Euro American Students as Solidarity Allies at Historically White Institutions:

Principled Support of the Interests of African Students

by

Wendy Lee Craig

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The Undersigned Faculty Committee Approves the

Dissertation of

Dr. Wendy Lee Craig

Euro American Students as Solidarity Allies at Historically White Institutions:

Principled Support of the Interests of African Students

[Signatures]

Frank Harris, III, Chair, Chair
Administration, Rehabilitation, and Postsecondary Education

[Signatures]

Andre Branch
School of Teacher Education

[Signatures]

Rey Monzon
Student Testing, Assessment, and Research

7/30/13

Approval Date
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by

Wendy Lee Craig
ABSTRACT

Despite 40 years of efforts to provide access and support to African students at Historically White Institutions, these students still must cope with racial microaggressions due to institutional Whiteness. The prevailing multinationalist perspective does not take into account the worldview of minoritized students and requires students to suppress or renounce their culture to achieve academic success, which is also defined within Whiteness. Only through student demands have changes been implemented for African students, such as ethnic studies or support programs. However, these programs were quickly co-opted to ensure that students could not organize for meaningful change.

This study proposes that Euro American students have a responsibility to support the interests of African students at HWIs in the form of transformational action. A new type of ally—the Solidarity Ally—addresses the problems found in current literature about racial and social justice allies, using the framework of the grass roots theory of African Internationalism.

A phenomenological approach was used to illuminate the lives of 11 Euro American student allies by exploring their definitions of allyhood, how they became allies, and the actions they took. Students from four colleges in the southwest region of the United States participated in semi-structured interviews. Four major themes emerged: (a) what it means to be an ally, (b) development as an ally, (c) the practice of being an ally, and (d) organizing as allies.

The findings from this study have implications for practitioners, as well as research implications for future inquiries on allies and social justice.
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As I am writing these Acknowledgments, it is one day after the verdict in which George Zimmerman walked free from the murder of Trayvon Martin. Every 28 hours, an African in the United States is murdered by a police officer or a vigilante acting on behalf of the State. And so I would like to thank my son, Xavier Qaadir McGregor, who introduced me to the theory of African Internationalism when he was just 14 years old and knew that something was not right in this world in which a young African such as he can be shot with impunity and in which a White mother of an African child such as I can only wonder when that 28th hour may hit her son.

I would also like to acknowledge Chairwoman Penny Hess of the African People’s Solidarity Movement, who nearly 3 years ago listened to me as I struggled to articulate my then fledgling idea for my dissertation topic. I had just become a member of the Uhuru Solidarity Movement and, as such, had only a rudimentary understanding of the theory of African Internationalism and how this theory had been put into practice so effectively. I remember Penny telling me decisively that change on a college campus would only come from a student movement. And so the idea was born, and from that evolved into this topic on Solidarity Allies.

Thank you to my chair, Dr. Frank Harris II, who never once discouraged me from my topic and who in fact championed me when hostilities or skepticism arose. Thank you also to my committee members, Dr. Andre Branch and Dr. Rey Monzon, for their insight and assistance.

I also give thanks to James, who got me through the last stretch when I felt like I could not possibly go any further.
This dissertation is dedicated to Chairman Omali Yeshitela, founder of the African People’s Socialist Party, and to every person in the Uhuru Movement who is fighting for African liberation, and the transformation of this world into one that is just for all humanity.

I am self-critical for not doing justice in this dissertation to the profound work that has been accomplished from the application of the theory of African Internationalism.

I can only go forward, as the Chairman says, with high revolutionary discipline and high revolutionary morale!
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

Euro American Students as Solidarity Allies

Since the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s, much has been written about the progress made in the access and retention of African students at Historically White Institutions (HWIs). The term “African” is used in this dissertation instead of “African American” to reinforce the need for an African national identity that conveys an ideological commitment to the perpetuation, advancement, and defense of a cultural and political entity and way of life as part of the solution for changing the educational experiences of African students at HWIs. Developing an African national identity involves the understanding that Africans as a group are treated as “less than” by the dominant group. This understanding then naturally leads to the conviction that Africans as a group must rule themselves and create their own destinies in order to control their own political, economic, and social institutions (Essien-Odom, 1995; Yeshitela, 2010).

Harvard University (2013) claims to be the oldest institution of learning in the United States. Interestingly, Harvard’s Charter of 1650 specified its commitment to the education of English and Indian youth (Harvard Library, 2013) but obviously did not reference any educational opportunities provided to those of African descent. The first African to receive a degree from an Historically White Institution was Alexander Twilight in 1823 (Middlebury College, n.d.), one of the few Blacks allowed to enter into American colleges during the 1800s and early 1900s. It was not until 1954 that the Brown v Board of Education case declared that schools must be desegregated (National Center for Public Policy Research, n.d.), paving the way for access to education at HWIs.
for African students. Efforts applied towards the desegregation of schools are relatively new given the history of the United States, and the past 59 years since Brown is a small window of time within which to change the legacy of exclusion of Africans in higher education. However, other countries have done more in less time (Griffiths & Williams, 2009).

Policy issues regarding racial climate tend to be elusive despite the attention that race is given at HWIs. This can be explained by an approach that assumes things will work themselves out, ambiguity about the role institutions of higher education play in terms of socialization, and the failure to implement policies addressing faculty attitudes and behavior (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998). African students at HWIs may feel oppressed, unwelcomed, and attacked on campus, because of the promotion of a colorblind campus climate and culture that systematically negates the experiences of students who are not White (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Haviland, 2008; Ortiz & Santos, 2010; Revilla, 2004; Solórzano & Yosso, 2000). This colorblind approach indicates that there is pervasive belief that the Civil Rights movement solved the problems of equality for Africans in this country, and that racism is not as prevalent an issue anymore. In fact, racism is now more covert and is masked by other explanations about why African students struggle to gain access to and graduate from institutions of higher education (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). This new colorblind racism continues to reflect Whiteness or White power as the dominant ideology in the United States (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Mills, 1997) and has an impact on solving the contradictions regarding the campus environment for Africans at HWIs.
Historically, White Institutions reinforce the prevailing ideology of White supremacy and White power systems even while purporting to embrace diversity and multiculturalism (Hurtado, 1992; B. J. Love, 1993). In fact, HWIs were developed by Whites to serve their interests and needs. Thus, by design, the values and goals of White students have been prioritized historically and require the forced assimilation of minoritized students (Gray Davies, Safarik, & Banning, 2003). Further, the majority of these institutions serves the goals of the middle class, which is often reflected in policies and practices that are damaging to historically low income students (B. J. Love, 1993), of which Africans make up a significant portion. According to the U.S. Census (2012), nearly 2.9 million Africans were enrolled in college in 2010 compared to about 15 million Euro Americans. Of those students, 46.8% of African students received Pell grants in comparison to 17.6% of Euro American students, which means that just about half of all African students enrolled in higher education were considered to be low income. Minoritized students receive more Pell grants than Euro American students because the average family adjusted gross income for low-income Caucasian students is $22,217, compared with $20,053 for low-income minoritized students (Kantrowitz, 2011).

Between 1995 and 2003, need-based grants increased only 47% in comparison to merit-based grants which more than tripled—an increase of 212% (Heller, 2008). Seventy-six percent of merit-based aid went to Euro American students, even though they represented only 62% of the student population (Kantrowitz, 2011). In fact, Kantrowitz (2011) stated that “to put minority students on an equal footing would require increasing annual private scholarship awards for African-American students by $83 million and Latino students by $197 million” (p. 4).
Another example of how Whiteness dominates the policies of HWIs is the costs for mandatory new student orientations, intent to enroll, and housing deposits that are required in order to enroll in a university, prior to receiving financial aid. Further, with the exception of ethnic studies courses, most college curriculum still reflects Whiteness as the dominant viewpoint.

Despite the literature on curriculum and other efforts to create a welcoming culture to diverse students, efforts tend to be fragmented, rely on the perseverance of individual instructors, or rest in the hands of student organizations, which do not always have the time, energy, and political knowledge to implement systematic change (Kellogg & Niskodé, 2008). Attempts at multiculturalism are exemplified by isolated courses in which there may be discussion of concepts of culture, ethnic identity, White privilege, and racism (Chaisson, 2004; Dozier, 2000; Haviland, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Sonn, 2008; Stark-Rose, Lokken, & Zarghami, 2009), but few systemic course offerings or integration of these concepts across the curriculum. Celebration of diversity also occurs through highlighting traditions, foods, and dress of African and other minoritized students, particularly during months designated to focus on a specific group’s history and achievement (Ayers, 1988; Cobham & Parker, 2007). This nod to diversity not only ignores racism’s historical roots in slavery, genocide, and colonialism, but does not address the systemic and severe conditions still faced by African people today in the United States (Alexander, 2010; Cobham & Parker, 2007; Hess, 2000; Yeshitela, 1997a, 2010). A focus on racism as the main problem reinforces the impression that simply learning about others’ cultures and traditions will eliminate injustice in our society. Further, not only are systemic racism and colonialism not recognized, they are typically
met with strong denial (B. J. Love, 1993). This is a concern because the enduring legacy of colonialism is apparent in our educational systems today as exemplified by the high dropout rates of African students in high school (Greene & Winters, 2005; Schott Foundation of Public Education, 2010) and the low matriculation rates in colleges and universities (Dunston, Richmond, & House, 1983; Harper, 2009a). It is also apparent in the disproportionate percentage of Africans tied to the prison system (Alexander, 2010; Hess, 2000; Mauer, 2008), thus resulting in a new phenomenon, the pipeline from preschool to prison (Children’s Defense Fund, 2007; Hess, 2000; Rashid, 2009).

Currently, Africans are nearly 50% of the total prison population despite being only 12.6% of the U.S. population (Alexander, 2010). More Africans are in prison today than were enslaved prior to the Civil War (Alexander, 2010). Sixty percent of African men born after 1964 who possess less than a high school diploma have a prison record (Safer Foundation, 2010). Moreover, nearly 10% of the total African population in the United States is tied to the prison system, a multi-billion dollar industry primarily profiting Euro Americans (Alexander, 2010) and perpetuating the legacy of slavery and colonialism in the United States.

Millions of Africans are unable to provide for their families because they are tied to a prison system that relies on the criminalization of African people and their enslaved labor to make billions of dollars for the mainstream White economy every year (Kirchoff, 2010). African people experience the highest poverty rate in the United States at 27.4% compared to 13% of White households, and 40% of African children live in poverty compared to 12.4% of White children (Tavernise, 2011). Further, in the current economic climate, over 45% of Africans from the ages of 18-24 are unemployed, and
when you count those who have given up on looking for jobs, the percentage is even higher (Bunch, 2011).

