyielding that he refused to take a class from her:

I was leaving a class on the first day when a white guy told me he was dropping the class because a black woman was teaching it.

Two other students were overheard ridiculing their African American professor:

I overheard some white guys talking. They were chatting about how their black professor doesn't ever know what he's talking about.

Research suggests that female professors of color are much more likely to be challenged in the classroom compared to their white male colleagues, a finding borne out by consistently lower student evaluation scores for minorities and women (Turner 2002, Lilienfeld 2016). This can significantly complicate recruitment, tenure decisions, and retention of underrepresented faculty, a topic we explore starting on p. 33.

- *At the Student Union*

The Student Union is a microcosm of the campus at large; it provides under one roof a central gathering place for any of 24,000 students from all 50 states and 92 foreign countries. Thus, opportunities for intergroup contact--and conflict--are substantial.

I went to the Union to go to subway on my way to subway i was going to take the elevator but the two Caucasian students who were on there had plenty of time to hold the elevator for me I was by the last machine just steps away from the elevator as the doors were closing they said we don't want your Black ass in here with us. It made me stop dead in my tracks because I was shocked by the comment that caught me off guard by strangers who do not even know me as a person they just was my skin color.

People have multiple positions--their *statuses*--in a social hierarchy. For example, a student could be an American, which positions them as relatively privileged among other world citizens, and a daughter, which might position them as less influential than other family members. Someone's most important status--their *master status*--is their most salient position. When the students refuse to hold the door for this African American student, they are saying that her most important status isn't her age, her height, her religion, or any other common indicator of position in different contexts. Her master status is her blackness.

As the student in the elevator incident found, stereotypes allow us to make snap judgements about people based on the group to which they belong. Upon reflection, however, some students have second thoughts about how they characterize other groups. Witness the following incident, which occurred in front of the Union:

A couple of months ago, some Muslim students were giving away free food of their culture. Their table was setup in front of the Union. I overheard someone saying, "I'm not eating anything from them. It may be poison." And another student responded, "I know right! I'm don't trust them especially since 9/11!" I felt bad because the Muslim students were being very friendly. They seemed nice to me.

Here is a second incident involving a student refusing food--an ironic decision considering that eating is the primary reason to go to the Union:

Me and my friend were eating breakfast. There was a lesbian handing out the eggs and bacon. My friend purposely would not go get eggs and bacon because the lesbian was handing it out.

This student does not reveal how her friend determined the sexual orientation of the server, nor the mechanism by which the server's presumed sexuality would have contaminated a breakfast plate. The implication by her comment is that student would rather go hungry than confront her homophobia. Here is another homophobic incident at the Union:

I have this gay friend that am real close with that also goes to Ole Miss. We were sitting in the Union one night, my friend was dressed in a feminine type of way, such as tight pants and a half shirt and cowgirl boots. There were a group of athletes sitting at the table beside us and my friend whispered to me saying that one of the guys was cute, but one of the guys over heard him and started to say rude things aloud, this upset my friend so bad that he ran outside of the Union crying. This also hurt me because my friend was hurt.

It may not be a coincidence that these microaggressors were athletes. Because athletics represent a place where masculinity is defined and even idealized, gay men and their associations with femininity represent threats to this masculine ideal (Anderson 2002). According to a 2015 survey of attitudes of 9,500 international athletes, American athletes had the lowest "inclusion score" among athletes in six English-speaking countries (Denison & Kitchen 2015).

The Union is also a site where predominantly African American food-service workers come in regular contact with white students. Some diary entries noted staff-on-student microaggressions in these interactions:

I was in the subway line at the union, with all the other hungry students. I was next in line to place my order, or tell the lady behind the counter which bread I would prefer for my sandwich. I knew the subway worker saw me, yet completely ignored my presents. There happened to be a black student behind me, and the subway worker completely skipped me asking for her (the black student) order. She made it clear she did not want to help me. I ignored it at first and let the other student go ahead of me. As I would now be the next person in line, she still did not acknowledge the fact I was there. When I asked for help in order to get her attention she rudely answered "what do you want," while she rolled her eyes at me. I have never been so disrespected before. I knew coming to school here that there would be racism, but I did not think it would be towards white people.

Without more details, we cannot determine why this African American service worker treated the white student poorly. Job-related stress and frustration do cause workplace aggression, and employees who have been victims of discrimination against have higher levels of psychological distress than those who haven't (Glomb 2002). If the worker had had previous encounters with disrespectful white students--such as the above-mentioned student who refused to clean food she had spilled in her dorm because "that's what the black people are for"--one can imagine that the worker might react with hostility to having to serve another white student.

It may be more difficult to explain the following encounter involving an Asian student. Here the microaggressor is an African American male who delivers an ethnic, gendered microinsult that highlights the student's second-class citizenship:

I was in the Union standing in line to grab a bite to eat while an Asian female student stood off center waiting for her order to be called. I heard her speaking with a friend as her ticket number was being called repeatedly (unbeknownst to me or the others around her at the time). After several calls of said ticket number, her order was trashed. She stood there maybe 10 minutes as other grabbed their orders as ticket numbers were being called and she stepped forward alerting them that she had yet to receive her order. She was very pleasant when explaining her dilemma. However, the young lady that addressed her was very rude when saying that her order number had been called several times. As the student was walking away, an African American male on the grill said, "That chink bitch shoulda been listening". The student was within earshot and dropped her head with his comment.

These "overlapping" microaggressions, reflecting simultaneous microinsults, were not uncommon on campus. Here is a second example of ethnic, gendered remarks from three presumably white males:

When I was walking to class there was a group of three boys walking in front of me. I could not help but over hear the conversation they were having. They were laughing and making jokes about a muslim girl for wearing her traditional clothing. One boy said "I would not want to see what is under that, she probably hairy and gross like the rest of them."

- *At the Turner Center (Dept. of Campus Recreation)*

Because sports are intertwined with the creation and maintenance of masculinity, as noted above, we were not surprised to diary entries from women who wrote of being prevented from fully participating in this putatively democratic space:

I was at the gym the other day and I was doing my thing trying to get a lift in before class. Guys tend to "peacock" around the gym and take up all the weights and most of my girl friends are way too intimidated to go on the side of the gym. I am not like that, though. So I walk over to the weights and start to do cleans and I find that every eye on that side of the gym was on me. Guys gave me dirty looks and waited impatiently for me to be done so I felt like I couldn't spend the time I wanted to on it. However, if I was a guy they

would have respected me and taken their time to wait until I was finished with my lift. Just because I am a girl they believed that my being there was taking away from their ability to have a good work out and that bothered me.

Ironically, men were not always the superior athletes. One male student wrote:

We wanted to go play soccer, unfortunately for our group of guys we did not have enough people. Somebody mentioned asking some girls to come play they quickly rejected the idea because they were not males. After some persuasion we agreed as a group to let them play soccer with us. They were much better than us.

- *At the Grove*

We expected tailgating parties at the Grove to be sites of unrestrained celebration of the Old South. As such, the usual stigma from publicly advertising one's aversion to marginalized groups would not apply. Many of the 31 diary entries that mentioned the Grove confirmed this expectation. The following white-on-black microaggression was typical:

One day me and my friends were all in the grove for a football game with my friends parents. We were all laughing and having a good time and really enjoying the day. All of a sudden a black man walks by and my friends father makes a comment about how the black man was a thug and probably was on drugs and had a gun in his jeans and was going to go rob a back or something.

This comment may not have been overheard by the African American passerby. But when members of marginalized groups became aware of the hostility directed against them, they regretted trying to be a part of the pregame celebration, as demonstrated by these two entries from African American students:

I have went to the Grove many times this year and if you do not know anyone it is really hard to mingle for African Americans. A lot of the white people just stare at you like you do not belong, they are not really welcoming either. Attempting to just stand in the middle of the grove near others tent is hard because if you stop in front of somebody tent who does not know you they will probably pretend drunk so they can try and push you from standing in front of their tent.

I avoided The Grove my entire freshman year, but when sophomore year rolled around I vowed to go and have a nice time. Some friends and I pre-gamed a bit before we went Groving so we were all in good spirits, laughing, joking, and just enjoying ourselves as we walked to The Grove. As I walked around, I began to feel very uncomfortable. There were Confederate flags hung up everywhere, old white people eyed me curiously as I passed, Colonel Reb's hung up around everywhere. This old man passed by me with a jumpsuit covered with a giant Confederate flag pattern and said "Hotty Toddy". I know that he meant this as a greeting to a fellow comrade, but it did not feel that way to me. I did not feel like we were comrades, I mean what a slap I the face. A FULL CONFEDERATE FLAG JUMPSUIT AND YOU GREET ME AS IF WE ARE ON THE SAME TEAM?! We are not. Because the people, who waved the flag that you are celebrating, fought to uphold an institution that dehumanized oppressed my people. I was told that The Grove was supposed to be where I'd be able to bond with my fellow students and have a blast in the name of the football season. I hated it. And I will never go back.

Some diary entries articulated aspects of the Grove experience that we did not entirely expect. Consider the following account from an Asian female student who accidentally bumped into a man's cooler and spilled his drinks:

I was walking in the grove and it was during a football game and I got pushed from behind and accidentally knocked someone's cooler. All their drinks came out and the old man yelled at me saying, "Go back to your country." That really offended me and made me upset cause I did not mean to do it.

In a space known for honoring southern tradition, one would have expected a man to be gracious to a woman who had experienced an accidental mishap. "Manners are one of the many things that are central to a Southerner's identity," Charles Reagan Wilson, UM professor emeritus of History and Southern Studies, told *The New York Times* in 2011. "But not any more. Things have eroded" (Severson 2011). That may be particularly true when the woman in question is a person of color. Instead of empathy, this student was served an ethnic insult.

To Yale University sociologist Elijah Anderson, Grove tailgating qualifies as a "white space"--a place where persons of color are either absent, unexpected, or marginalized when they are present. Whites tend to view white spaces as unremarkable (the Grove's association with festivity notwithstanding). But marginalized persons view these spaces as off limits, places to be approached with caution if not alarm (Anderson 2005). African Americans in particular have historical reasons to be wary of crowds of whites intent on glorifying the old South: from 1890 to 1930, Mississippi led the nation in lynchings, which were typically attended by large crowds of festive whites.

This helps explain why diary entries about the Grove show that members of different groups live in different worlds--worlds in which UM's famed tailgating parties can have starkly different meanings. Many white students may not be aware that their experiences during game day are often considerably different from those of their marginalized classmates. Compare the previous comments from African American students about their off-putting Grove experiences to the following entry from a white senior undergraduate:

In one of my classes we were talking about racism with a teacher. One girl raised her hand and proceeded to say that African Americans do not feel welcomed to the grove. She never wants to go or neither do her friends because they are not "invited." No one reacted to this in the class other than the teacher who simply said I can understand that. This made me upset because no one is invited to the grove. No one gets special treatment. You just show up and have a good time.