In terms of hate crimes, Africans are the target in 70% of reported incidents in the category of hate crime in which they were victims of an offender’s bias against a race (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2010). This is an increase from 1997-99 in which 6 out of 10 hate crimes were inflicted on Africans (U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, n.d.). A hate crime can be defined as “the violence of intolerance and bigotry, intended to hurt and intimidate someone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religious, sexual orientation, or disability” (U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, n.d., para. 3). Hate crimes can exacerbate conflict, as well as trigger wide-scale racial conflict and civic disturbances that cost in terms of police, fire, medical personnel, injury or loss of life, and property damage. As a result, hate crimes cause serious social and economic risks to a town or city. Nearly 12% of all hate crimes that are racially motivated occurred at schools or on college campuses (U.S. Department of Justice, FBI, 2010). Because an institution of higher education is oftentimes the size of a small city or town, the same risks and costs that occur in the wider community are prevalent on the college campus. The possibility of increased racial tension or escalating racial conflict means that it is in the best interest of HWIs to ensure that all students on campuses are supported, respected, and have their needs met.

Given the grim statistics, it would seem that a commitment to the education of African students has an impact on many aspects of life in the United States for everyone. Moreover, systematically excluding groups of people from opportunities of higher
education leads to narrowing the possibilities of innovation and discovery. For example, in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) research there is a push to diversify those fields because it increases the variety of perspectives, adding to the quality, innovation, and creativity of science and technology (Leggon & Pearson, 2007). Further, according to Dalton Conley, Dean for Social Sciences at New York University, who specializes in determinants of economic opportunity within and across generations, an inclusive society with equitable opportunities and realities creates a stable community in which everyone has a stake in the accumulation of assets and economic self-sufficiency (Public Broadcasting Service, 2003).

Interest convergence theory suggests that Euro Americans will not make attempts to create or support actions that would change conditions of African students unless Euro Americans can realize personal gains (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Harper, 2009b). Harper (2009b) defined areas in which there were clear educational benefits to individual faculty and to the collective for HWIs to engage in practices that impact African students positively. On an individual level, focus on the issues faced by African students provided insight into conditions on which faculty conducted research, such as poverty. It also could change perceptions and stereotypes of Africans, and African male students in particular, thereby correcting cultural misconceptions that prevent some faculty from being published in minority-based journals. Further, it enabled faculty to work more comfortably with those who are culturally and ethnically different from themselves (Harper, 2009b).

Research indicates that student peer groups are the principle method of socialization for Euro American students (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969). Nora and
Cabrera (1996) found that Euro American students’ persistence in college was both directly and indirectly affected by perceptions of discrimination and negative climates regarding racial and ethnic diversity. Gilliard (1996) also found that a poor racial environment had a negative effect on Euro American students and that their sense of belonging was positively affected by having friends who were not White.

At the institutional level, making a commitment to African students can have several effects. First, the institution can experience overall improvements in persistence and graduation rates. Second, companies who are seeking a diverse workforce will recruit more from that institution. Third, it can eliminate a reputation in the community as an alienating or hostile campus environment, which can result in an increase in applications from African students. Fourth, African and other diverse alumni may be more likely to contribute donations to the institution; and finally, it creates a more inclusive living and learning environments for all students (Harper, 2009b). Further, by making a commitment to African students, the poor and working class, first generation Euro American students benefit as changes in elitist policies translate into a more favorable climate for these students as well (Oldfield, 2007).

When one reflects on the contributions made by Africans throughout history in terms of mathematics, science, medicine, language, and culture (Ani, 1994; Browder, 1992; Hess, 2000), it seems questionable to systematically deny a group of people to whom so much of the world’s progress is owed. The price of this systematic elimination of segments of the world’s population from contributing to a knowledge base that has become increasingly homogenized and hegemonic results in a limited worldview that precludes all possibilities from being examined or discovered.
The seemingly invisible problems of alienation, exclusion, colonialism, and racism experienced by African and other minoritized students on campus need to become visible to the White community in higher education in order to disrupt the status quo (McClelland & Auster, 1990). Further, racial and ethnic diversity in higher education will continue to grow and, unless a structured response is put into place, there will continue to be racial tension and incidents on campus that deteriorate the quality of life for all students. Studies have shown that unless multicultural education and programming is put in place alongside increasing racial and ethnic diversity, the campus climate suffers (Chang, 2001; Hurtado et al., 1998).

As a result of this pervasiveness of Whiteness, many African students succumb to pressure to discard their cultural and ethnic identities. Further, they attribute characteristics of these identities to deficiencies within themselves rather than understanding the destructive power of a colorblind racist ideology (Martinez, 2009) and are unable to critically analyze the causes of their own oppression (Leonardo, 2004), including experiencing a colonial education (Kinshasa, 2009). This acceptance of negative stereotypes imposed by the dominant system actually supports the continuation of oppression (Fanon, 1969; Freire, 1970/2006). Students may choose to drop out rather than continue their studies due to the daily microaggressions and hostile racial climate they experience (Pierce, Carew, Pierce-Gonzalez, & Willis, 1978; Solórzano & Yosso, 2000; Sue et al., 2007). Ultimately, this phenomenon negatively affects retention, persistence, and graduation of African students at HWIs (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Fleming, 1984; Hurtado, 1992).
In addition to the complexities faced by African students, Euro American students in HWIs tend to be resistant to antiracism curriculum and activities which have been created to ameliorate the conditions faced by African students (Ancis et al., 2000; Chaisson, 2004; Dlamini, 2002; Kobayashi, 1999; Nast, 1999; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Sonn, 2008; Stark-Rose et al., 2009). In fact, Nast (1999) stated that teaching Euro American students about antiracism was the “kiss of death” (p. 105) and resulted in negative student evaluations. Euro American students as a whole reject these teachings and, in their resistance, project this resistance onto the instructors who teach them. This resistance can even occur in course offerings designed specifically to address concepts of antiracism in which one would expect Euro American students to understand that they would be encountering new and difficult ideas. Resistance can be displayed by silence (Dlamini, 2002), by Euro American students crying because they feel frustrated or are unwilling to accept White power (Dlamini, 2002; Leonardo, 2002), or walking out of a classroom (Dlamini, 2002). As a result, faculty working to address and reduce racism through their instruction can experience a negative impact on their career, tenure, and professional legitimacy (Boatright-Horowitz & Soeng, 2009).

Ultimately, discussions about multiculturalism and diversity practices disregard its roots in colonialism (P. Hess, personal communication, June 12, 2010) and often still define Whiteness as the norm to which others are compared, and encourage finding common ground rather than having a meaningful discussion of difference as a result of White domination. For example, Bruffee (2002) referenced oppressed communities in a statement that members of “identity-focused communities” tend to believe “if you’re not for us, you’re against us” (p. 15), and that these communities feel that no other
community is similar to their own. Yet, he failed to make the connection that White communities are “identity-focused” and this same belief is prevalent, if not rampant there. Thus, the Historically White Institution is an example of an identity-focused community that holds the “if you’re not for us, you’re against us” mentality about African students on its campuses, despite any mission statement to the contrary.

In essence, multiculturalism is an “add-on” rather than a correct revision of history; “ perspectives” from oppressed peoples are invited by Whiteness while holding them to an assimilationist standard. Yet, the problem with inviting perspectives is that it allows for the option of not embracing or agreeing with said perspectives. To define the experiences of oppressed peoples as perspectives continues the complicity with the dominant culture’s sanitization of, if not outright lies, about historical facts (Yeshitela, 2012). Further, continuing to define the problems faced by African students as a result of racism means that the historical legacy of colonialism is ignored, colonialism that finds its expression in racist ideology and practices (Yeshitela, 2010).

Even as HWIs seem to miss the mark in terms of creating significant change through policies and practices, there are those who argue against diversity practices at all. Campbell (2010) advocated strongly against creating places for minoritized students on campus and found the elimination of ethnic studies in Arizona, for example, as encouraging in the destruction of all efforts pertaining to the voice of those who are oppressed. In fact, Campbell stated:

Without the false stereotype of the racist, privileged, undeserving, and prejudiced White population, there would be no justification for the large expenditures of resources to create an entire bureaucracy to establish and oversee protections,
advantages, exclusive opportunities, training programs, targeted recruitment efforts, special services, and unique events for certain categories of people classified as something other than White. (pp. 500-501)

The National Association of Scholars, which has a membership of over 5,000 academics and others (Chang, 2001), states its mission on Charity Navigator (2011) as: “We uphold the principle of individual merit and oppose racial, gender, and other group preferences. And we regard the Western intellectual heritage as the indispensable foundation of American higher education” (para. 7). Similar organizations exist, such as FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights in Education), whose mission is “to defend and sustain individual rights at America’s colleges and universities” (FIRE, 2013, para. 1) and the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research which has a mission “to develop and disseminate new ideas that foster greater economic choice and individual responsibility” (Manhattan Institute, 2013, para. 1). Organizations such as NAS and FIRE arose out of a backlash to identity politics and have been instrumental in shifting racial discourse from its historical roots of slavery into a populist movement of family, traditional values, and individualism as exemplified by right wing conservative groups (Giroux, 1997).

As Freire (1970/2006) said, the educational process is not neutral; it either is used to support conformity and the status quo, or it becomes a practice of freedom in which teachers and students can participate in a liberatory education that brings about social change. In terms of pedagogy, Freire is best known for his criticism of what he called the “banking” concept of education in which the student is viewed as an empty account to be filled by the teacher. He noted that this mode of education transforms students into receiving objects and attempts to control thinking and action, resulting in students
adjusting to the existing world, and inhibiting their creative power. Cagan (1978) also shared this critical perspective on the role of education, stating that it is not neutral, and that it serves both cultural and political interests such as assimilation, domination, social control, or liberation. Giroux and McLaren (1986) stated that the trend of conservatives in attacking the educational and social reforms of the 1960s has resulted in a narrow labor market emphasis for education, and reduced focus on its citizenship function.

Ultimately, the reinforcement of values such as meritocracy and individualism as expressed by NAS and FIRE supports the reproduction of capitalism and continues to uphold the exploitation of those who are not intellectuals (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Kinshasa, 2009) and denies access and academic success for African students.

Much of the research about the experiences of African and other minoritized students focuses on how they adapt or adjust to the campus through finding or creating safe spaces or organizations in which they can rely on support from students like themselves and thus increase their chances of academic success (Ancis et al., 2000; Harper & Patton, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Tierney, 1999). In essence, the success of African students is an individual and isolated incident insomuch as it is a product of their ability to form community and remain resilient in the face of Whiteness. This fragmented reality begs for a systemic response.