#### • *Off campus*

Alcohol plays a central role in students' lives. It may be illegal at UM for anyone under age 21 to possess or consume alcohol, but UM's Greek Life website (<http://greeks.olemiss.edu/alcohol-education/>) provides alcohol education resources, discusses the signs of alcohol intoxication, and provides alcohol awareness downloads (Anon. 2017a). Similarly, while beer is illegal in the Grove and underage liquor possession is against the law, the University threatens only to confiscate coolers "left unattended or in plain view" (<http://alcohol.olemiss.edu/faqs/>). Given alcohol's ability to relax inhibitions--one student referred to alcohol as "liquid courage"--we were surprised that "only" 43 diary entries (3.1%) mentioned alcoholic beverages.

On campus, Greek houses were the sites of 28 percent of microaggressions involving alcohol. Off campus, the central sites were bars, which accounted for 25% of microaggressions involving alcohol. Whether because of the alcohol-fueled environment, or their location, which removes students from the scrutiny of campus adults, these noisy, crowded spaces gave rise to some of the most notable microaggressions in the survey.

The first three examples, all reported by white students, involve white-on-black hostility that emerged after little if any provocation:

Basically I was just hanging out with my friends at the bar and a group of african american students walked by. one of my friends degradingly murmured under his breath

the n word and "they smell like sh\*\*\*". this just made me think like wow thats harsh. i wonder how that person would feel if they heard that. i wonder how i would feel if that were me.

My two friends and I were at the bar the Levee when an african american male came up to us and asked if we wanted anything to drink. We said yes and he bought us a drink. He then gave my friend his phone number and walked away. When he was gone my friend said, "I don't want this niggers number I'm going to delete his contact... and I don't know why all of them like me its not like I would want to talk to them back." This made me mad because he was a nice man by buying us drinks and she does not know anything about him. She could end up being really close to him in the end if she gave him a try. It was upsetting because he did nothing wrong to her.

An African American man was trying to get to the bar to order a drink. He accidentally bumped into a white male which then lead to a minor amount of liquid being spilt on the white guy's shirt. The white guy proceeded to freak out as the african american was apologizing. The N word was used multiple times and almost a fight had broken out.

Whether the topic is body odor, predatory sexuality, or clumsiness, all three entries illustrate notions about African Americans that have been invented and recycled by generations of white southerners. "The anonymous black person carries historical and social baggage...when in mixed company," writes Elijah Anderson (2011: 255). Far too often, Anderson says, "strangers they encounter fall back on scripts, roles, and stereotypes that raise doubts to the black person's claims to decency" (Anderson 2011: 255). Sometimes the most innocent event--like the African American man bumping into the white man--strips a physical space of its veneer of civility. In that split second--Anderson calls it the "nigger moment"--white racial animosity suddenly becomes clear.

Bar interactions also seemed to elicit blatant homophobic behaviors from name-calling to assault:

I was at Proud Larry's, and an openly gay couple was there also. They were having drinks at the bar and at one point they kissed. I could over hear some guys making comments, one even had the nerve to say "fags" loud enough for the couple to hear.

My gay best friend and I were at a bar with a big group of people. We were all goofing off, dancing and just having a good time when we were interrupted by an overly served guy. He was screaming jokes about my gay friend calling him a fag and just being really rude about his sexual preference. My friend gets really upset when people discriminate against him because he is gay so he started saying not nice things back. The guy then pours his drink on my friend and saying he deserved that for being such a faggot and that he needed to get out of the bar. The guy was then removed and we were able to stay, but my friend had a very sad demeanor the rest of the night.

Here a friend confided a fantasy that gay men should be shot:

I was out with friends for the Yik Yak event at The Levee, there was a DJ and a dance floor. There was a gay guy dancing around provocatively on some girls. A friend of mine leaned over and told me "his kind", the homosexual, should all be killed by the firing squad. I felt bad because this topic is very confusing for me. Religiously i've always been told it's wrong, but a family member very dear to my heart acted homosexually.

In one entry, fraternity members were so wary of gay men that they refused to walk near a gay bar:

I went to New Orleans this weekend for a fraternity formal and I was the only one in my date's group of friends that was familiar with New Orleans so I ended up being essentially a tour guide. One of my favorite bars on Bourbon street is a gay bar called Oz and it is on the end of Bourbon Street that is known for being very obvious about their feelings towards gay rights (which is why I love that end of Bourbon so much). Well, the guys refused to even walk within a block of the gay bars because of their disgusting prejudices. It really infuriated me because they acted as if homosexuality was some contagious disease that they didn't want to catch.

While we expected many examples of sexism in bars, we found "only" one:

I was at a local bar with my girlfriend. We had been drinking and dancing and having a great time. I noticed that her drink was getting low, so I went to the bar to get her another. As I was waiting at the bar, I noticed that another guy came up to her and asked her to dance. I was cool with it at first, because I just thought that he didn't know she was with me. She politely declined his invitation to dance. Once he was rejected, he got really upset and put his hands on her, called her a "stupid whore" he was really drunk, but still I felt like it was my duty to intervene. I took it upon myself, along with some of my fraternity brothers to escort him from the bar.

*Slut-shaming* refers to the act of judging females for expressing their sexuality, whether real, perceived, or imagined (Tanenbaum 2015). Some observers of dating behavior find irony in encounters, such as the one above, where a woman who has *rejected* a sexual proposition is called promiscuous, but the man who was seeking sex is not (Alden 2011). Given the prevalence of slut-shaming, we suspect that this practice--and its apparent variations--are much more common at UM than this single diary entry suggests.

In addition to bars, we were surprised by the number of disturbing interactions that occurred when students were driving. Here are four examples:

I was driving in the car with two of my friends. A black person in another car cut us off and the driver of our car said "fucking niggers" under his breath. The other friend laughed.

A asian girl made the mistake driving through a stop sign, instinctively every guy I was in the car with made numerous jokes about how she fit the stereotype of asian drivers around.

I was riding in a car with my boyfriend and best friend, who is a girl and was driving. My boyfriend started making comments about her driving and my own driving, stating that we drove very timidly and that he could always tell the difference between our driving and his or his dad's. This comment really upset me because I feel like he could "only tell the difference" because he knew he was riding with us. I personally drive cautiously because I've been in two wrecks before and therefore cannot afford another wreck. I also drive more cautious when I have more people in the car because I care about their safety. I get tired of people thinking I need a guy around me to take care of me because they're stronger and more equipped at taking care of me than I am of taking care of myself, when that simply is not the case.

Last week I was driving in Oxford when all of the sudden lights started flashing and going off in my car and the left side of my car felt unusually close to the ground. I luckily made it to my apartment complex and pulled into a parking spot beside where some landscapers were removing trees. I got out of my car and noticed my left front tire was completely flat. I had somewhere to be in an hour so I decided rather than trying to call someone to

change my tire I would just do it myself. My dad had shown me how to change my tire a few years ago when the same thing happened because he said, "It's always a good thing to know how to do, in case of an emergency." So, I proceeded to change my tire when one of the male workers walked up to me and said "ma'am do you need help?" I appreciated his generosity but I knew what I was doing so I said "no sir, I've got it, thank you though!" After I politely declined he continued to offer his assistance, but also began to make both intentional and unintentional sexist comments. He made comments such as: "Ma'am I can help you if you want, I really don't mind." "This is a mans job anyways!" "Girls don't usually know how to do stuff like this." And I said "stuff like what?" and he replied back "You know, handiwork." He went on to tell me how surprised he was that "a girl like me could do a job like this." He said it was "nice to see a woman that could handle herself and be able to do 'a mans job.'" I'm not sure if he was purposely making these comments to make me feel uncomfortable or upset, or if he was simply trying to compliment me.

When a person's intentions are unclear, it is difficult to know whether a microaggression has even been committed, as with this student who cannot decide whether the landscaper is trying to praise her or unnerve her. Her confusion is typical: while microassaults--deliberate slurs--are usually clear-cut, microinvalidations and microinsults are often ambiguous.

### How students responded

Microaggressions are not a one-way street. Students can--and did--respond, whether by *confronting* the microaggressor, *talking* with friends or family, or *thinking* about the microaggression without acting on it.

- *Confronting the microaggressor*

With emotions that ranged from disappointment to furor, many students expressed regret over the microaggressions they witnessed. They were appalled by the slurs and insults they overheard and embarrassed by the brazenness and apparent lack of awareness with which some students demeaned others. Here is an example from a student whose enthusiasm for a Greek step show was not shared by anonymous "haters" who posted racist comments on Yik Yak:

It really just irritated me that people were being so inconsiderate. These men, and women I think, have put in so much time to organizing this event, and to have people cowardly hide behind a phone screen and put them down is ridiculous. Not only that, but with what happened last year with the James Meredith status, you would think people would learn racism is not something that will be taken lightly. This 2014, nearly 2015, it's time for people to mature a little bit and realize that it's not okay to judge someone for things they are incapable of changing or a lifestyle they choose to live. The people who wrote these things on Yik Yak would probably never go up to one of the men who were stepping and say what they wrote out loud to their face. So, therefore they shouldn't have said it at all. Certain things you just keep to yourself.

A white student was stunned by a white sorority member who boarded a crowded bus and refused a seat beside a well-dressed African American man because, as she said under her breath, "I don't want to sit next to a nigger":

Although no one heard the girl say the racial slur it was still very hurtful and uncalled for. It offended me because of how rude she was and no one should treat anyone that way even if they do not hear it.

A sorority member who saw her house mother “yell at the [African American] workers because they did not clean something the right way” struck the student as inappropriate:

This bothered me because I felt like she was treating them as they were our "help" and that they held a lower position than us. Our house mother is older and attended Ole Miss before it had black students. I think she did not mean anything when getting on our house staff, but it made me feel uncomfortable and I felt bad for the staff who works so hard all day every day serving us.

In response, many students took action by challenging the microaggressor. This happened in several ways. Sometimes students simply walked away:

I was doing homework in my friend's dorm room and girl that lives down the hall came into her room to hang out. The girl that came in is a very religious southern baptist. We were all joking about our weddings and relationships and the baptist started talking about different people she has dated, but she specifically said she has never dated a black person. Everyone in the room got quiet and just looked at her. The girl who's room we were in asked why. The baptist said that because if she did her dad would shoot the boy and then shoot her. Everyone else began to say that they didn't think their parents would care if they brought home a black guy and she began to get angry. She said "I was raised a certain way and a white person is the only respectable person I could ever date, anyone else would be beneath me". Everyone felt so awkward that they got up and left the room.