**Statement of the Problem**

The attitudes of Euro American students at HWIs requires examination because Euro American students play an important role in the campus environment, given that they enjoy the benefit of White power and privilege and show resistance to attempts to dismantle it (Boatright-Horowitz & Soeng, 2009; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Nast, 1999;
Radloff & Evans, 2003). Euro American students are a factor in student leadership on
campus due in part to the White privilege and power they possess. Thus, Euro American
students have the ability to influence and inform policies, programs, and organizations on
campuses of HWIs in ways not readily available to African students. Associated Students
organizations alone can be multimillion dollar corporations, controlling funds for
activities, events, speakers, and supplemental instruction. For example, the operating
budget of one Associated Students organization at a large southern California public
institution is over $20 million, and funds 90 full-time and over 1,000 part-time positions.
Further, this organization collaborates with and influences student clubs and
organizations, student life and leadership, and Greek organizations (San Diego State
University, 2010). Other Associated Students organizations at similar California
universities operate the campus bookstore, restaurants, and other services on campus,
wielding influence and power in many areas (Associated Students University of
California Berkeley, 2012; Associated Students University of California Los Angeles,
2012). Therefore, the role of student government alone is significant and pervasive in
policy-making, disbursement of funds, and decision-making. These functions are
typically centered on Whiteness, due to the makeup of its members who are
predominantly Euro American.

Even the Greek system is typically divided into categories along the lines of
ethnicity and culture. At University of California Berkeley, the system is divided into
four categories: The Interfraternity Council (traditionally White fraternities), the
Panhellenic Council (traditionally White sororities), the Multi-Cultural Greek Council
(culturally based organizations—which reinforces the idea that White organizations have
no culture), and the National Panhellenic Council (historically Black fraternities and sororities). On the web page, two organizations are named with the White organizations first and the Black and Multicultural organization listed last (CalGreeks, University of California Berkeley, 2013). San Diego State University has a similar web page and layout, listing the same top two organizations (called “general” organizations) as those at UC Berkeley, with the historically Black and culture-based organizations—the National Panhellenic Council and the United Sorority and Fraternity Council listed last (San Diego State University, n.d.).

Thus, both the degree to which Euro American students understand the impact of White power and its associated privileges, and the extent of oppression experienced by students who are minoritized play an important role in changing the experiences of African students, as depicted in Figure 1. In particular, this impact could be most significant in the area of retention and graduation, in which the success of African students at HWIs continues to be a problem (Cabrera, Nora, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Hagedorn, 1999; Davis, Dias-Bowie, Greenberg, Klukken, & Pollio, 2004; Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson, & Mugenda, 2000; Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000). Benefits are not reaped by African students alone; Bowman (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of college diversity experiences and cognitive development and stated: “Interactions with racial diversity are more strongly linked with cognitive growth than are interactions with nonracial diversity, which suggests the particular educational importance of fostering a racially diverse student body” (p. 22). Based on their experiences, many African students superficially understand how they are oppressed by Euro Americans. However, they have
neither a full understanding of the force and impact of White power nor a critical analysis of their own oppression (Bondi, 2012; Giroux, 2010; Leonardo, 2000; Martinez, 2009). In essence, their perceptions are formulated void of a critical pedagogy that allows students to develop consciousness of freedom, recognize White power, and connect knowledge to their own power and ability to take action (Giroux, 2010). If college campuses refuse to provide systematic practices in which not only are the experiences of African students valued, but the impact of White power is acknowledged, then change is likely to occur only through a student-driven movement. This type of movement could be similar to those movements in the 1960s for Black Studies and equitable access to higher education (Rooks, 2006; Williamson, 1999). However, Euro American student contact with African students would need to go beyond casual contact, requiring much deeper and more meaningful engagement and education for this type of student movement to occur (Reason & Evans, 2007). To this end, the development of Euro American students as
allies is important in supporting the interests of African students and building momentum for a student-driven movement that addresses the continued racial microaggressions, systemic practices of neocolonialism and forced assimilation experienced by African students at HWIs.

Significance of the Problem

Post-civil rights era racism has been called colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000), the new Jim Crow (Alexander, 2010), modern racism (McConahay, 1986), symbolic racism (Sears, 1988), and aversive racism (Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002). The commonalities among these definitions are that racism is more likely to be covert and disguised, more ambiguous than previous forms, and more difficult to acknowledge and identify.

Omali Yeshitela (2006, 2008, 2010) stated that racism is an expression of colonialism, and focusing on racism will not solve the problems of African students who experience racial microaggressions on college campuses. As will be discussed further, changing ideas that Euro Americans hold about African people will not change the conditions experienced by Africans. Thus, reducing racism will not translate into a campus climate or culture that values self-determination for African students and eliminates racial microaggressions. In fact, minimizing or denying racial microaggressions are a line of defense used by Euro Americans to avoid examining their own stereotypes, acts of discrimination, and biases they hold towards those who are minoritized (Sue, Capodilupo, Nadal, & Torino, 2008). Racial microaggressions have been defined in a number of ways (Pierce et al., 1978; Solórzano & Yosso, 2000; Sue et al., 2007). Sue et al. (2007) describe them as:
Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults towards people of color. Perpetuators of microaggressions are often unaware that they engage in such communications when they interact with racial/ethnic minorities. (p. 271)

As campuses become more diverse, it will be more important for Euro American students to not only become aware of their beliefs and practices in relationship to African students but to further their cognitive tendencies and skills as they relate to racial diversity (Bowman, 2010). In doing so, not only will Euro American students develop in their critical thinking skills, but will improve in their racial interactions with students (Bowman, 2010), thus helping to transform the campus environment for African and other minoritized students.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Euro American allies at Historically White Institutions and how they demonstrate their support of the interests of African students. Identifying and examining the experience of Euro American allies can assist in creating a student-driven movement in which Euro American students support the interests of African students on campus, concretely overturning the campus climate in which racial microaggressions and systemic practices of neocolonialism occur. Thus, an ally would be a member of the dominant culture who works to end the current system of oppression that allows them privilege and power based on a system of White power (adapted from Broido, 2000). Ultimately, an ally puts the interests of African students at
the forefront of campus activities and initiatives, thus supporting African student self-determination, and aiding in the transformation of the campus environment.

**Research Questions**

The research questions that will guide the design and execution of this study are as follows:

1. What attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression and social justice are held among Euro American students identified as allies at HWIs in the Southwestern region of the United States?

2. What sociocultural factors situated within HWIs challenge and reinforce prevailing attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice among Euro American students?

3. How do critical events, factors, experiences, or incidences relating to race influence Euro American students’ attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression and social justice?

**Definition of Terms**

*African*: Black or African American students are identified as African as used in the theory of African Internationalism to reinforce the need for a united national African identity as a means to overturn the effects of colonialism and imperialism.

**Colonialism:** Direct White rule that created the concept and ideology of race and the basis of European unity. An illegitimate relationship between colonizer and colonized that deprives a subject people of access to self-determination (Yeshitela, 2010).

**Euro American:** This term is used instead of “White” to emphasize a separation between systemic Whiteness, White power, and White supremacy from the agents who benefit from said systems.

**Imperialism:** The policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries.

**Minoritized:** “[The] use of the word minoritized brings attention to the actions imposed on people. This word acknowledges the processes that cannot be attributed to being a numerical minority alone” (Bondi, 2012, p. 297).

**National identity:** Ideological commitment to the perpetuation, advancement, and defense of a cultural, political, racial entity, and way of life. This use of the term is neither limited to, nor determined by, the boundaries of the “nation-state” as defined eurocentrically (adapted from Ani, 1994).

**Neocolonialism:** Nominal political independence that leaves the peoples and countries dominated economically by their former European and U.S. masters. A false independence under a new, more subtle and essentially economic colonialism (Yeshitela, 2010).

**Racism:** A social construct that holds “the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance” (Lorde, 1992, p. 496).

**White power:** An expression of capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism which rests on the notion of White supremacy.
White privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society that Euro Americans receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997, p. 97).

White supremacy: “The belief, and promotion of the belief, that White people are superior to people of other racial backgrounds. The term is sometimes used specifically to describe a political ideology that advocates the social, political, historical and/or industrial dominance by Whites” (Wildman, 1996, p. 87). An ideology of the inherent superiority of White Europeans over nonwhites that was developed initially to justify slavery of Africans and genocide of Indigenous people, and used today to continue the exploitation of every nonwhite immigrant group (Jensen, 2005).

Limitations of the Study

This study took place at four institutions located in the same city, thus the transferability of findings would be somewhat limited. However, transferability is not a primary aim of a phenomenological study, as I am interested in the meanings students attach to their experiences. A possible limitation related to data collection was that I am a Euro American woman interviewing African students which may have affected the level of rapport developed during the interview process. Another limitation was that I have been involved in issues of social justice for African students and communities for a long time. I work as an African Internationalist for African liberation and reparations. To mitigate this limitation, I relied on member checking and used the dissertation committee as a form of peer debriefing. Given my background and experience in this field, objectivity may have been compromised, but I strove to be as objective as possible.
Delimitations of the Study

The scope of this study was limited to allyhood as it relates to support of African students, rather than looking at minoritized students as a whole. Further, it was limited to the study of African student leaders and Euro American allies who were selected through snowball sampling. Student leaders were selected because they were involved in student government and organizations which results in having influence in terms of campus climate and activities. They were also selected for snowball sampling of Euro American students they considered to be allies. Euro American allies were selected due to the specificity of the research questions.

Although all oppressed groups experience problems of racial microaggressions, hostility, and issues of adjustment at HWIs (Sue et al., 2007), focusing on one population provided the depth of insight into allyhood with African students’ unique experiences that may not have been achieved by studying multiple groups. In addition, because the theoretical framework of African Internationalism is utilized in this paper, a focus on allyhood with African students was appropriate.
CHAPTER 2—REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of relevant research and literature regarding the responsibility of Euro American students in creating a campus climate at Historically White Institutions (HWIs) that can potentially overturn the alienation of African students. The literature reviewed here provides an overview of White power in the United States and highlights the role of White supremacy in the educational achievement of African students. I discuss the experiences of African students at HWIs and their academic success. I also reveal the contradictions inherent in the research related to the antiracism movement, racial justice allies, and the multicultural curriculum used to assist Euro American and other students in understanding the pervasiveness of White power and how to combat it. A discussion of the theoretical framework chosen for this study will also be discussed in this chapter, as well as the relevance of student movements in creating substantial change on the campuses of HWIs.