At other times, students asked the microaggressor to leave:

At the Retreat pool there was this really redneck guy hanging out with my friends and I. He was the friend of a friend and was a pretty wealthy member of one of the larger fraternities here at Ole Miss. We began talking about police brutality, Ferguson Riots and whether or not more blacks get abused by the police or if they just react worse when it happens to them. The discussion was open, fair, and by no means derogatory and was going well until this redneck guy starts spouting off racist bullshit. He claimed that blacks commit way more crimes than whites and how they deserve all the police brutality as it keeps them in line. One friend of mine and I were really angry as not only was this guy being unbelievably racist but he was also completely wrong with his 'facts'. After arguing with him for a while he wouldn't budge and we asked him to leave. He said he had been joking and didn't mean any of it but we firmly told him that we do not think so and that he is not welcome around us if he continues to behave this way.

Sometimes students acted because they saw how a microaggression had wounded a victim. Here is how a white freshman acted on behalf of a marginalized sorority sister to confront the use of an ethnic slur:

One of my friends in my sorority is of spanish ethnicity. Some of our friends call her consuela as a joke. When i was studying with her she told me it actually hurts her feelings. She said it made her feel alienated because she's already one of the only non-white girls in my sorority. I felt bad that people had been calling her this even if it was supposed to be a joke so i privately talked to the group of guys who nicknamed her this and asked them not to use this nickname anymore because it was hurtful toward her.

The sorority members had not realized how offensive the nickname was. They apologized to their Hispanic sister.

In other cases, students acted even when no victim was present:

I was out at the bar and a white guy who I know not that well kept calling black people the N word. It made everybody very uncomfortable, but i could tell that some people just weren't going to say anything and let it slide. it made me very uncomfortable and i told him not to use that word.

It was particularly noteworthy to find students addressing microaggressions in circumstances where their views may have been unpopular. One student recounted challenging a homophobic statement at his fraternity house:

Discussing a member of my greek organization that is gay, one of my friends blurted out "next year we shouldn't give any bids to gays like Jake. They just need to stop being gay. We don't need any more of those". Immediately I scolded him on the ignorance of that comment and that somebody's sexuality choice should not have any effect on their personality or ability to be an asset to our organization. I have encountered a lot of people with homophobic views since moving to the south and I understand that they have been perpetuated through culture, but that in no way makes them okay. I don't think anyone should ever be shamed for who they are and I think the greek community needs to embrace the diversity of that rather than feel any difference amongst members brings their status down.

Some of these interventions seemed to have the intended effect on the microaggressor. Here are two instances in which challenging uncivil statements gave students pause:

One of my guy friends was telling us about his night at a local bar and mentioned to us a gay guy that worked at the bar. He said the guy was walking so girly and was offering him drinks all night at the bar. He kept on and on about how much of a "fag" this guy was, not knowing that my uncle so happened to be gay. As soon as he started using inappropriate names for the homosexual guy I immediately stopped him and told him theres nothing wrong with being different and that those names can be very hurtful. I think I taught my "so called" guy friend a very important lesson because he didn't say a word the rest of the time at the pool and had a very guilty look on his face.

I was sitting with my friends and we were having our normal conversation that included the events that happened throughout the day. All of a sudden my friend remembered something that happened that she had forgotten to mention. She bshe said that she was really afraid when she was in Lamar headed to class. I proceeded to ask the question of why? She started to tell me about when she was getting on the elevator and there was a lady already on the elevator. The way she described the lady, it seemed as if she was describing a Muslim. So I let her continue to tell her story and then she made the comment pertaining to bombs, and I just started becoming more and more irritable and uncomfortable. She continued to explain how she was really afraid and how she was excited to get off the elevator and head to class. Once she was finished, I looked and said that was very ignorant and racist. She said that she was aware and didn't really care. I left and couldn't understand how people could be so closed minded. I felt a little offended knowing that I'm currently learning to speak Arabic, I started to question the friendship. Then I received a text message from my friend and she apologized for the comment.

- *Talking with friends and family*

Some students who were troubled by the microaggressions they had witnessed sought help from adults on campus. There were 19 diary reports (1.3%) of contact with UM administrators, faculty, or staff, and three reports of contact with University police. One person contacted the UM Counseling Center. No one mentioned contacting the UM Bias Incident Response Team, through which students can file online reports of incivility (<http://inclusion.olemiss.edu/birt/>), although students may have contacted BIRT without disclosing that fact in the diary entry. BIRT fielded 19 student reports of bias-related incidents during the 2014-2015 academic year, the period of data collection for our study (S. Mead, personal communication, September 13, 2017).

In some cases, discussing a microaggression with faculty or staff seemed to bring students comfort, as was the case when a female freshman came to a startling realization about a male classmate:

In my business writing 102 class, we are working on a big research paper project where we are able to form our own research question and write a long, extensive paper answering that research question through an original thesis. During peer review time, I exchanged papers with a boy that was sitting next to me that I had never spoken to but seemed very nice. I began reading his paper and was quickly shocked as I read all of the reasons why women should in fact be paid less than men in the workforce. I am not a feminist whatsoever, but never have I been confronted with such ignorance as this boy had written basically claiming that women should be paid lower because they should not in fact be working at all. This boy claimed that women are more emotional in the office and not as reliable because they may become pregnant while working there and have to take maternity leave therefore deserving to be paid half of what men make. He said women should stop claiming to be victimized by lack of proper wages because if they chose to come to work then they should not be expected to be allowed to have children and that nobody is "forcing" them to become pregnant, that is a decision that they make on their own. Thus, the possibility of having to take maternity leave must be compensated for by having low wages. There was a slew of misogynistic comments and facts that basically pointed to the conclusion that women are not as smart as men nor as capable. I was shocked.

After class, the student spoke with her professor:

My teacher noticed the shock on my face as I read the paper so after class I was asked to stay and discuss. My teacher was very understanding and asked me if I felt uncomfortable by it and would go to whatever means to make sure that I felt safe in the class. I reassured him that I felt fine about it, but I did feel that the boys paper was sexist and some opinions needed to be kept quiet if it would anger half of the human population.

In 62 diary entries (5.6%), students sought out roommates, fellow dorm and house members, and parents to help them make sense of comments they found offensive and behaviors they found questionable. In turn, these support communities provided reassurance and a sounding board for students' ideas. One student contacted her mother after a confusing incident involving her roommate's family:

I moved in a few days before my roommate did. When she moved in her whole family, mother, dad and brother were all crowding my room so I tried to give them space to get situated. The first day I came back to the room around dinner time and they were all in my room. Her family was telling me all about themselves and then started to ask me questions. When I told them I was from South Florida, about an hour north of Miami, their

first question was, "Are you Mexican?". I was set back by this for two reasons. First clearly they had no clue about where I was from in Florida, but my area is not known for having very many Mexicans. Secondly, I have blond hair, blue eyes, light skin, and speak fluent English. I was more confused that anything as to why they asked me this question but I was also taken back and felt judged by their tone of voice.

The mother helped the student brush off the conversation:

I told my mom and we both laughed that they must be very ignorant people and how weird of a question that was.

Students' instinct to contact their parents is understandable given that parents are a child's *primary socializers*--the persons most responsible for teaching norms and helping a child make responsible decisions (Benokraitis 2014). But in more than a few cases, parents were themselves microaggressors, a discovery that shocked some diary writers. For example, a white student was appalled when a white parent likened an African American restaurant server to an incompetent maid:

I was invited to go to lunch with one of my friends and her mother who was in town visiting. We went to a local Oxford restaurant to eat. It seemed as though it was taking a very long time to get our food. We ended up asking our waitress and she went back to the kitchen to check on our food's progress. Our waitress was African American and so were many of the other workers. She came back to our table and told us that she had made a mistake and did not put in our order like she thought she did. She frantically took our order again and ran back to the kitchen to get the order accomplished. When our waitress walked away, my friend's mother made a remark that went something like this: "These workers are incompetent and need to figure out how to do their job. They are just like the movie, "The Help". These statement really took me back and made me feel uncomfortable. Yes, the waitress did mess up our order, but I do not believe that my friend's mom had the right to make this racist comment. Our waitress brought our food a few minutes later. She was very apologetic and I did not mind her mistake. This comment made me feel sad because our waitress is a human being and all humans make mistakes.

Here an African American senior was startled when a child visiting the campus with his family referred to African Americans using a term from the Jim Crow era. The student rightly questioned what the child was learning at home:

I went to the union to get some subway and there were parents and their kids walking around the union, one of the children said mommy I thought their kind didn't go to this school while pointing at a black male walking out of subway, the little boy was no older than ten. It made me look at the parent because it made me wonder what they were teaching their children about people.

One student was quite clear that her parents were the source of her outmoded racial ideas and was unapologetic, even when her comments made her friends uncomfortable:

I was doing homework in my friend's dorm room and girl that lives down the hall came into her room to hang out. The girl that came in is a very religious southern baptist. We were all joking about our weddings and relationships and the baptist started talking about different people she has dated, but she specifically said she has never dated a black person. Everyone in the room got quiet and just looked at her. The girl who's room we were in asked why. The baptist said that because if she did her dad would shoot the boy

and then shoot her. Everyone else began to say that they didn't think their parents would care if they brought home a black guy and she began to get angry. She said "I was raised a certain way and a white person is the only respectable person I could ever date, anyone else would be beneath me". Everyone felt so awkward that they got up and left the room. I felt that if she had those predisposition about who she should date she should keep them to herself. Many of the people that were listening to her were from the north or the far west and do not share the same views as her. For her to express those opinions in front of people that don't feel the same way was extremely inappropriate and made everyone feel uncomfortable.

Such entries remind us of the power of parental socialization. As novelist Salman Rushdie (1980: 293) wrote, "Children are the vessels into which adults pour their poison."

In fairness, not all parents evidenced such antebellum-era expectations; we noted several reports of mothers and fathers warning children that racist behavior was unacceptable. But even when a parent grew to accept a student of color, we were struck by how ingrained their initial suspicions could be. In one case, a father seemed alarmed at the possibility that his daughter would go so far as to befriend a student of color:

The summer before I moved into my freshman dorm, I met a girl on the roommate exchange facebook page that I wanted to room with. She was black (technically half black/half Filipino, but everyone just assumes she's black) and was the sweetest and cutest girl I'd ever met. I told my dad about her and he was very unsure about me rooming with a black girl. Keep in mind, now, that the dorm we both live in is very hard to get accepted into, and requires an extensive application process. So obviously this girl is smart and cares about academics/community service/etc. He was still just scared that me becoming friends with this black girl would really hinder my experience and might cause me some disadvantages. This enraged me, because I had grown to like her so much just from talking to her. I roomed with her anyway, and the day that I moved in to my dorm, he met her for the first time. After saying 2 sentences to her, he fell in love with her. He told me that she was the cutest and sweetest little girl on earth and even made jokes about adopting her. It just proved that he made very unfair pre-made judgements about a girl he didn't even know.