White Power in the United States

In order to understand the role of White supremacy in education, it is necessary to understand the effect of White power in our social system. In The Racial Contract, Charles Mills (1997) discussed the existence of an unacknowledged White supremacy political system by stating, “White supremacy is the unnamed political system that has made the modern world what it is today” (p. 1). Mills’ Racial Contract is a set of formal and informal agreements between members of one subset of human beings (Whites) that allows them to categorize the remaining subset of human beings as nonwhite, and as having an inferior moral status, resulting in a subordinate civil standing.
In his theory of African Internationalism, Yeshitela (2010) ties White power to parasitic capitalism, stating that Euro American people benefit from the subordination and colonization of Africans and Indigenous peoples and have created a world system based on the suffering and brutalization of these groups in order to maintain capitalism (Hess, 2000; Yeshitela, 2010). In the forward of the book *Overturning the Culture of Violence*, Hess (2000) stated that the “foundation of European wealth and civilization (the beginnings of capitalism) is the resources and genius of Africans and the colonized world” (p. vi). This concept builds on the works of Marx (1867/n.d.) in which capitalistic production rested on the enslavement of Africans because it presupposed the preexistence of a considerable mass of labor power and capital in the hands of producers of commodities. In other words, the basis of the wealth of the United States and Europe is derived from slavery and the theft of resources from Africa and could not have occurred except through this primitive accumulation of capital (Marx, 1867/n.d.).

Racialization of peoples and the emergence of Whites as a “race” arose as part of the extraordinary efforts taken to develop and preserve capitalism and its benefits. Thus, racism became the ideological underpinning to justify colonialism and the exploitation of land, labor, and resources (Yeshitela, 2005). Although the issues of colonialism, imperialism, and reparations are central to the struggles of the majority of the people on earth, they are absent from most White consciousness (Hess, 2000; Mills, 1997).

The racial state that has been created imposes a clear demarcation between Whites and nonwhites, and its purpose is to maintain and reproduce the racial order, ensuring privileges for Whites and maintaining the subordination of nonwhites (Mills, 1997). Any reform efforts, whether in education or elsewhere, require a shift from capitalism to a
democratic socialist system, since the very existence of capitalism relies on the continued exploitation of resources and labor from oppressed peoples. Because of the reliance on exploitation and colonialism of African and Indigenous people, capitalism cannot be maintained; and the current struggles worldwide against North American and European domination are indication of the inevitable revolution that must occur to topple the present White supremacist system (Yeshitela, 2010). A socialist system that incorporates the interest of African and Indigenous people first would put resources back in the hands of these groups and eliminate the racialization of people. Thus, race would no longer be a reason to subjugate the majority of the earth’s people for the continued existence of White domination (Yeshitela, 2010).

The concept of race prevails today, but all too often is seen as an isolated problem and not a symptom of policies of White domination and supremacy. For example, some scholars such as Bonilla-Silva (2006) discount theories of colonialism, treat race as a “stand-alone,” and separate it from the context of class. The danger in studying the effects of racism in isolation of its historical context is that one begins to focus only on educating people on cultural differences, appreciating diversity, and teaching tolerance, with the implication that racism will disappear once people are sufficiently educated. Yeshitela (2005) explains that the true problem is colonialism, as displayed by White racial domination in our political, educational, and social systems. It is a class struggle for economic, social, and political power, not about changing the ideas in Euro American people’s heads (Yeshitela, 2005).

Euro Americans can learn all about racism in a seminar or workshop and agree that it is destructive, but at the end of the seminar the material conditions of Africans and
other oppressed peoples remain the same. Euro Americans go home to their community, ensconced in White power and privilege, changing nothing about the conditions of most of the people in the world (Hess, 2000). Further, one sees the exploitation inflicted by antiracists, such as Tim Wise, who earns a living discussing ideas primarily co-opted from African speakers (see Osayande, 2010). Racism will not go away until another political system is put into place to replace parasitic capitalism, which relies on the continued exploitation and domination of oppressed groups (Yeshitela, 2005).

A system of White power has been established by European and Euro Americans with rules regulating behavior towards one another that do not apply to oppressed peoples. White power allows for differential privilege and the exploitation of the bodies, land, and resources of oppressed peoples, while denying them equal socioeconomic opportunities (Hess, 2000; Mills, 1997; Yeshitela, 2010). This contract is one of which nonwhites are not consenting members and are considered objects rather than subjects (Mills, 1997; Yeshitela, 2005). Ultimately then, race is not an afterthought or a deviation from “raceless” Western thought, but is central in shaping its ideals (Mills, 1997). When concepts such as colonialism are absent from the discussion about the social world, one’s learning and understanding is hindered and impedes the construction of solutions and practices, allowing contradictions to be maintained (Mills, 1997; Yeshitela, 2005). Therefore, understanding that the concept of “race” was created as a justification for colonialism and exploitation of nonwhite people is essential (Yeshitela, 2005).

Given the system of imperialism or White supremacy in the United States, it comes as no surprise that the inequities of this system are reflected in higher education (Cagan, 1978). African students live in an oppressor nation and attend institutions
designed to manage and ensure the reproduction of capitalism. In order to do so, the oppressor nation must train individuals to maintain the status quo (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Kinshasa, 2009). African students are taught, as are we all, that education is the pathway to the lifestyle of the petty bourgeoisie, or middle class. Through the lens of colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006), African students learn that hard work and individual effort are all that is needed to acquire education, jobs, and careers. Because success is defined as joining into the existing system, it is more difficult for African students to understand that this success relies on the exploitation of the poor and oppressed, and maintenance of the status quo (Jackman & Muha, 1984; Kinshasa, 2009). Paradoxically, while the system of White power stresses individual effort as key, it limits the ability of African students as a whole to succeed in terms of retention and graduation from institutions of higher education, no matter how vigorous their efforts.

The Role of White Supremacy in Education

This section examines the role of colonialism in education as it pertains to African and minoritized students. In addition, I discuss the need for a critical pedagogy of White racial supremacy in education that examines not only unearned White privilege, but the systems and processes in place that uphold and protect Whiteness in higher education.

Colonialism in Education

Given the systematic exploitation of those who are not White as part of the ideology of capitalism in the United States, African students are not so much victims of “racism,” as their educational experiences mirror their experiences in larger society in which African and the Indigenous in the United States are colonized populations (Arce,
1978; Coloma, 2009; Freeman, 1998; Hess, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). This can be defined as academic colonialism which is the selective imposition of intellectual premises, concepts, methods, institutions, and related organizations on a subordinate group and/or the unselective and uncritical adoption and imitation of the intellectual premises, concepts, methods, institutions, and organizations of other groups by selected members of a subordinate group, with the selection processes not being in control of the subordinate group. (Arce, 1978, p. 77)

Arce (1978) identified several patterns in which colonialism in education is reinforced that still prevail today. Although his focus was on Chicanos in academe, his observations are relevant to African students and staff in higher education as well. The first he called structural accommodation and realignment and stated that this pattern encompassed the majority of students and staff. These were the students enrolled in community colleges and vocational programs (and now, for-profit institutions) in which they had hopes for upward mobility due to education, but were likely not to benefit because this sector is the most abused and unprotected in terms of educational consumerism. This was exhibited by low transfer rates and low rates of completion for certificates and degrees (Hagedorn, Moon, Cypers, Maxwell, & Lester, 2006). The second pattern was called the conscious assimilation pattern, in which colonized students made attempts to assimilate into the dominant culture. The third pattern Arce identified was the nationalist exhortative pattern. This pattern was detrimental in that it relied on historical reconstruction and re-enactment activities. These focused more on highly recognized individuals rather than the everyday student, a trait of intellectual colonialism. In Arce’s example, resources
were allocated to identifying “the Chicano” (p. 94) in historical events or actions that had already been identified in North American history, rather than focusing on an independent historical perspective. The final negative pattern was called the *affirmative action pattern*, in which individuals of color were given specialized roles on college campuses as part of the overall affirmative action plan. Generally, these roles were located on the margin of the decision-making and action. They tended to protect the university’s interests over the interests of the Chicano or African population within the university, through the creation of a buffer or fall-person. Although individuals in this role could gain concessions from the university, these concessions tended to be compartmentalized and were not part of an overall strategy for the university to genuinely address the needs and voice of the marginalized community (Arce, 1978).

Arce (1978) also identified two patterns in which colonial relations in the HWI were disrupted or destroyed. These two patterns were called *independent transformational pattern* and *interdependent analytical pattern*, and only a small number of adherents employed them. The first pattern required a separate institution, an autonomous and fully staffed program or center, or a well-organized group of individuals committed to individual and collective transformation. This pattern relied on the right of self-determination, cultural purification, and necessary separation from traditional academe in order to function fully. As such, it was difficult to achieve unless there was an alternative institution that gave the freedom to employ meaningful content and methods of educational discourse.

Interdependent analytical pattern shared similar philosophical premises as the transformational approach. However, it also acknowledged that institutions housed both
Chicano (or African) staff and students who were committed to disrupting educational colonialism, as well as those who ignored it and may exploit their own people. Within this space, it was necessary not only to function collectively, but also to neutralize alien forces within academe. Thus, interdependence with progressive forces at the HWIs was required, and diverse viewpoints had to be invited in to achieve the analysis and development of values and standards that, through the development of individuals, improved the collective welfare of the group.

Other scholars agree that colonialism in education is a key problem for Africans and other students. Ladson-Billings (1998) posited that African students in the United States lagged so far behind their Euro American counterparts as a result of the colonial education they received, one not only lacking in material resources but that systematically provided continuous psycho-cultural assaults on colonized African students. Moreover, Euro American preservice K-12 teachers tended to view African students as victims linked to the status of slaves from the 1800s, which compromised their ability to view African students as competent and intellectual beings (King & Ladson-Billings, 1990).

The argument that colonialism in education in the United States exists is strengthened by the fact that the colonial education pedagogy for Filipinos under U.S. rule in the Philippines was based on the colonial education model for Africans in the South (Coloma, 2009).

Ogbu and Simons (1998) classified minorities partly based on whether they were voluntary immigrants or involuntary nonimmigrants, and discussed the resultant educational achievement based on this classification. In other words, educational achievement was influenced by colonialism, in that involuntary nonimmigrants were a
colonized population within the United States, receiving a differential education (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). The problems of African students in education must be framed within the broader context of the colonial conditions faced by African people. Otherwise, attempts to address systematic discrimination will fail (Allen, 1992).

Colonialism in education is also addressed in research by Traoré (2004) in which newly arrived Africans experienced frustration with their American schooling experience and the profound ignorance of their African counterparts born and raised in the United States. Traoré stated that “the colonial mentality that degraded Africa and Africans for hundreds of years thrives in their schools, neighborhoods and the media” (p. 348).