UM alumni were mentioned infrequently, but because many alumni are parents and grandparents of current students we note the following comment of an alumnus who told a group of students that he was not pleased by the diversity they represented:

On a Wednesday night, I was visiting my boyfriend at work. He works at the Inn at Ole Miss, which is a hotel located on campus. Standing at the front desk, there was my boyfriend, a young black man, ["Sam"], a white lesbian woman, and ["John"], and older age white man, and me, a young black woman. We were all talking and laughing during their down time. In walks a man who looked to be in his 60s, nicely dressed, and obviously an alumni of the University. As he made his way up to the desk, he stopped and looked at us all. We all were curious as to what exactly he was staring at. He then proceeded, and when he got to the front desk, he said, " Well, ya'll got a pretty diverse group standing up here. In my day at this University, we weren't having any of this. No. We were not gonna let "them" mix us up like this right here. I don't know what they're doing these days." We were all appalled at this. There was about 3 minutes of silence as he walked away. And then the tongues rolled. "What the heck was his problem?" "That racist bigot." "He must be crazy!" Sam began to tear up, as she had come from a mixed race family. Her sibling were interracial and her step dad was Muslim. She began to

explain to us how she had suffered from this type of attitudes and gestures for so long, and she was just tired. We all consoled her and ourselves.

- *Thinking about the microaggression without acting on it*

Students remained silent in response a microaggression for a number of reasons. Some students claimed shyness:

A roommate of friend that I had started hanging out with was in rage about the problems happening in St. Louis. He would use words like "monkeys" and "niggers" to describe his feelings toward the African American community. I felt angry that he would use words like these so freely with no care for how they could effect someone. I'm shy and don't speak up when I should and I really wish I had in that situation.

Others resorted to prayer, a response not altogether unexpected in a state where the percentage of adults who believe in God (82%) is the highest in the nation (Pew Research Center 2014):

Yesterday afternoon I went to the square to have lunch. A white man entered the restaurant with his family. The server was a African American male. The white man seem to be angry from the time he walked into the restaurant. He was giving the server a hard time when he was ordering his food being that he wasn't being clear with what he wanted to eat. The black man proceeded with copying down the order and got it prepared just as he asked but, when the food came back the man begin to get real smart mouthed and started name calling cause thats not what he wanted. This made me very angry and all I could do about the situation was to pray that God heal this man.

One of the most common reasons for students' silence seemed to be their utter speechlessness. In 35 (2.5%) diary entries, students confessed to being stunned by a remark or behavior that most Americans consider taboo. Given the students' surprise, words simply failed them:

At a party of one of my neighbors, I was invited by them. I brought some of my friends with me to this party and as soon as we showed up, one of the guys states, "this party isn't for faggots". We all looked at each other and did not know what to say. The entire house was silent and everyone was standing around awkwardly. We left the party and I have never spoken to my neighbor since.

We suspect that students may have spoken up more often had they known how to respond to someone's public hostility toward another group. When we asked if students wanted to say or do more than they had said or done in the moment--in other words, to act in a way that was more consistent with their values--89 students (6.4%) said yes. This response suggests that students may have intervned to confront a microaggressor had they simply understood effective strategies for doing so. We believe that students would almost certainly benefit from expanded exposure to role-playing interventions such as the training offered by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation.

### **Local consequences of microaggressions**

- *Effects on students*

Microaggressions matter. Whether students, faculty, or staff are assumed to be criminals or terrorists, demeaned for their religion or sexual orientation, second-guessed for their interests and abilities, or subjected to slurs from friends and insults from strangers, it can affect their long-term health and well-being, as noted earlier. Qualitative research with African Americans, Asian

Americans, and Latinos finds that people who experience microaggressions risk injury to both physical health (e.g., high blood pressure, pain, fatigue) and mental health (e.g., depression, negative affect), and both short-term effects (e.g., confusion over whether to respond) and long-term effects (e.g., hopelessness). Psychologist Kevin Nadal (2012) suggests in a commentary for the American Psychological Association that just as firearms killed Trayvon Martin in Florida and Michael Brown in Missouri, racial and ethnic microaggressions “may be slowly killing the entire population of people of color.” This assessment may seem hyperbolic, but the late Chester M. Pierce, a Harvard Medical School psychiatrist who conducted pioneering research on microaggressions, may have agreed. “In and of itself a microaggression may seem harmless,” Pierce (1995: 281) wrote. “[B]ut the cumulative burden of a lifetime of microaggressions can theoretically contribute to diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence.”

Research with other marginalized groups finds similar effects. For example, in environments where heterosexuals use exclusionary “heterosexist” terminology and infer that heterosexuality is proper and normal, LGBT teenagers hide their sexual orientation, experience low self-esteem, and make more suicide attempts. As one research team put it, the outcome of the everyday degradations experienced by these students is “death by a thousand cuts” (Nadal, Issa, Leon, et al. 2011: 234).

These obstacles are not insurmountable. Writing in *Harvard Educational Review*, Tara Yosso and colleagues (2009: 660) note that Latina/o undergraduates respond to microaggressions by constructing “counterspaces in which they build a culturally supportive community and develop skills to critically navigate between their worlds of school and home.” No doubt the same is true of all marginalized groups. Some students even find motivation from being marginalized, as did this UM African American freshman:

I heard of a racist chant at a University of Oklahoma fraternity. I know this did not happen at my school but it did bring back memories of some of the situations that have occurred. It made me wonder do some of my own classmates do these sorts of things behind closed doors. I wonder do they feel as though I am not welcome at the University of MS. However, I quickly moved past those feelings because I know that I have earned my reason for being here by working hard and I will walk away knowing that I have defied the odds and will achieve great things while being at the University.

But for most marginalized students, microaggressions make achieving and maintaining a sense of wellness and emotional stability--two key ingredients of academic success--significantly more challenging. For example, here is an account of an African American student at UM who experienced a microaggression on her first day in the classroom:

On the first day of school, I made it to class at least 20 minutes early. There was a white girl that sat behind me. When the teacher walked in, she made the ugliest remark. The white girl said, "Oh my God, why do we have a black professor?" I was very upset by her comment.

In a single nine-word sentence--*Oh my God, why do we have a black professor?*--this white student has conveyed any of several possible messages:

1. This professor is incompetent (or unprofessional or poorly trained or disinterested in my success or biased against white people or unable to relate to me) because she is African American.
2. I show the same guilty-until-proven-innocent disdain for my African American classmates as I do for the professor, so I hope I won't have to study, work on a group project, sit near them, or interact with them in any way.

3. If I am called on in class, I will show my disrespect for the professor by being needlessly hostile, chronically argumentative, or consistently complacent.
4. I will challenge the professor at every turn, even though my limited education--particularly compared to the professor's--gives me little legitimate basis for doing so.
5. I will feel free to make derogatory racial comments under my breath about the professor throughout the class. I will not care if my African American classmates overhear these comments.
6. I am oblivious to the idea that my African American classmates may feel insulted when I insult a professor who looks like them.
7. I will try to make allies of the other white students in the class, thus creating "us vs. them" racial tension.
8. I will not care if the tension I cause disrupts the classroom and interferes with the learning environment; this professor can't teach us anything anyway.
9. The African Americans in this class will probably get better grades for doing less work. I will resent them for this.

Little wonder that the student of color is upset. Although she comes to the classroom with enthusiasm--she arrives 20 minutes early--a hostile comment changes her excitement to concern. She realizes that the unsavory scenarios that lie ahead could prove to be a semester-long distraction.

Rutgers University law professor Elise Boddie (2017), who is African American, writes about being stopped by a security guard in her building. The guard assumed that her older white male student was the professor. When she pointed out the error, the guard replied, "Oh, he *looks* like the professor." Boddie suggests that many marginalized people yearn for the ability to transact their daily affairs without the burden of onlookers' pervasive assumptions about their place in the world. Yet because such assumptions are indeed commonplace, even the most mundane interactions become stressful. The same is true at UM. One African American senior wrote about several apparent microaggressions from a white male classmate:

On several occasions I have handed worksheets and sign in sheets to my fellow classmates. However, two in particular have a habit of snatching the documents. The most recent case occurred on yesterday. With my arm outstretched, I handed my classmate the sign in sheet. He proceeded to snatch the paper with much aggression. It was harder than usual so I instantly became angry and simply looked at him with an expression that read "really?". As in, was that really necessary. He did not look at me in that moment and never does when there are times in which we are required to interact. After all, it is a small class. As usual, he behaves as if I do not exist. His expression was blank and intense. He looked like he was about to burst while fighting to hold back an emotion. I don't know if the emotion is hate or disgust but his actions suggest that they are one of the two.

In another diary entry, a student recalled visiting a sorority fundraiser and got the distinct impression that she and her friends simply didn't belong--and not just because they weren't members:

I went to a sorority house with some friends to help a fundraiser they were having. I remember walking there and seeing all of the parents and other college students walking there too. I went in and followed the people to the back porch. It was very packed walking

in and getting to where the fundraiser was. Me and my friends really didn't know where we were going, but we found our way. The whole time we were there we didn't see one black person but ourselves. It was very awkward. I can't really explain it. I felt like I was a sore thumb packed with pretty thumbs all around me. LOL if that makes since. Because of this me and my friends got to go plates and left. I was sweaty and just felt like everybody was staring at us. I know that sororities have changed over the years, but it just seemed like there wasn't much effort put into involving black people.

The student doesn't mention why she broke into a sweat. It may have been because the gathering was crowded, but sweating is also a common stress response that may have come from the feeling that she was unwelcome and under surveillance.

Because members of marginalized groups often have many experiences with microaggressions by the time they reach college, it doesn't take much to trigger a stress response in a person who has a history of being on the receiving end of microaggressions. Here is an account of a comment that infuriated a student of color even though it happened to someone else. It suggests that microaggressions can be second-hand stressors. That is, they can invoke a stress response even though the person who hears about the microaggression wasn't the one who experienced it:

My roommate was telling me about a class she was in where they were talking about how to control the population. She said that three white guys were sitting behind her, and one said I say we kill off the darkest race. She said she didn't say anything. I was shocked; then I was infuriated. I was asking her why didn't she say anything she said she didn't know what to say. I would have went off. Then I think if someone was bold enough to say that where someone could hear them what do you think they would do to her later if she had said something. Fears like that are ones people who even look black have to think about.

Simply reading how people responded to a racial incident was enough to make one UM student's head hurt:

Today, I watched a video of a schizophrenic man get gunned down by police officers. Firstly, it was disturbing. The video was from a police officer's body cam, so it was difficult to see the entire situation. But, I just don't understand why he was killed. He was a sick man, he obviously was not getting the proper medical attention that he needed. Though, the video left me perturbed, it was not nearly as disgusting as the comments were. Often, i try to ignore comments on sites like World Star Hip Hop because they just make me angry, but this time (against my better judgement) I read the comments and I was...speechless. Speechless, disgusted, I cannot think if a word. It made my heart hurt. The things that people say about people that look like me make some days really hard. And today, I am having a pretty bad day, One person commented and said "Why is it that when blacks get shot in the head only blood comes out? How come you never see any brains haha?" another person said, "That's what happens when your mother smokes crack while in labor. And your father isn't at home to teach you discipline." I mean, is this what people really think? They think that senseless death is comical and that we are to blame for our own mental illnesses? I don't understand why people don't see blackness the way that I do, well I do understand, but at the same time I don't.