A Critical Pedagogy of White Racial Supremacy in Education

McIntosh (1990) delineated the unearned privileges one received by being Euro American on a daily basis, but did not discuss the structural processes that needed to change in order for these unearned benefits to be eliminated. White privilege is an expression of a White power system, and simply becoming aware of this privilege will not result in any meaningful change to the prevailing system. Euro American students may be aware of their differential treatment based on White privilege, but this awareness will not eliminate the differential treatment experienced by their oppressed counterparts. Awareness and understanding do not reduce or change the root structural causes. In the same way, research on ethnic identity development and the positive outcomes associated with having a strong ethnic identity (Ortiz & Santos, 2010) focused on learning about one’s own culture and ethnicity, but not necessarily within the historical context of White supremacy. Therefore, while one may learn about and appreciate other cultures and ethnicities, most practices within the campus setting do not address the basic inequities
between Euro Americans and oppressed groups based upon this historical context. As a
result, the current system of higher education continues to support the normalization of
White power. This results in qualitatively different educational experiences for students
who are not White in comparison to White students (Allen, 1992; Leonardo, 2002).

Leonardo (2002) suggested that a critical pedagogy in education would integrate
Whiteness studies with the application of globalization discourse. Whiteness studies
attempts to trace the economic and political history behind the creation of “Whiteness,” to
challenge the privileges given to Euro Americans and to analyze the cultural practices
that create and maintain Whiteness. Globalization refers to the sameness across the world
of consumption patterns, lifestyles, products, and cultural experiences under the guise of
continuation of White domination and hegemony while simultaneously fragmenting
issues regarding the rights of minoritized students, and the growing disparity between the
rich and poor, especially as it relates to the ability to pay for an education (Leonardo,
2002). When discussing White privilege or analyzing White racial hegemony, one must
also examine White supremacy and conduct a rigorous analysis of White racial
domination (Leonardo, 2004). Yet, in most cases at HWIs, issues of race, racism, White
privilege, and White supremacy get “glossed over” (Haviland, 2008, p. 40). A critical
pedagogy of White racial supremacy should focus not on unearned privilege, but on the
processes in place that ensure and secure domination, that is the policies, acts, and
decisions with which Euro Americans subjugate people of color (Leonardo, 2004;
Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Pérez Huber, 2010).

Despite the need for a critical pedagogy, imperialist ideology insists that
institutions of higher education are colorblind and neutral, and they function in the same
way for all students, regardless of color (Pérez Huber, 2010). Yet, given the prevailing system of White domination, this is not the reality. Efforts to reveal racism in educational institutions are a deliberate attempt to move towards empowerment and social justice (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). In other words, campuses must be serious about providing a systematic practice in which the experiences of African students are closely examined and strategies to ensure the importance of their experiences, culture and knowledge are used to transform the campus from one that tolerates differences to one that puts their needs at the forefront to ensure their success. Creating a campus environment that does this requires developing a cultural norm that rejects the negative stereotypes perpetrated onto African students (Museus, 2008a). Ultimately, administration at HWIs must be prepared to give up their colorblind stance and be willing to examine deeply these structural forces and acknowledge their impact on the academic success of African students.

The traditions of historically White campuses’ make rational the status of minoritized students through colorblind racism; racial inequality that is deemed an outcome of nonracial dynamics, such as market dynamics or cultural limitations (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). James Boyd White (2006) described the concept of empire of force as an ideology maintained by a dominating presence that sought to destroy, manipulate, and exploit those it dominated, and denying the humanity of those it oppressed. Far from being liberatory, education in the United States has a dominant ideology that provides an interpretation of reality that serves its own purposes, advances the benefits of individualism over group rights, and responds to the demands of minoritized students through symbolic responses, such as forming commissions or task forces, thus
simultaneously placating and appearing sincere (Jackman & Muha, 1984). Thus, it becomes extremely important to socialize minoritized students into a value system of higher education that maintains the status quo, promotes individualism as a way to strategically deemphasize the importance of group rights, and promotes the dominant ideology as desirable and necessary (Jackman & Muha, 1984; Kinshasa, 2009).

Leonardo (2002) discussed incidences in which Euro American students disrupted honest interrogations of White power by other students by crying when confronted or minimizing the experiences of the students who were minoritized. Leonardo stated that White comfort zones could tolerate only small incremental doses of racial confrontation and that Euro Americans had extraordinary difficulty in deconstructing the untruths of White racism and viewing the world from the eyes of the oppressed. The costs of losing the benefits of Whiteness (Whiteness as a social construct) were high because Euro Americans would be obligated to engage in an intense historical understanding of how they “became White” and acknowledge their unearned power and privilege they enjoyed as a result (Leonardo, 2002). Only when Euro Americans are able to give up this power in a meaningful way could inroads be made in changing the college experience for African students.

**Experiences of African Students at Historically White Institutions**

African students encounter a great deal of hostility as they navigate the campus environment. This section briefly examines their experiences in terms of modern racism and the racial microaggressions that African students are faced with as part of their educational experience.
Modern Racism

When examining the education of African students in college, it is necessary and critical to understand underlying structures and systems because they are responsible for shaping students’ perceptions and experiences (whether students realize it or not). Further, understanding structures and systems clarifies the extraordinary effort that must take place in order to transform college campuses from being racist, colorblind, and unwelcoming, to becoming places in which African students and those Euro Americans who choose to join them can resist White supremacy and the empire of force ideology (Martinez, 2009). This undertaking has serious challenges, as the experiences of African students are a microcosm of the experiences of oppressed people in the United States. Because these experiences have not changed remarkably, and in many ways have worsened in this post-Civil Rights era (Bonilla-Silva, 2006), one could surmise that transforming the campus is a daunting and difficult task. Giroux (2010) stated that minoritized students’ perceptions are formulated void of a critical pedagogy, that is an “educational movement, guided by passion and principle, to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action” (para. 1).

The policies and practices of college campuses are instrumental in defining the experiences of African students and influence their academic success (Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998). Most college campuses have a statement about its commitment to diversity within their mission and vision. In addition to an institutional commitment to inclusion, college campuses that have a more positive racial climate generally have students, faculty, and administration of color; a curriculum reflective of the experiences
of people of color; and support for the recruitment, retention, and graduation of African students (Solórzano & Yosso, 2000). Many campuses have developed workshops, presentations, and community service learning, or have infused course curriculum with multiculturalism and diversity. However, many students (primarily Euro American), are resistant to discussions about diversity and racism, or hold simplistic views about oppression and privilege (Chizhik & Chizhik, 2005; Stark-Rose et al., 2009; Vogelgesang, 2001). In any case, a direct relationship between racial stereotypes, campus climate, faculty relationships, and the retention of African students has been found (D. Love, 2008).

Campus climate can also be assessed by determining the level of commitment to activism and promoting racial understanding. Vogelgesang (2001) found that Euro Americans differed significantly from three nonwhite groups (African, Latino, and Asian), in expressing the least amount of commitment at statistically significant levels. Further, a diverse student body produced a negative effect on Euro American students in promoting racial understanding, confirming previous research that diversity in isolation does not promote greater racial understanding (Vogelgesang, 2001). A pretest questionnaire developed by the Higher Education Research Institute, and a follow-up College Student Survey were administered to 19,915 students to assess their commitment to racial understanding and social activism. African students had the strongest commitment to activism and promoting racial understanding, followed by Latinos, Asians, and Euro Americans. Euro American students had limited perceptions of racial-ethnic tension and higher levels of overall satisfaction with the university in comparison to African and Asian American students. Further, African and Asian
American students were more likely to experience pressure to conform than their Euro American counterparts in terms of racial and ethnic stereotypes about academic performance and behavior. They also tended to minimize overt racial or ethnic characteristics such as language or dress, in order to be accepted. Finally, Latina/os reported greater comfort with their own cultural background, as well as with those culturally different, and experienced the least amount of racism (Vogelgesang, 2001). This may have been because of the relative small numbers of Latina/os on the campus, or the lack of overt physical attributes discussed by Helms (1995).

Many African students struggle not only with isolation at HWIs, but with the pressure of assimilation and performing in the same ways that allowed them entry into the HWIs (Gray Davies et al., 2003; Martinez, 2009). Simultaneously, they struggle with the pressure to discard their own ethnic and cultural identities, and internalize their own oppression (Bondi, 2012). This pressure can result in guilt, shame, and trauma for students as they attempt to maintain their identity and still be successful at the college (Martinez, 2009). Students may adopt a colorblind ideology as an attempt to understand or explain the institutional racism they experience, rather than disrespect and resist the empire of force (Martinez, 2009) and the internalization of oppression (Bondi, 2012).

A colorblind ideology relies on four frames, as explained by Bonilla-Silva (2006). These four frames are (a) abstract liberalism, (b) naturalization of race, (c) cultural racism, and (d) minimization of racism. The frame of abstract liberalism involved using the concepts of political and economic liberalism to explain racial matters. The idea of equal opportunity and individual choice were examples of abstract liberalism. Many Euro Americans agreed that everyone should have equal rights, but opposed government
policies that would bring about such equality. For example, Euro Americans could ignore institutional practices behind segregation, as they claimed they had a right to live in segregated neighborhoods and have their children attend segregated schools.

The second frame, naturalization, allowed Euro Americans to explain racism as natural occurrences. An example is claiming that segregation is natural because people tend to gravitate toward people who are the same as them. This provided something akin to a biological explanation because the preference for primary associations with individuals from the same race could be seen in racially minoritized people as well. By attributing this to human nature instead of racism, Euro Americans could conclude that nothing can really be done to change it.

The third frame was called cultural racism and relied on culturally based arguments to explain the position of oppressed people in society. Previously, biological arguments were used to justify racism. When this tactic was refuted, cultural explanations such as bad values related to family and work ethic became commonplace. Cultural racism blames the victim and implies that Africans and oppressed people use racism as an excuse as a justification for handouts.

The final frame, minimization of racism, suggested that this society has moved past racial discrimination so that it is no longer a central factor in the opportunities available to oppressed people. This frame explained that racism operated as isolated, individual occurrences and no longer holds back oppressed people as a whole.

Using the frame of naturalization of race as an example, students can claim that segregation is natural because people from similar backgrounds tend to want to be together (Martinez, 2009). Students who are minoritized tend to use these four frames as
do their Euro American counterparts to explain their lack of success (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

**Racial Microaggressions and Racial Battle Fatigue**

Over half a million college students are targets of racial slurs and racist acts each year (Willoughby, 2003). In discussing the experiences of African students at HWIs, it is important to emphasize the research about the racial microaggressions these students experience. As previously discussed, racial microaggressions are intentional and unintentional racial slights and insults that are hostile, derogatory, and negative (Sue et al., 2007). These racial microaggressions take place daily and can be environmental, verbal, or behavioral actions; they are commonplace, and oftentimes perpetrators of these indignities are unaware that they interact in this way with racial and ethnic minorities.

Racial microaggressions experienced by African American students on college campuses can criminalize students or suggest incompetence (Sue et al., 2008). They can also convey that African students are second-class citizens, as well as underestimate personal ability, thus causing cultural/racial isolation (Torres, Driscoll, & Burrow, 2010). One example of a racial microaggression is the failure of Euro American teachers to acknowledge students who are not Euro American in the classroom, rendering them invisible (Solórzano & Yosso, 2000; Sue et al., 2007). Solórzano and Yosso (2000) detailed additional types of racial microaggressions experienced by students, including having their cultural history distorted in the curriculum, being excluded from study groups by peers, and assumptions that they did not earn the right to be at the institution.

The racial microaggressions African American students experience on historically White campuses have the negative effect of instilling self-doubt, frustration, and isolation, and
result in students dropping classes, changing majors, or leaving the university (Solórzano et al., 2000).

Using Critical Race Theory as a framework for a qualitative case study conducted by J. Singer (2005), African student athletes felt strongly that opportunities were denied to them as athletes. In focus groups and individual interviews, student athletes revealed that based on the color of their skin, this manifested in being denied positions that required decision-making skills and in being counseled inappropriately regarding their course selections.

In another study examining the experiences of 36 African males on six large university campuses, it was found that there was a strong presence of anti-Black male stereotyping and marginality that caused exaggerated hyper surveillance, control, and policing tactics. These experiences crossed three realms: (a) campus-academic, (b) campus-social, and (c) campus-public spaces. The result was that African male students experienced symptoms of racial battle fatigue which were psychological stress responses of shock, frustration, anxiety, fear, hopelessness, and anger (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007).

These racial microaggressions and the resulting racial battle fatigue provide insight into the barriers African students experience in trying to successfully stay in school and graduate, barriers that do not even enter into the radar of Euro American students.

**Success of African Students**

There is a certain contradiction in that success for African students is based on their ability to navigate a colonial education system that is designed to maintain the status
quo and perpetuate the will of the oppressor nation (Kinshasa, 2009). In this sense, is it really a success for African students to graduate and become a part of the very system that is oppressing them?

There has been much research conducted showing that the retention and graduation rates of Africans at HWIs continue to be problematic (Cabrera et al., 1999; Davis et al., 2004; Holmes et al., 2000; Lewis et al., 2000). African students at HWIs showed increasing dissatisfaction, lack of institutional support, and feelings of abandonment, leading to greater engagement in cultural and political activities that gave them the opportunity to protest (Fleming, 1984). In comparison to their counterparts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, African students entered HWIs with higher grade point averages (GPAs) but experienced both lower academic achievement and lower academic self-concept (Cokley, 2000).

On an individual level, a fair amount of research on the assessment and retention of African students has shown ineffective methodologies and limited successes (Sherman, Giles, & Williams-Green, 1994). One reason may be based on age (Awad, 2007) in that it is difficult to predict the outcomes for young people who do not fit into stable patterns (Sherman et al., 1994). Noncognitive variables such as positive self-concept, realistic self-appraisal, ability to understand and deal with racism, preference for long-range goals, demonstrated community service, successful leadership experience, availability of a strong support person, and knowledge acquired in a field were shown to predict retention (Awad, 2007; Schwartz & Washington, 2002; Sedlacek, 1987). Awad (2007) conducted a study in which he sought to determine if racial identity, academic self-concept, and self-esteem were predictors of GPA and verbal GRE (Graduate Record Examination)
scores. He found that while global positive self-concept was not a predictor of GPA, academic self-concept was, and theorized that racial identity was indirectly related to GPA because it may influence self-concept. Academic self-concept, however, was not a predictor for standardized test scores. A possible reason for this is that standardized tests are not part of the everyday environment of students, and the concepts may have seemed unrelated to this environment (Awad, 2007). This finding was supported by previous research conducted by Gerardi in 1990 (as cited in Awad, 2007) in which academic self-concept was not a significant predictor of scores from a freshman assessment test. It was supported as a predictor at HBCU, but not at HWIs in another study conducted (Nasim, Roberts, Harrell, & Young, 2005).

In terms of institutional factors, research showed four elements of a positive racial climate: a college mission statement that reinforced a commitment to diversity; the inclusion of students, faculty, and staff who were minoritized; curriculum that accurately reflected the experiences of those who were minoritized; and programs that supported the recruitment, retention, and graduation of students who were minoritized (Solórzano et al., 2000). Campuses that did not exhibit these four elements were associated with poor academic performance and high dropout rates for African students (Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991; Carroll, 1998; Hurtado et al., 1998).

Unfortunately, the ways in which college and universities work with students appear to be based on assumptions of colorblind racism. According to Reason and Evans (2007), there are several assumptions. First, African students were expected to adjust to the HWI and its inherent ideology of Whiteness. Second, African and other minoritized students and faculty were expected to be responsible for addressing nonwhite initiatives,
such as diversity training. Third, African students were assumed to have the same interests as Euro American students, and were criticized for joining cultural student organizations or for not participating in student leadership. Fourth, assumptions were made that all nonwhite students need academic support services, and that if they did not engage in these programs, they were lazy or unappreciative. Fifth, colleges and universities assumed that they provided equitable educational opportunities to all students, thus ignoring environmental challenges faced by African and other oppressed students. Finally, most universities assumed that the White dominant environment is functioning well and needed no adjustment.

Harper (2008) conducted a study about high achieving African males at six large public universities and recommended five strategies based on his findings. Out of 4,954 African males on the campuses, only 32 were identified by administrators to meet the criteria for the study, which was to identify high-achieving African males who had made the most of their college experience and maintained a 3.0 GPA. The first recommendation was to increase the number of African males who had access to the university, which would result in a higher representation within the campus population. Second, efforts to increase participation in student clubs, organizations, and educational activities were recommended. Supporting cultural clubs, both financially and otherwise, was the third recommendation. Fourth, campus personnel who worked with African males as advisors needed to ensure that the males who were benefiting invited younger peers into the activities so that they too could begin to develop social capital. Finally, Harper recommended that administrators should offer as much access as possible to opportunities for meaningful interaction between them and African males.
Other recommendations from the literature included early identification and monitoring of students who may have a higher risk of drop-out, freshman advising courses, mandatory tutoring for those identified as needing additional support, helpful staff and friendly student body, and targeting certain groups (such as African males) for specific retention plans to ensure their success (Glenn, 2003). Mentoring was also seen as an important retention tool (Guiffrida, 2005; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; LaVant, Anderson, & Tiggs, 1997; Nasim et al., 2005). Euro American faculty engagement and personal investment in African students’ success was also recommended, as it was found to be a factor in retention (Kobrak, 1992; D. Love, 2008). Transformational changes that replaced assumptions of majority and privilege with those of diverse cultures and relationships, and which governed all development and implementation of programs, services, and activities, were important to changing the campus climate (Rankin & Reason, 2005).

**Historical Changes Through Student Movements and Their Impact on Historically White Institutions**

In Obama’s postracial America, the idea of a colorblind nation stands in sharp contrast to the steady increase in neo-racism as displayed by the formation of the Tea Party, as well as the adoption of legislation in Arizona and other states that is targeted at immigrants, Indigenous peoples, and those with languages other than English. Yeshitela (2008, 2010) called this post-racial America “White power in black face,” and stated that it was the crisis of imperialism that led to the election of an African president. This is a way to distract the public from the growing revolutionary movements around the world that are standing up to the exploitation of a parasitic capitalist system. Given this current
political climate, it is all the more difficult to challenge colleges to put the needs of African students at the forefront, because the institutional promotion of a colorblind racism denies the needs of these students in the first place.

Historically, access to higher education and attempts to dismantle racism and inequity on college campuses has come about through student movements, not administrative efforts (Rogers, 2008; Rooks, 2006). This historical legacy is reflective of the gains made by the Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, although its effectiveness in implementing systematic change in terms of the rights of African students had been marginalized in the discussion of the Black Power Movement (Ogbar, 2004; Rogers, 2008). Yet, student activism has a lasting legacy as seen in the movements for educational access (Educational Opportunity Programs); courses that are inclusive of non-Eurocentric viewpoints (Ethnic Studies); and Black Power (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC).

In reviewing the literature regarding the history of Black/Afrikan Student Unions and other Black student organizations on campus from 1966 to 1975, efforts to transform the college culture into one that did not oppress African students came from students (L. Patton, 2006; Rogers, 2008; Rooks, 2006). African student organizations and centers born in the 1960s and 1970s were the mainstays institutionally for programs and services, not only for Africans, but all students on college campuses (L. Patton, 2006). The historic gains made during this period stand in stark contrast to the current literature on curriculum and other campus efforts to create a welcoming climate for diverse students, which tend to be individualistic efforts (Kellogg & Niskodé, 2008). Further, there is a problem of the original intent of student movements being co-opted and corrupted, as can
be seen in the current realities of Ethnic Studies programs, Educational Opportunity Programs, and other student-driven organizations that followed SNCC, as discussed in the next sections.

**Ethnic Studies**

Ethnic studies courses played a major role in providing a protected environment within the campus setting in which African students could not only learn and study, but which mitigated some of the negative experiences they faced on a daily basis (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Haviland, 2008; Ortiz & Santos, 2010; Revilla, 2004; Solórzano & Yosso, 2000).

The first Ethnic Studies programs and courses were established in 1969 as a result of student protests. The first and most sustained student strike occurred at San Francisco State University in the late 1960s (Okihiro, 2007; Rooks, 2006; Williamson, 1999). Students who were minoritized united together to create the Third World Liberation Front and demanded a relevant education that would engage the scholarship of faculty who looked like them. They fought for autonomy to set standards that included the power to hire and fire faculty and admit students into the university, as well as to transform educational standards to include racial justice and dismantle elitist standards. At San Francisco State University, fully 80% of the student body supported the strike for Black Studies programs, which was seen as a first step to a larger agenda encompassing educational, social, and economic equality (President’s Commission on Campus Unrest, 1970; Rooks, 2006). Similar protests took place at Cornell, Berkeley, and other HWIs throughout the country; by 1971 over 1,300 colleges had at least one Ethnic Studies
course, and there were over 500 Black Studies programs (Rooks, 2006; Sims, 1978, as cited by Williamson, 1999).