Conversely, we counted 28 diary entries by white students who spoke of facing unprovoked hostility from students of color. An example:

Today I was in the quiet section of the library studying and right near me there was some pretty loud music playing. I brushed it off at first, but then I couldn't focus so I looked around the cubical to see who it was coming from and ask them politely to turn it down. I noticed it was coming from an African American girl, which didn't change anything at all in my mind. I calmly went up, tapped her and said, "excuse me I'm sorry to disturb you but I was wondering if you could turn your music down just a little bit." She looked at me and replied, "why?" I explained that I could hear it from where I was sitting and I couldn't focus so she rolled her eyes, turned away from me and turned it down without a word. I said "thank you," and walked away. I honestly felt like she was reluctant to turn it down because she thought I was just trying to find something to pick on her for because I'm white. It was the defensiveness that made me feel this way.

One wonders whether any of these incidents may have been fueled by a marginalized student's stressful prior experiences with microaggressions.

- *Effects on the University*

As an institution with a checkered racial past, the University of Mississippi "realizes its unique obligation to educate and lead the state with unquestionable and unwavering commitment toward the goal of embracing all aspects of diversity" (diversity.olemiss.edu). The University recently retired the only state flag to feature a Confederate symbol; hired its first Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Community Engagement; and has established an undergraduate mentoring program among other initiatives, such as the Luckday Success Program, which awards 80 scholarships each year to first-generation college students (Flaherty 2017, <http://luckydayscholarship.olemiss.edu/>).

These developments notwithstanding, many persons of color are underrepresented at UM. African Americans comprise 37% of the state's population, yet only 13% of students--and barely 6% of full-time faculty--are African American. Hispanics, who make up 3% of the state's population, comprise 2% of students and 2% of full-time faculty. Asians, who represent 0.8% of the state's population but 7% of the student population and 4% of full-time faculty, represent one of the few marginalized groups who are overrepresented on campus (University of Mississippi 2017b).

But recruiting talented underrepresented students (and faculty) is half of the problem. The other key metric is seeing them through to graduation. On average, the six-year graduation rate for all UM students of color lags behind that of whites; the graduation rate for African Americans (45%) is a few ticks above the national average (42%) (Anon. 2017b, University of Mississippi 2017c). Enrollment and retention data are not available for religious and sexual minorities.

But if creating and maintaining a welcoming campus atmosphere is critical to meeting the University's recruitment and retention targets--and we believe it is--diary entries suggest that campus microaggressions may play a key role. For example, many out-of-state students--who comprise nearly half (44%) of the UM student body--were shocked when they discovered that some of the most noxious elements of the University's racial heritage had not died away. One white student from southern California felt blind-sided upon hearing an unexpected racial slur:

I was in the car with two white males and three white females, and we were driving to Sardis Lake. The two males began to discuss who was and who was not let into their fraternity. They said that they "don't let niggers in their brotherhood". When that word was spoken, I was completely shocked. I had never heard someone use that word in such an

easy tone. Growing up in southern California, I had rarely ever heard that word used to describe an African American citizen. I felt extremely sensitive and awkward the rest of the time I was with them. I did not know what to say or do at that time. I do remember telling them I have never heard someone use that term in such a normal way, and they told me that it is because I did not grow up in the south.

A white student from Kentucky felt so traumatized by a racial comment that she told her mother she had misgivings about enrolling at the University:

When I took EDHE, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. I'm from Lexington, Kentucky and I have heard the stereotype that every white person in the South is racist but I didn't believe it. On the first day of class, we were divided into groups and it was me, a white male and a black female. The white male and I were sitting on the opposite side of the room so before black female came over he looked at me and said, "if she wants to be in my group then she needs to pick my cotton first." I was so beyond disgusted. Lexington isn't a place where race is a big deal and I didn't think that people were still that racist. I didn't laugh or say anything back. The entire time we were working on our group project all I could think about was that comment. It bothered me so much that I called my mom to tell her that I wanted to come home.

Campus microaggressions were on some students' minds even before they matriculated at the University:

On November 8, 2012 some Ole Miss students got upset over the election results. It was stated that racial slurs were being shouted and they were seen burning an Obama election sign. I saw images on social media, news reports, and the local newspaper. I was not happy about this because I began to wonder would I be faced with these types of things when I began at the university.

Once they arrived on campus, one of the most visually striking aspects of the University that out-of-state students noticed is *de facto* segregation. Fifty-five years after integration, students had resegregated themselves, particularly along racial lines, in ways that permeated nearly every aspect of campus life.

With the eye of an ethnographer, one student recorded careful observations about seating patterns in the Student Union:

The African American students tend to sit at the tables in the front together. There is often a large group of people sitting there, while the white students tend to sit in the back and the booths. This may have just come about from people not being able to get in a booth so they got use to the front tables or that you can only have so many people in the booth and they have a bigger friend group and need more space. You also see it with the foreign exchange students in the rebel market, particularly the Asian students. Often when I go to the rebel market there will be a large group of Asian students at a table and a large group of white students at another. One does not see those tables mix as much. That could be from people just not knowing each other, or sharing a common language can make some people feel more at home and make them want to spend more time with the people who share their language. I just find it interesting how people tend to gravitate towards the people they look most closely like. This entry does not mean that every student follows this pattern by any means. Every student here at Ole Miss is different. Each of us have our own quirks and our own way of doing things. Also each person has a different set of friend groups and it is based on that individual person who is included in their friend group and often race does not matter in that equation.

Some educators may decry segregated dining on campus as an impediment to racial comity. Psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum (1997), author of *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria*, disagrees. She sees "all-black" tables as safe spaces for African American students, small microaggression-free islands where they can build a sense of identity and feel a part of a community rather than embattled in isolation. But even Tatum may not have imagined the degree of racial self-policing at UM. Here classroom seating can be segregated:

In one of my classes for social work, the layout of the classroom is split. There are seats on the left and right with the steps up to the seats in the middle. The first two weeks of this class, most of the black people sat on one side and the white people sat on the other. Nobody really noticed it until our teacher pointed it out.

Interracial dancing, unremarkable at most universities, draws notice at UM:

I was at the square this weekend with friends at a bar called the Library. We were all on the dance floor dancing and having a good time. I heard a group of white girls next to me talking about a black girl and white guy dancing together making fun of them because they "didn't match" which really ticked me off because who really cares? They are both having a good time and seemed to be into one another but those group of girls seemed to really be bothered by it.

Even a snowball fight can devolve into a racial skirmish:

Ole Miss had a snow day about two weeks ago. My friends and I went to the Grove to play in the snow and have a good time. There were a ton of students in the Grove and everyone was having a great time throwing snowballs at each other and playing in the snow. Soon, a huge snowball fight broke out and it was so much fun. But, after a while the huge snowball fight began to split into two distinct teams. These teams were white people vs. black people. There were at least thirty people on each team and the snowball fight grew as we kept playing. But, still there was a split between whites and blacks. The game started to turn very physical and intense. At times it was even malicious and violent. I got the feeling that certain participants from both the black and white teams felt anger towards the opposing team for no apparent reason other than their skin colors. This random anger resulted in people from both teams wanting to actually physically harm people on the other team. The friendly snowball fight that this snow day produced soon turned into a racially fueled battle. As this snowball fight was occurring I could not believe what was happening. I was in awe that this fun game had literally become a racially fueled fight. I felt sadness to see that this occurred where I attend school.

Students who breach the segregation code can be stigmatized. Here is an account of a white man who stopped talking with a white woman because she defied an antebellum-era custom against socializing with an African American man:

My friends and I were laying out by the pool and there were a group of guys hanging out behind us. One of the guys was talking about how he stopped talking to this girl that worked out at the same work out facility as he did, because she was attracted to black guys. He said "I get that she's from California, but I'm from the south, and we don't do that here". I was appalled by what he said and it made me very uncomfortable.

A second report describes how a white student was so taken aback when she saw her white friend walking with an African American classmate that she demanded an explanation:

I have become friends with this girl who sits next to me in one of my classes and she happens to be an african-american. When ever class would get out we both had our next class in the same direction so like any normal friends would do we walked to class together. I am a very observant person so when I'm walking to class or anywhere really I tend to people watch. I found that a lot of people would stare or look because I'm guessing they thought it was weird to see me walking with her and chatting like we were good friends just because of our skin color. One day I was sitting at lunch in the union with one of my friends asked about her. She asked if I was friends with her because she always saw us walking together and "was very confused".

In sum, policy changes such as removing the state flag or campus initiatives such as the Luckyday Success Program may help to distance the University from its past. These policies are designed to attract and sustain a diverse mix of students, faculty, and staff for the betterment of the University community. But we suspect that ongoing microaggressions stymie these efforts by creating an environment that threatens marginalized students and their allies, making them feel unwelcomed, unappreciated, and undesirable. Microaggressions may also promote a range of stress-related physical and mental disorders, and ultimately make students feel like second-class citizens at their own university. Thus, microaggressions also threaten the university's recruitment and retention of talented students, faculty, and staff of color. The consequences to the university, both financial and reputational, may be costly.

## CONCLUSION

In August 2017, a violent clash of protesters at the University of Virginia was vivid evidence that racial tensions there had reached fever pitch. Yet our Race Diary Project shows that racial and other tensions are a fixture of campus life at UM. To be sure, our data show evidence of interracial generosity and willingness of whites, males, heterosexuals, and other powerful groups to respect the rights of persons of color, females, members of religious and ethnic minorities, and the LGBTQ community. But they also reveal behaviors that undercut the UM "brand", a marketing concept that embodies tolerance, diversity, and multiculturalism. Instead, the diary entries show a campus where persons of color are routinely insulted, women are repeatedly denigrated, Muslims are feared, Jews are dismissed, and gays and lesbians are humiliated. Off campus, the atmosphere at Oxford's restaurants, bars, sidewalks, and streets is no less troubling. Microaggressions by students and some faculty and staff persist despite the University's efforts to encourage tolerance. Under the circumstances, we are not surprised that a racial tragedy like Charlottesville occurred on a college campus. The surprise is that Charlottesville didn't happen in Oxford.

There are no doubt many causes of an environment that leaves victims of microaggressions and their allies feeling troubled if not outright threatened. Our project was not designed to identify the root causes of such a toxic environment. However, the diary writers made explicit mention of parents and alumni who display outdated racial sensibilities during their visits to Oxford. It stands to reason that many students who are exposed for 18 years to traditional racial, ethnic, gender-related, and sexual fears and anxieties in the home will have internalized them once they arrive at UM. In the absence of vigorous educational programs and rigorously enforced prosocial policies by the University, microaggressions will undoubtedly continue as arriving students find support for these ideas among their peers, within Greek houses, in classrooms, and in other public or private spaces on or off campus where archaic notions about "other" groups thrive.