Even in the initial creation of Black and Ethnic Studies departments and courses in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a concerted effort to shape these programs by White philanthropic organizations, such as the Ford Foundation. Ostensibly, this was to desegregate and integrate college campuses and aid in solving the longstanding “Negro Problem” (Rooks, 2006, p. 8). However, the Ford Foundation had ties to the CIA and its predecessor, the OSS (Epstein, 1967; Roland, 2012), and was a likely participant in the counterinsurgency tactics of the CIA to put down the Black Power Movement. In particular, the Ford Foundation worked to ensure that the Black Nationalist voice was absent from curriculum developed (Rojas, 2007). Grant funding resulted in developing guidelines that focused on racial inclusion as a means to neutralize Black militancy. As a result, many programs funded in the first few years of the development of Black Studies were forced to focus on diversifying the White curriculum, promoting integration, and distancing themselves from the Black Power movement (Rooks, 2006). Even more telling, no university that attempted to set up an autonomous Black Studies department or program was awarded a grant (Rooks, 2006). In essence, students who had fought so hard for their voice to be heard were discouraged from revolution and made to define themselves within the context of the existing system. That system was centered on using Black Studies for the racial education of Euro American students rather than being used for reform or revolution (Rojas, 2007; Rooks, 2006). As a result of this seemingly benevolent funding, true institutional change did not occur at HWIs.
Even with the watering down of the original intent of Black Studies, there continues to be a number of changes and challenges to maintain these programs. In 1996, Columbia University created an American Studies department as a way to appease those who were demanding a department for Ethnic Studies (Okihiro, 2007). However, when one examined the curriculum shown on the department website, the predominant individuals studied were Euro American, and all of the full-time professors for the department were Euro American (Center for American Studies, Columbia University n.d.). Many Ethnic Studies departments on campuses struggled to maintain their individual identity. For example, UC Berkeley established a department of Ethnic Studies with separate disciplines of Comparative Ethnic Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicano/a Studies, and Native American Studies. African American Studies is a separate department (University of California Berkeley, Department of Ethnic Studies, n.d.). However, at one time it was proposed that the Ethnic Studies department merge with the American Studies department. To date, this has yet to happen (Walsh, 1998) because opponents question if they will lose the autonomy to teach and do what they believe is essential to their programs.

Many existing campus Ethnic Studies departments have taken a stance on the Arizona law SB 1070 and Arizona legislation to ban ethnic studies in K-12, despite the data showing that Latino/a students improved dramatically in test scores and grades once this curriculum was implemented (Romero, 2009). Ethnic Studies departments indicated the need to address this and other attacks on Ethnic Studies programs across the United States by academically resisting and challenging backlash assaults on gains that had been made for equity and inclusion (Leong, 2012; Maldonado-Torres, n.d.). One of the
original founders of the Ethnic Studies department at the University of California Berkeley stated in 1998 that he felt Ethnic Studies would be dead within the decade, unless steps were taken to ensure that it did not continue to be marginalized (Walsh, 1998). The current backlash against Ethnic Studies is an indicator that his fears may soon be realized.

**Educational Opportunity Programs**

Educational Opportunity Programs (EOPs) at the California State Universities (CSU) was enacted into law in 1969, again as the result of student protests. Chicano and African students from California State University Los Angeles raised questions about access and the use of university funds to provide access to special populations under the 2% rule (EOP, 2012). The 2% rule allowed CSU campuses to admit students who did not otherwise meet the regular CSU admissions criteria. This rule was being used for athletes as special admits, but not for other disadvantaged populations. These EOP programs spread across the nation, and in California community colleges the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) were also established (EOP, 2012). Educational Opportunity Programs provided access to and retention in higher education by providing preadmissions support and outreach, academic advising, tutoring, and transitional programs to students who were traditionally underserved in the CSU and other systems (EOP, 2012). Students in CSU EOP programs graduated at the same rates or higher than non-EOP students because their barriers were mitigated by the services provided through the EOP program. They also graduated at significantly higher levels than students from similar backgrounds, who did not participate in the program (EOP, 2012).
Educational Opportunity Programs across California have faced similar erosion of original intent as Black Studies and Ethnic Studies, in terms of admission of students and priority services. San Diego State University (SDSU, Office of Educational Opportunity Programs and Ethnic Affairs, n.d.), which currently has the largest EOP in the state of California, originally established its EOP as a single program, but shortly after it became established separated into Black EOP, Chicano EOP, and Asian EOP, because those involved in the program found it critical to address the individual needs of each ethnic group as a separate program. The program is now once again integrated, and with the anti-affirmative action legislation passed in California, focuses solely on low-income and first generation students (SDSU, Office of Educational Opportunity Programs and Ethnic Affairs, n.d.). Additionally, the university no longer allows special admissions for EOP students who are considered to be historically disadvantaged and do not meet the minimum CSU entrance requirements, but who have been deemed to have academic potential (S. Flor, personal communication, May 10, 2007). In 2007, SDSU was allocated 75 slots for disadvantaged special admits but only utilized 4. In 2009, it was allocated 50 slots but did not use any. In contrast for the same years, SDSU was allocated 75 general special admits and used 178 in 2007 and 54 in 2009. These are typically used for athletes and a few specially designated departments, such as Music (California State University, Office of the Chancellor, 2008, 2010).

Over the last decade, SDSU EOP has lost the ability to conduct its own admissions selection process and now must choose its program participants from those students who are officially admitted into the university, rather than providing the admissions office with its own list of selected students (B. Gil, personal communication,
September 18, 2009). Further, SDSU EOP students no longer receive priority registration and have lost a 50% discount for a costly New Student Orientation (R. Blaylock, personal communication, June 2, 2011). This means students who cannot afford to attend the orientation must register last for classes, thus tying socioeconomic status to registration priority. Finally, the university also eliminated the local admission guarantee for students in its service area, effectively reducing EOP incoming populations by several hundred students, as the show rate for local EOP students was between 90-100% (B. Gil, personal communication, September 18, 2009). Efforts to use data showing that EOP students graduate at virtually the same rates as other SDSU students despite historical and systemic barriers as an argument to allow EOP students in with lower test scores and GPAs were fruitless (B. Gil, personal communication, September 18, 2009). Instead, the college president stated that the most deserving students who have exhibited greater achievement should be chosen because efforts must focus on those most likely to graduate (S. Weber, personal communication, December 4, 2010). In essence, historical barriers of access were treated as individual issues of effort, an example of meritocracy as colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

**Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee**

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was founded in 1960 with an initial statement of purpose that affirmed a philosophical ideal of nonviolence as its foundation. It assumed that acceptance would dissipate prejudice and that a “redemptive community supersedes systems of gross social immorality” (Ogbar, 2004, p. 58). The SNCC was a group that emerged from the Student Leadership Conference at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina and coordinated various student protest
groups by meeting to formulate programs and plans of action (Forman, 1972; Wilkins, 2007). The group organized sit-ins, voter registration drives, and Freedom Rides, and conducted Freedom Schools that raised awareness among poor Africans regarding civil rights (Bond, 2000; Urban, 2002; Wilkins, 2007).

The students who formed SNCC as a permanent coordinating committee were intent upon their own self-determination with the freedom to make decisions and act on their own initiative regarding racial discrimination. They refused to become an arm of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference with Dr. Martin Luther King because of this intent (Forman, 1972; Urban, 2002). There were attempts to control and influence SNCC by other groups, including the AFL-CIO which provided funds for SNCC’s first conference (Forman, 1972). Early on, SNCC developed two factions: one that focused on direct action, the other on voter registration; however, this supposed conflict was rendered meaningless due to the amount of repression both groups faced while working in the South to organize poor Southern Blacks (Forman, 1972).

The SNCC was the first organization to demonstrate that independent Black politics could be successful by forming two political parties. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was the prototype for Black Power and challenged the all-White Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention of 1964 (Bond, 2000; Forman, 1972). While the MFDP failed in its challenge to the seating of the delegation and ultimately refused a compromise of two seats, it provided insight into the need for independent African politics. There was a general realization that true change may not take place through the electoral process. However, strategically raising issues important to the African community in the electoral process could disrupt that process.
and give consciousness to the African masses, thus furthering the goals of the African liberation movement (Yeshitela, 2011). The SNCC also created the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, which was a significant player in Alabama politics and also raised the political consciousness of that state’s African population (Bond, 2000; Jeffries, 2006). It was this organization that first used the symbol of the black panther (later adopted by the Black Panther Party), and created the slogan of Black Power (Jeffries, 2006).

Over time, SNCC moved towards a stance of self-defense in response to the extreme violence and murders experienced by the organization during its voter registration campaigns in the South (Forman, 1972; Ogbar, 2004). It also evolved as a group of Internationalists, as its members saw their struggle for self-determination in the United States as inseparable from the struggle against imperialism and colonialism in Africa (Bond, 2000; Forman, 1972; Wilkins, 2007). As such, SNCC was the first organization to come out against the war in Vietnam (Forman, 1972).

Ultimately, SNCC developed a theoretical framework that encompassed capitalism, colonialism, and class struggle. When SNCC’s Euro American members refused to focus on work in the White community, SNCC removed them from the organization and became African only, based on their evolving understanding of the struggle for self-determination (Jeffries, 2006; Wallach, 2008). Omali Yeshitela’s early work as a SNCC member was the genesis for his formulation of the theory of African Internationalism used in this study.

The SNCC (n.d.) was the first organization that opened the door for the feminist movement. In 1964, SNCC published a position paper that lay criticism to the organization’s own shortfalls in terms of subjugating the women within the organization.
to positions of lesser importance, despite their skills and qualifications. In addition, the paper contained a discussion about how the oppression of women by men was similar to the oppression of Africans by Euro Americans. The SNCC proceeded to become an organization in which women held prominent positions of power (SNCC, 1964, n.d.). The Third World Women’s Alliance, formed in 1968, emerged out of SNCC, focusing on sexism, imperialism, and racism (Thompson, 2002). In general, the Black Power movement paved the way not only for women’s rights, but gay rights, as these movements grew out of using the strategies of the Black Power movement to raise awareness about issues both groups faced (Thompson, 2002).

These three examples of the impact of student movements on creating significant change either at HWIs or in the larger U.S. society provide insight into how real change has occurred historically, and how it may need to occur at present to make any significant changes in the campus climate experienced by African students.

**Impact of Student Government and Student Cultural Organizations**

Due to the pervasiveness of Whiteness still prevalent at HWIs, African students need the support of cultural and ethnic student organizations on campus, as well as areas for academic support, tutoring, advising, counseling, and mentoring. Therefore, it is important that campuses provide support and guidance to student organizations so that they can be maintained (Kellogg & Niskodè, 2008). Students also need curriculum that addresses racial identity, race relations, and Whiteness in order to have discussion and dialogue about their experiences.