To appreciate the dangers of not addressing this issue, one need only remember that microaggressions echo UM's notorious legacy of intolerance. Every microaggression that a student talks about, phones home about, tweets about, blogs about, or writes a Facebook post about reminds the world of a legacy UM is trying hard to shed. In a competitive admissions environment in which an estimated two-thirds of all students use social media to investigate

potential schools, and three-quarters of them find social-media reports to be influential (Pratt, Dalfonso, & Rogers 2014), UM risks alienating prospective enrollees, particularly out-of-state students; potential victims of microaggressions (students of color, ethnic minorities, females, and LGBT students); and any students who feel wary about stepping onto a campus that feels out of step with 21st-century sensibilities.

Our collective failure as a campus community to address microaggressions threatens the emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being of vulnerable students, while simultaneously impeding progress toward the University's retention goals. Our reluctance to teach all incoming students how to respond to microaggressions exposes vulnerable students to situations where well-intentioned potential allies do not know how to help them. Our reticence to identify microaggressions and correct those who perpetrate them abdicates our role of educating offenders and helping them develop into mature, thoughtful adults.

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APPENDIX A  
SURVEY FOR STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

**Survey 1**

Welcome to ***Everyday Racial Experiences of College Students!*** We're glad you want to help make your campus a better place.

We're social scientists who are trying to raise awareness of discrimination at universities and find ways to create a more livable campus climate. We want to understand how race (and ethnicity) influences students' everyday lives.

We'd like you to keep a diary of race-related events that you see or hear about, regardless of whether they involve you personally. They can be troubling events or positive ones. They can happen on campus or off campus (e.g., at an apartment), as long as it involves university-owned property.

Tell us what happened and what you think about it. Your perspectives are valuable regardless of your political views. We want to hear from you whether you're white or black, Latino or Asian, Christian or Muslim or Jewish.

Starting on the next page you'll find some information about the project. After you **give your consent** at the end of this section, we'll ask you a few questions about you and your family. Once you submit this information online, you'll get an email saying **you're in** as a participant. Click on the link in the email and you can send us **your first diary entry** immediately. It's that simple.

Got a question? Email Dr. Kirk Johnson at [kirkjohnson55@gmail.com](mailto:kirkjohnson55@gmail.com).  
Thanks for your help!  
Sincerely,

Dr. John Green  
Dr. Kirk Johnson  
Dr. Willa Johnson  
Dr. James Thomas

Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology  
University of Mississippi

**Q2 First, we have to clear some legal stuff with you. This is where you consent to join the project.**

**Q3 Who can participate**

By law, you must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this project. Otherwise, any student at the University of Mississippi and selected other colleges and universities is welcome. We invite participants from all races and ethnic groups.

Q4

**Risks and Benefits**

Sometimes students can feel uncomfortable writing about race. Guilt, embarrassment, anger, shame--those are just a few emotions that our students can experience when we teach about race and ethnicity.

However, we encourage you to write freely and frankly. If you're troubled by something you've seen or heard, it can be cleansing to write it down. Students also tell us that it's refreshing to write about an important issue that's not often discussed in public.

With your permission, we may use excerpts from your diary in an academic research paper or presentation. That means people all over the world could learn from your experiences. It also means you can help administrators and faculty make your campus a better place.

**Q5 Costs and Payments**

The total time you devote to the project depends on how many events you write about, and how much you say about each one. If you submit one entry a week, you could spend several hours writing 3 or 4 single-spaced pages of material over the course of the semester.

We always encourage students to *write as much as possible*, because a detail that seems small to you may be valuable and important to us. There is no limit to the number or size of your diary entries.

If you participate as part of a class, you may receive extra credit at the discretion of your instructor.

## Q6 Confidentiality

Respect for privacy is very important to us. When you write your diary entries, please don't mention names or other information that could identify you or others. For example:

<i>Instead of this:</i>	<i>Write this:</i>
Tommy and Bill.....	my roommates
Professor Jones.....	my professor
SOC 101 class.....	my sociology class
Memphis.....	my hometown

Once you agree to participate, you will be asked for information about you and your family. This data will be stored in a secure database maintained by Qualtrics, an international data collection and analysis company. If we use your diary entry, we will mention your race/ethnicity, school, and class (e.g., "a white University of Mississippi freshman"). With your permission ONLY, we will also mention whether you are male, female, transgender, gay, etc.

All other personal data about you and your family remains strictly confidential. We may disclose aggregate information about large groups of students (e.g., the freshman class), but we will NEVER release your name nor any information that will reveal the identity of anyone who participates in the project.

### Q7 If You're Taking a Class

You don't have to join this project. If you decide not to participate, your instructor may offer you the opportunity to earn credit in some other way.

By law, whenever students are involved in a research project, special protections apply to make sure students don't feel coerced to participate. If you feel pressure from your instructor, please contact the UM Institutional Review Board (IRB) by phone (662 915 7482) or email ([irb@olemiss.edu](mailto:irb@olemiss.edu)). You will remain anonymous in any investigation.

### Q8 Your Right to Withdraw

If you join us but decide to withdraw before the end of the semester, simply notify Dr. Johnson ([kirkjohnson55@gmail.com](mailto:kirkjohnson55@gmail.com)). If you're due to receive extra credit, your instructor may decide to prorate the points you receive depending on how long you participated. You may also receive prorated points if we terminate your participation, which we reserve the right to do for any reason.

Withdrawing from the project, or declining to participate in the first place, will not affect your standing with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, or with the University of Mississippi (or your own institution if you're a student elsewhere), and it won't cause you to lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

### Q9 IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by the University of Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study fulfills the human research subject protections obligations required by state and federal law and University policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of this research project, please contact the IRB at 662 915 7482

### Q10 Statement of Consent

I have read the above information.  
 I am 18 years of age or older.  
 I have had a chance to ask questions and receive answers.  
 I understand that my diary may appear in an academic research paper or presentation, and I can keep confidential all information I provide except my race/ethnicity, school, and class.

*NOTE: Do NOT give your name or email address*

*if*

*this stamp has expired.*

**I understand that by giving my name and email address below, I am consenting to participate in this project.**

First name (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Last name (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Name you like to be called (in case we need to contact you) (5)

---

Your email address (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Page Break

**Q11 Now we need to construct a profile for you. These are one-time questions that you won't see again.**

**First some questions about you and your family. You'll get to sign off on how we'll refer to you if we use your diary. All other information stays confidential.**

**Q12 Where do you attend school?**

University of Mississippi (1)

other (*specify*) (2) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q13 What year are you?**

freshman (1)

sophomore (2)

junior (3)

senior (4)

graduate student (5)

other (*specify*) (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q14 What's your race/ethnicity?**

white/European-American (1)

black/African-American (2)

Asian/Pacific Islander (3)

Native American (4)

other (*specify*) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q15 Are you Hispanic/Latino?**

Yes (1)

No (2)

End

**Block 1**

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you Hispanic/Latino? = No*

**Q16 Based on your answers to the previous questions, here's how we will refer to you if we use your diary:**

*"a  $\{e://Field/ethnicity\}$   $\{Q12/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoicesTextEntry\}$   $\{Q13/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoicesTextEntry\}$ "*

**Are you OK with this?**

Yes (1)

No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you Hispanic/Latino? = Yes*

**Q17 Based on your answers to the previous questions, here's how we will refer to you if we use your diary:**

*"a Hispanic  $\{Q12/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoicesTextEntry\}$   $\{Q13/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoicesTextEntry\}$ "*

**Are you OK with this?**

Yes (1)

No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Based on your answers to the previous questions, here's how we will refer to you if we use your d... = No*

*Or Based on your answers to the previous questions, here's how we will refer to you if we use your d... = No*

**Q18 If you don't like our computer-generated description, how should we refer to you?**

---

**Q19 Your answers on this page may be used to compile statistics for large groups of students (e.g., the freshman class). Information we release will *never* be linked to you personally.**

**Q20 When were you born?**

Month (1)

Year (2)

- January
- January ~ 1997
- January ~ 1996
- January ~ 1995
- January ~ 1994
- January ~ 1993
- January ~ 1992
- January ~ 1991
- January ~ 1990
- January ~ 1989
- January ~ 1988
- January ~ 1987
- January ~ 1986
- January ~ 1985
- January ~ 1984
- January ~ 1983
- January ~ 1982
- January ~ 1981
- January ~ 1980
- January ~ 1979

- February
- February ~ 1997
- February ~ 1996
- February ~ 1995
- February ~ 1994
- February ~ 1993
- February ~ 1992
- February ~ 1991
- February ~ 1990
- February ~ 1989
- February ~ 1988
- February ~ 1987

February ~ 1986

February ~ 1985

February ~ 1984

February ~ 1983

February ~ 1982

February ~ 1981

February ~ 1980

February ~ 1979

March  March  
~ 1997

March ~ 1996

March ~ 1995

March ~ 1994

March ~ 1993

March ~ 1992

March ~ 1991

March ~ 1990

March ~ 1989

March ~ 1988

March ~ 1987

March ~ 1986

March ~ 1985

March ~ 1984

March ~ 1983

- March ~ 1982
- March ~ 1981
- March ~ 1980
- March ~ 1979
- April
- April ~ 1997
- April ~ 1996
- April ~ 1995
- April ~ 1994
- April ~ 1993
- April ~ 1992
- April ~ 1991
- April ~ 1990
- April ~ 1989

April ~ 1988

April ~ 1987

April ~ 1986

April ~ 1985

April ~ 1984

April ~ 1983

April ~ 1982

April ~ 1981

April ~ 1980

April ~ 1979

May

May ~ 1997

May ~ 1996

May ~ 1995

May ~ 1994

May ~ 1993

May ~ 1992

May ~ 1991

May ~ 1990

May ~ 1989

May ~ 1988

May ~ 1987

May ~ 1986

May ~ 1985

May ~ 1984

May ~ 1983

May ~ 1982

May ~ 1981

May ~ 1980

May ~ 1979

June

June ~ 1997

June ~ 1996

June ~ 1995

June ~ 1994

June ~ 1993

June ~ 1992

June ~ 1991

June ~ 1990

June ~ 1989

June ~ 1988

June ~ 1987

June ~ 1986

June ~ 1985

June ~ 1984

June ~ 1983

June ~ 1982

June ~ 1981

June ~ 1980

June ~ 1979

July

July ~ 1997

July ~ 1996

July ~ 1995

July ~ 1994

July ~ 1993

July ~ 1992

July ~ 1991

July ~ 1990

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July ~ 1988

- July ~ 1987
- July ~ 1986
- July ~ 1985
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- July ~ 1981
- July ~ 1980
- July ~ 1979
- August
- August ~ 1997
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- August ~ 1979
- September
- September ~ 1997
- September ~ 1996
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September ~ 1987

September ~ 1986

September ~ 1985

September ~ 1984

September ~ 1983

September ~ 1982

September ~ 1981

September ~ 1980

September ~ 1979

October

October ~ 1997

October ~ 1996

October ~ 1995

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- November ~ 1997
- November ~ 1996
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- November ~ 1993
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November ~ 1991

November ~ 1990

November ~ 1989

November ~ 1988

November ~ 1987

November ~ 1986

November ~ 1985

November ~ 1984

November ~ 1983

November ~ 1982

November ~ 1981

November ~ 1980

November ~ 1979

December

December ~ 1997

- December ~ 1996
- December ~ 1995
- December ~ 1994
- December ~ 1993
- December ~ 1992
- December ~ 1991
- December ~ 1990
- December ~ 1989
- December ~ 1988
- December ~ 1987
- December ~ 1986
- December ~ 1985
- December ~ 1984
- December ~ 1983
- December ~ 1982
- December ~ 1981
- December ~ 1980
- December ~ 1979
- {241}
- ~

**Q21 How old are you?**

Years of age (1)

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36+

**Q22 With what group(s) do you identify?** (Click all that apply.)*asexual* means not attracted to males or females.*transsexual* means you identify as a person of the opposite sex.*transgendered* means you identify with one or more aspects of being a person of the opposite sex.*intersexual* means your body is biologically ambiguous

- male (1)
- female (2)
- heterosexual (8)
- homosexual (9)
- bisexual (10)
- asexual (5)
- transsexual (3)
- transgendered (6)
- intersexual (7)

**Q23 Where did you spend most of your formative years?**

- Rural area(s) (1)
- Suburbs (2)
- Urban area(s) (3)

**Q24 What's your hometown?**  
(Table Truncated to 63 Columns)

**Q25 What best describes your politics?**

- Extremely conservative (1)
- Conservative (2)
- Slightly conservative (3)
- Moderate (4)
- Slightly liberal/progressive (5)
- Liberal/progressive (6)
- Extremely liberal/progressive (7)
- I am NOT VERY interested in politics. (8)

**Q26 Which political party do you feel closest to?**

- Democratic (1)
- Republican (2)
- Independent (3)
- Other (*specify*) (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- NONE (5)

**Q27 For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential election?**

- Donald Trump (1)
- Hillary Clinton (2)
- Other (3)
- I didn't vote (4)

Display This Question:

If For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential election? = Donald Trump

Q28 **Why did you vote for Trump?** (Rank these campaign slogans by moving them to one box on the right.)

Important to me (you can reorder your choices)	NOT important to me (disregard the autonumbering)
_____ Taking back our country (13)	_____ Taking back our country (13)
_____ Making America great again (14)	_____ Making America great again (14)
_____ Building a wall (2)	_____ Building a wall (2)
_____ Repealing Obamacare (3)	_____ Repealing Obamacare (3)
_____ Bringing back jobs from overseas (4)	_____ Bringing back jobs from overseas (4)
_____ Defeating ISIS (6)	_____ Defeating ISIS (6)
_____ Restoring law and order (1)	_____ Restoring law and order (1)
_____ OTHER (<em>explain</em>) (12)	_____ OTHER (<em>explain</em>) (12)

Display This Question:

If For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential election? = Donald Trump

Q29 Which statements do you agree with? (Click all that apply.)

- I'm comfortable with Trump's values. (1)
- I'm NOT comfortable with Clinton's values. (2)
- I'm not ready for a female president. (3)

Display This Question:

If For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential election? = Hillary Clinton

Q30 **Why did you vote for Clinton?** (Rank these campaign slogans by moving them to one box on the right.)

Important to me (you can reorder your choices)	Not important to me (disregard autonumbering)
_____ Creating middle-class jobs (1)	_____ Creating middle-class jobs (1)
_____ Addressing climate change (2)	_____ Addressing climate change (2)
_____ Raising taxes on the wealthy (5)	_____ Raising taxes on the wealthy (5)
_____ Raising the minimum wage (7)	_____ Raising the minimum wage (7)
_____ Making college affordable (8)	_____ Making college affordable (8)
_____ Equal pay for equal work (10)	_____ Equal pay for equal work (10)

_____ Bringing criminal justice reform (4)	_____ Bringing criminal justice reform (4)
_____ OTHER (<em>explain</em>) (13)	_____ OTHER (<em>explain</em>) (13)

*Display This Question:*

*If For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential election? = Hillary Clinton*

Q31 Which statements do you agree with? *(Click as many as apply.)*

- I'm comfortable with Clinton's values. (1)
- I'm NOT comfortable with Trump's values. (2)
- I'm ready for a female president. (3)

Q32 How would you describe the books you own?

- They focus on a few topics. (1)
- They cover many topics. (2)

Q33 What kinds of decorations are on your walls? *(Only your possessions. If you share a living space with other people, their stuff doesn't count.)*

- Typical for someone my age (1)
- Unusual for someone my age (2)

Q34 How many genres (e.g., country, jazz, classical, rap, etc.) does *most* of the music you listen to fall into?

- One or two genres (1)
- Three or more genres (2)

Q35 When you travel to a new place, what are you more likely to enjoy?

- Familiar foods (1)
- Local cuisine (2)

**Q36 What is your religious preference, if any?** *(If Protestant, see individual denominations.)*

- Adventist (20)
- African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) (21)
- Anglican (22)
- Baptist (23)
- Buddhist (2)
- Calvinist (24)
- Church of God in Christ (25)
- Congregational (26)
- Hindu (4)
- Jehovah's Witness (5)
- Jewish (6)
- Methodist (27)
- Mormon (7)
- Muslim (8)
- Orthodox (Greek, Russian, etc.) (9)
- Pagan/Wiccan (11)
- Pentacostal (28)
- Presbyterian (29)
- Quaker (13)
- Roman Catholic (14)
- United Church of Christ (30)
- OTHER (31)
- NO PREFERENCE (17)

NOT APPLICABLE (33)

**Q37 What is your mother's highest level of education?**

- Some elementary or high school, no high school diploma (1)
- High school diploma (2)
- Some college, no degree (3)
- Trade/technical/vocational training (4)
- Associate's degree (A.A.) (5)
- Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., B.F.A., etc.) (6)
- Master's degree (M.A., M.S., M.S.W., M.F.A., etc.) (7)
- Professional degree (M.D., J.D., M.B.A., etc.) (8)
- Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) (9)

**Q38 What is your father's highest level of education?**

- Some elementary or high school, no high school diploma (1)
- High school diploma (2)
- Some college, no degree (3)
- Trade/technical/vocational training (4)
- Associate's degree (A.A.) (5)
- Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., B.F.A., etc.) (6)
- Master's degree (M.A., M.S., M.S.W., M.F.A., etc.) (7)
- Professional degree (M.D., J.D., M.B.A., etc.) (8)
- Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) (9)

**Q39 Please estimate your family's annual income:**

- Less than \$20,000 (1)
- \$20,000 to 40,000 (2)
- \$40,001 to 60,000 (3)
- \$60,001 to 80,000 (4)
- \$80,001 to 100,000 (5)
- \$100,001 to 200,000 (6)
- Over \$200,000 (7)

**Q40 How did you first learn about *Everyday Racial Experiences of College Students*?**

Someone told me about it. (1)

I read about it. (2)

*Skip To: Q46 If Q40 = I read about it. (2)*

*Display This Question:*

*If How did you first learn about *Everyday Racial Experiences of College Students*? = Someone told me about it.*

**Q41 If you heard about our project from your instructor, what's her or his name? (e.g, Mr. Dewey Knight)**

---

*Display This Question:*

*If If you heard about our project from your instructor, what's her or his name? (e.g, Mr. Dewey Knight) Is Not Empty*

**Q42 What course does the instructor teach? (Give course number AND section number: e.g., EDHE 105, section 4)**

---

*Display This Question:*

*If If you heard about our project from your instructor, what's her or his name? (e.g, Mr. Dewey Knight) Is Empty*

**Q43 If the person who told you about the project is NOT your instructor, who is (s)he?** (To choose more than one answer, click while holding Ctrl or Shift key.)

- Another instructor/professor (10)
- Classmate (5)
- Roommate/Dormmate/Housemate (2)
- Fraternity brother (4)
- Sorority sister (7)
- Friend (1)
- Girlfriend/boyfriend (3)
- University administrator (Chancellor, Dean, Department chair, etc.) (8)
- TV announcer (on campus or off) (20)
- Radio announcer (on campus or off) (21)
- OTHER (6)

**Q44 What is this person's race/ethnicity?**

- White/European-American (1)
- Black/African-American (2)
- Asian/Pacific Islander (3)
- Native American/American Indian (4)
- Other (5)

**Q45 What is this person's religious preference (if you know it)?**

- Adventist (1)
- African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) (2)
- Anglican (3)
- Baptist (4)
- Buddhist (5)
- Calvinist (6)
- Church of God in Christ (7)
- Congregational (8)
- Hindu (9)
- Jehovah's Witness (10)
- Jewish (11)
- Methodist (12)
- Mormon (13)
- Muslim (14)
- Orthodox (Greek, Russian, etc.) (15)
- Pagan/Wiccan (16)
- Pentacostal (17)
- Presbyterian (18)
- Quaker (19)
- Roman Catholic (20)
- United Church of Christ (U.C.C.) (21)
- OTHER (22)
- I DON'T KNOW (25)

NO PREFERENCE (23)

NOT APPLICABLE (24) \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*

*If How did you first learn about Everyday Racial Experiences of College Students? = I read about it.*

**Q46 Where did you read about the project?**

- Campus newspaper (1)
- University website (2)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, etc.) (3)
- Email (4)
- Handout or flier (6)
- Other (*specify*) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block

**Block 2**

**Q47 *You're done!*** Click the arrow to submit your information.

End of Block

APPENDIX B  
SURVEY FOR TUTORIAL AND DIARY ENTRIES

**Survey 2**

Q31

***WELCOME to the diary portion of Everyday Racial Experiences of College Students.***

Come to this webpage any time you want to submit a diary entry. We'll remind you about the project from time to time, but don't wait until you get an email from us. If you see or hear something at school that relates to people being included or excluded on the basis of race, nationality, religion, or similar markers--regardless of whether the incident is personally discouraging or encouraging to you--let us hear from you any time day or night.

If you're joining the project as part of a class, you can keep submitting entries throughout the school year, even after your class is over.

Before you submit your first diary entry, take a few minutes to review the following tutorial that explains exactly what we're looking for. Don't worry about trying to remember every element of an ideal diary entry; we'll prompt you when the time comes.

In subsequent visits, you can bypass the tutorial if you want to.

Questions? Email Dr. Kirk Johnson at [kirkjohnson55@gmail.com](mailto:kirkjohnson55@gmail.com).

- On with the tutorial! (1)
- I'll skip the tutorial for now. (2)

End of Block

**Block 1**

Q24 ***Follow these tips:***

1. **Write as much as you can.** Longer entries are usually much more helpful than short ones.
2. **Write it down soon.** Memories can fade, and key information can be lost quickly.
3. **Avoid using names,** to protect people's privacy. Instead of giving your R.A.'s name, say "my R.A."
4. **Once you start, you can take your time.** If you stop writing to get a snack, the software won't time-out on you. So if you can't finish your entry in one sitting, don't worry.
5. **You won't lose what you've written.** Whatever you write is saved automatically every time you hit the forward arrow button. If you happen to close your browser before you finish your diary entry, the information you've entered will be stored for one week. You can return to finish your diary entry from any computer.

**Q25 When did this incident happen?**

- Today (1)
- Yesterday (2)
- 2 days ago (3)
- 3 days ago (4)
- 4 days ago (5)
- 5 days ago (6)
- About a week ago (7)
- More than a week ago (8)

**Q29 Where did it happen?**

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**Q32 Did the incident happen at a sorority or fraternity house?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**Q31 Was alcohol involved?**

- Yes (1)
- Probably (2)
- Probably not (3)
- No (4)
- I don't know (5)

**Q33 What is this incident about?** *(Click all that apply.)*

- Antisemitism (2)
- Homophobia (fear of or hostility toward nonheterosexuals) (3)
- Islamophobia (fear of or hostility toward Muslims) (4)
- Racism (1)
- Sexism (6)
- Other (*specify*) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Page Break

**Q27 Explain what happened and how you feel about it.**

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**Q28 Did you talk with anyone? What did they say?**

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**Q30 Any other thoughts or comments?**

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End of Block

**Block 2**

**Q8 KEEPING A RACE DIARY: YOUR 20-MINUTE TUTORIAL**

Here are five scenarios that illustrate how race and ethnicity can play out at college campuses. Some of the scenarios may seem straightforward, others more complicated. After each one, we're going to ask you a few questions that will prepare you to write excellent diary entries.

Read each scenario, then try to answer the questions honestly.

Q3

**SCENARIO #1: Hateful acts**

*This morning when I was in my dorm room I heard a police radio outside our window. When I looked out into the parking lot, there were maybe 15 students there, both white and black. They were standing around a car belonging to an African-American student. Everybody looked stunned, like they were in a state of shock. Friends were hugging the student, who was trying not to cry. When I went out to find out what was wrong, I saw that somebody had spray-painted the car with a really bad racial slur and then smashed the windshield into a thousand pieces. I heard one student say she thought she had seen someone run into the woods next to our dorm after she heard the sound of breaking glass. When one of the guys (a white football player) heard that, he picked up a rock and threw it as hard as he could into the woods, screaming out "You frigging coward!" He said other things I won't repeat here, but from the look on people's faces I think he spoke for everyone. I don't know the student whose car was vandalized all that well, but I felt really bad for them. I mean, what a thing to wake up to.*

**What do you think of this situation?**

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**Q9 Do you know anyone who's witnessed racial or ethnic violence?**

Yes. (1)

No. (2)

Q10 When you see racial or ethnic violence first-hand, it feels unforgettable. But to explain what happened to someone who wasn't there, **the key element is detail**. In this diary entry, notice how the writer pays attention to detail. Instead of simply saying "Someone messed up a black student's car" the student describes the physical scene (*15 students, both black white, standing around a car*). The writer also describes students' reactions (the victim was *trying not to cry*; onlookers looked *stunned, in a state of shock*; the football player *screamed out "You frigging coward!"*). That's the kind of detail that makes for the best diary entry.

(Details should be relevant, of course. If you saw a student tell someone a "Jew joke," the fact that the speaker was laughing and the hearer looked mortified is a pretty important detail. But if you wrote down where they were walking or what they were wearing? Not so much.)

**Have you yourself ever witnessed intolerance, discrimination, or violence on campus?**

- Yes, I have. (1)
- No, I haven't. (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If When you see racial or ethnic violence first-hand, it feels unforgettable. But to explain what h... = Yes, I have.*

Q11 **Tell us what happened.** Include key details that might help explain what you witnessed to someone who wasn't there. (Your starting point for each diary entry will be explaining what happened.)

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Q12

**SCENARIO #2: Playing on stereotypes**

*Today in chemistry class our professor was asking lots of questions about the periodic table of elements. There was this Asian student sitting in the front row who kept raising his hand and really nailing the questions. After a few minutes of this, the guy sitting next to me turned to me and said under his breath, "Of course the Asian dude knows every answer!" I felt like rolling my eyes. I thought to myself, "Really? All Asian students are good in math and science? That's the oldest stereotype in the book!" I guess it had never occurred to Mr. Close-Minded that the student knows the periodic table because he studied really hard, not because he's Asian. As soon as class was over, I went straight to the computer lab so I could send you this entry. I think it helped to get my classmate out of my system!*

**What do you think of this situation?**

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**Q13 Has anyone you know had a memorable experience at school with someone who thinks in terms of stereotypes?**

- Sure. (1)
- Not that I know of. (2)

Q14 A good diary entry tells more than what happened. It also explains **how you feel about what happened**. Notice how this student describes what went on in her head when she heard her classmate's comment. (*I felt like rolling my eyes; I thought to myself...that's the oldest stereotype in the book!*) When you tell us how you feel, we're not judging; there's no right or wrong way to react. We just want to know your perspective on what you're describing.

Notice also: the student wrote her diary entry *immediately*. Short-term memory degrades dramatically over time, and especially once you fall asleep at night. So we always tell students to **write down what happened as soon as you can**, before your mind has a chance to lose key details.

**Have you ever encountered someone at school who thinks of people in terms of stereotypes?**

- I certainly have. (1)
- Not that I recall. (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If A good diary entry tells more than what happened. It also explains how you feel about what happe... = I certainly have.*

Q15 **How did you feel when you were with this person?** (In your diary entry, we'll ask you to tell us your reaction to what you're writing about.)

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Q2

**SCENARIO #3: Ball of confusion**

*My best friend's parents were visiting for a football game, and I happened to watch him introduce his mom and dad to a bunch of his friends. When he introduced one girl (I'll call her "Sarah") as "another friend of mine" his buddies glanced at each other nervously because Sarah is more than a friend: she's his girlfriend, and the parents don't approve of interracial dating at all. I like Sarah a lot and I obviously like my friend, but I hated to go along with the deception. After all, what if his parents started asking me questions about the relationship? I felt caught between a rock and a hard place. Should I keep the deception going in order to spare my friends' feelings? Or should I tell the parents the truth because I disagree with their racial views?*

**What do you think of this situation?**

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**Q4 Has anyone you know been confused about how to react to a racial situation at school?**

- Yes. (1)
- Not really. (2)

Q6 This diary entry is a good example of how race can cause confusion, and maybe even a moral dilemma. We all like to think we're well-intentioned people who just want to do the right thing. The problem is, it's not always easy to know what the right thing is! Whatever your feelings might be, **don't worry if you're still sorting things out**. Life is complicated; it's OK not to have all the answers.

**Have you yourself ever felt confused over how to respond to a racial situation at school?**

- Yes, I have. (1)
- Not really. (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If This diary entry is a good example of how race can cause confusion, and maybe even a moral dilemm... = Yes, I have.*

**Q7 What were you confused about?** (In your diary, it's OK to write about something even if you're not sure what to make of it.)

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**Q19 SCENARIO #4: Feeling defensive**

*I live down the hall from this student who's from Saudi Arabia. She dresses in traditional clothing and everyone can tell she's a Muslim. She usually doesn't talk much but today as I passed her in the hall she glared at me and said, "I HATE white people!" I was shocked! I mean, she hardly knows me! Someone told me later that her professor had said something in class that made her feel bad. He was talking about this trip he took to Washington, DC. He said that when he drove past the Pentagon, you couldn't tell where that jet had slammed into the building on 9/11. Then he turned to the Muslim girl and stared at her for a few seconds, as if she was personally responsible for highjacking the plane. As soon as I found out what happened I went to her room to say I was sorry the guy was such a jerk, but she wasn't hearing it. She said all white people are racist and I was just like all the others, then she told me to leave her room! I don't like being attacked for something I didn't do, and would never even THINK of doing. I mean, I've never done anything bad to her, so why should she come after me? I was so upset that I called my mom to talk about it. She said it's important to try to walk in the other person's shoes, etc. It was good to have someone to talk to, but I still felt kind of raw even after the phone call.*

**What do you think of this situation?**

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**Q20 Have you known anyone who felt unjustly accused of racism?**

- Sure I have. (1)
- No, not that I can remember. (2)

Q21 When someone accuses you of something you don't think you're guilty of, it's natural to feel defensive. But notice what this student does: she talks to the accuser and when that doesn't help matters much, she talks to her mom. We're want to know **whom people talk to** after a racial incident. (This student called her mother because she felt bad, but it can be any person for any reason.) And **what did that person say?** This student wrote down all we need to know.

**Have you ever been accused of racism?**

- Yes. (1)
- Not that I'm aware of. (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If When someone accuses you of something you don't think you're guilty of, it's natural to feel defe... = Yes.*

**Q18 If you talked to someone about it, who was it and what did they say?**

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Q22

**SCENARIO #5: Unexpected friendship**

*When my dad dropped me off at college, it felt like I was on Mars. Everything was alien--the food, the way people dress, even the way they talk. The strangest thing was being around so many white people. I'm from a rural part of the state, and I never had to interact with many white people until I came here. When I walked into my dorm for the first time and realized that my roommate was white, I thought I...was...going...to...die. I'm thinking, I don't hunt, I don't much care for football, and I hate country music! What could I possibly have in common with this dude? I was feeling really bad until I heard someone at Orientation say how important it is to not judge strangers until you get to know them. So I decided to give the guy a break by inviting him to walk with me to a store off campus, since neither of us have cars. The more he talked the more I realized that we actually have some things in common. He's never hunted a day in his life either, and he said he likes rap music more than country. So we talked about rap artists the whole way home! I never would have believed it, but he's actually turned out to be one my best friends at school.*

**What do you think of this situation?**

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**Q23 Has anyone ever told you about a positive racial experience they had on campus, maybe one they didn't expect?**

- Yes, I have. (1)
- Not really. (2)

Q24 We want you to **write about any racial experiences**, not just negative ones. Sometimes positive experiences show us how to improve the campus racial environment. For example, this writer might never have discovered what he has in common with his white friend if the two of them hadn't been roommates. That could suggest that there are advantages to having white students room with nonwhite students in freshman dorms.

**Have you had a memorable positive experience on campus with someone from a different racial or ethnic group?**

- Yes. (1)
- Not really. (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If We want you to write about any racial experiences, not just negative ones. Sometimes positive ex... = Yes.*

**Q22 Tell us what happened and how you felt about it.**

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End of Block

**Congrats**

Q23 **Congratulations!** You've completed the tutorial. Ready to submit your diary entry?

- Let's do it! (1)
- I'd rather take a second look at the tutorial. Let's review it once again. (2)

End of Block