As African students increased in numbers at HWIs in the 1960s, they faced isolation, alienation, and hostility among their White peers and faculty (Williamson,
In response to this, African students became active in developing three strategies to combat the psychological and physical stressors they faced. These three strategies included Black Student Unions (BSU), Black Studies departments as previously discussed, and their own campus facilities (Williamson, 1999). The Black Power movement was integral to the development of these strategies. In terms of Black Student Unions, the goal primarily was to provide a legitimate base of power for Black students in order to bring change to the university and promote solidarity among African students. Ultimately these organizations created a collective for African student values, leadership, and action in a safe space on campus (Williamson, 1999).

Separate campus facilities were developed by African students as a way to appreciate each other and their own culture. The African centers or houses were spaces in which African students could escape from the negativity of the campus, as well as cultural centers at which workshops, presentations, and lectures took place emphasizing African culture and accomplishments (Williamson, 1999). Many centers also housed Black newspapers and magazines, which provided an independent viewpoint to the traditional campus publications that were deemed as racist and were controlled by Euro American students (Williamsons, 1999). Throughout HWIs, the collective of African students also aimed to uplift every African student on the campus and ensure that the freshmen who entered the university would successfully graduate. Further, students were measured by their peers based on their participation in action that questioned and disrupted the status quo of the university (Williamsons, 1999). Thus, academic retention and social activism were tied together (Williamson, 1999). These organizations and
intentions still prevail at many HWIs, although the level of activism has changed significantly from that of the 1960s.

Ethnic student organizations, however, continue to play a major role in African student success. According to a study by Samuel Museus (2008b), ethnic student organizations were critical in terms of cultural familiarity, cultural expression and advocacy, and cultural validation. Data analyzed from individual interviews with 12 African and 12 Asian American students examined student adjustment at HWIs. Museus used a conceptual framework that included Kuh and Love’s (2000) work regarding cultural perspective of student departure, in which the further the distance between the home and campus of the student, the more difficulty in adjustment. Museus also used Tierney’s (1999) work on cultural integrity which involved engaging the student’s cultural background within the college experience. Ethnic student organizations were examined to see how they facilitated student adjustment and membership within the campus cultures (Museus, 2008b). Student ethnic organizations were instrumental in providing a way in which African and Asian students could connect with and understand the struggles of students from a similar cultural background. They also provided ways in which students could express themselves and advocate for students with similar cultural identities (Museus, 2008b). Finally, these organizations helped African and Asian students to feel supported and accepted within the HWI (Museus, 2008b).

Harper and Quaye (2007) also found similar results for African male student leaders who were able to develop cross-cultural communication skills, advocate for other students, and pursue social justice issues that were in the interests of African students.
According to Quaye (2007), a new kind of student activism has emerged, in which student-initiated retention projects and coalition building among racial and ethnic groups were organized on campus. Organizations such as Raza Womyn de UCLA engaged students in activism efforts by holding weekly discussions of current events and facilitating workshops and conferences on social justice (Quaye, 2007; Revilla, 2004). African and Indigenous unity efforts in which cultural organizations joined together strategically to increase their voice at HWIs also occurred. However, what was missing was a comprehensive theoretical framework that correctly identified the true issues that contribute to the oppression experienced by African and other students at HWIs. Current efforts still appear to focus on how African and other minoritized students can adjust to the existing campus climate and create safe spaces, rather than overturning the conditions that create this reality.

**Theories and Concepts Related to Promoting Success for Minoritized Students**

This section reviews current theories and concepts related to efforts made to promote the success of African and minoritized students and provides some criticism. I raise these criticisms from a socialist standpoint and through the lens of colonialism in examining the U.S. system of education. In terms of using a socialist standpoint, a general critique of Marxism is the failure to address forms of oppression other than class. According to Yeshitela (2005), this is because Marx was a victim of the European experience as a world view. His inability to look at Africans as subjects of history rather than objects of history meant that their importance was only relevant in terms of how slavery affected the issues of White workers. Today, rather than looking at
political economy, post-Marxists believe that the principal political points are cultural and that “politics of difference” are explored by examining the relationships of power within cultural and ideological practices, taking away the focus on class (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). Class, race, and gender are all treated as being equal in weight and importance, and capitalism, as a result, is decentered. Thus, “difference” becomes the primary construct, cultural dimensions becomes the most important, and economic and material differences are ignored (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). This action results in an unnecessary focus on concepts, such as unlearning racism rather than on changing material conditions for oppressed groups (Hess, 2000, Yeshitela, 2005), such as the racial microaggressions experienced.

When difference becomes the main construct, race begins to be treated as separate and distinct, an autonomous category. As such, the economic dimension is the base and the cultural/political/ideological dimensions comprise the superstructure. This means that the economic dimension (which is viewed as nonpolitical), does not cause the cultural/political/ideological superstructure, and that the latter are relatively autonomous categories (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). As a result, colonialism and imperialism are dismissed as legitimate lens with which to view the conditions of African people (Yeshitela, 2005). This is the same idea seen in Bonilla-Silva’s (2006) work in which he stated that race is now a “stand-alone” category. The cultural dimension is no longer embedded within economic and sociopolitical arrangements. This has developed into a concept that difference is a question of relationships of knowledge and power, and difference can be dealt with on a discursive level. Thus, the understanding that change
must be dealt with within the context of the relations of production is lost (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004).

This does not mean that the cultural and discursive arenas are not important as sites of struggle. The voices of marginalized peoples have been given the power to reconstruct their own histories. The danger is that politics are now defined in terms of representation rather than grounded in “the mobilization of forces against the materials sources of political and economic marginalization” (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004, p. 183). In essence, cultural struggles become the primary arena, and they are almost completely dissociated from class struggle. This is what Omali Yeshitela (2012) calls the problem of cultural nationalists who confine their discussions to the classroom or other sterile arenas rather than engage in serious struggle around the material conditions of African people. Instead of working to overturn colonialism and imperialism, cultural politics are used to find representation within imperialism, the very system that created the oppressor nation, working against the interests of African and oppressed people (Piedrahita, 2013; Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). This de-emphasis of the oppressive power and function of capitalism and the inordinate focus on culture as a construct reduces the importance of class as the primary struggle in which culture or race is placed (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004).

Focusing on the marginalization of oppressed groups through the glorification of the “other” obfuscates that the “other” must be seen as a social construct created to maintain political and economic power of the oppressor nation. The “other” is produced; it does not happen passively or in a vacuum. Racism is a by-product of capitalism, and changing the ideas that Euro Americans hold as agents of the oppressor nation will not
result in changes in material conditions for the victims of racism. Racism and other
“isms” such as sexism arise to justify the maintenance of White power (Scatamburlo-
D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). Bannerji (1995) stated that it is illogical to see
“difference as a historical form of consciousness unconnected to class formation,
development of capital and class politics” (p. 30). Yeshitela (2010) expressed the same
idea stating that freedom from oppression will only occur through the development of a
new social system in which capitalism is overturned and the interests of the African
working class are put first. This idea illuminates what is wrong with the whole diversity
movement; diversity and difference are allowed representation only within the prevailing
social system (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). This distracts from the real
issue of the systematic exploitation of capitalism and imperialism in which relations are
defined between the oppressor nation and the oppressed. Therefore, the cultural politic
can never adequately address the manifestations that are interwoven within the dynamics
of capitalism. Race must be seen as a way in which the oppressor nation legitimizes the
state and reinforces existing relations of power (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren,
2004).

Thus, to consider race, gender, and class as equal categories is a mistake because
class at its heart is an economic as well as a social category. If it is transformed into a
purely cultural category, it then is cut off from political economy and exploitation of
capitalism. Those who control the resources do so because of the inherent value of those
who do not—the producers of the resources (Kinshasa, 2009; Scatamburlo-D’Annibale &
McLaren, 2004).
Treating class the same as race, gender, or other forms of difference changes the entire analysis and draws the question away from class as a universal form of exploitation. The movement away from a historical materialist class analysis to a cultural analysis can be seen in the antiracism movement. The focus on changing Euro Americans’ beliefs, thoughts, and ideas about African and minoritized people will not change the prevailing system in which the material interests of the White nation not only take precedence, but are maintained through unnatural violence, exploitation, and denial of the need to completely dehumanize and objectify people who are not White. This maintenance of White power at the expense of all others means that 50% of the world’s resources are concentrated in 5% of the world’s population, primarily the European and Euro American populations (Hess, 2012). The elimination of class is necessary to the elimination of all forms of oppression, according to Marx (1867/n.d.). Class utilizes the state as a form of control and that state defends class through the creation of various constructs of which race is an example. Historical materialism illuminates the ways in which all forms of oppression operate within capitalism and how oppression cannot be separated from class relations (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004).

In the current crisis of imperialism, class struggle is coming to the forefront once again, as the conditions faced by African and minoritized people are now being experienced by Euro Americans, as seen in the recent Occupy Movement. The Occupy Movement, however, incorrectly identified its participants as the 99%. Viewed through the lens of colonialism and imperialism, the Occupy Movement could actually be seen as a White nationalist movement created to give back to the White middle class a bigger “share” of the resources, resources that are expropriated from African and other
oppressed people. A large number of people involved in the Occupy Movement are not concerned with the fact that capitalism exploits and expropriates land, labor, and resources from African and Indigenous people. Many “Occupiers” fail to see the irony of the use of the word “Occupy” on occupied land of Indigenous people. Further, they do not know or understand that Wall Street was the trading grounds for African bodies, with over 15,000 Africans buried beneath its wall (A. Singer, 2012).

Because class analysis and capitalistic exploitation have been pushed aside in current social theory, the cultural approach to oppression means that academics can speak about the problems of racism and oppression without taking any action to further the struggles of the oppressed (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2004). The focus on the discursive rather than the material results in a certain acceptance and complacency with the status quo. It highlights the representation of the few Africans who have “made it” within the confines of capitalism, without regard for all those who continue to be crushed by the brutality and violence that capitalism requires to exist (Yeshitela, 2006). This can be seen in the work of Cornel West and Michael Eric Dyson, who are well known as speakers of truth regarding Black America, but whose class position and reliance on the discursive is a contradiction to any true revolutionary movement.

Bringing the focus back to class, with an emphasis on colonialism and imperialism, results in a clear understanding that there is no redemption in reforming capitalism. Researchers, such as Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Valerie Scatamburlo-D’Annibale and Peter McLaren, have all concluded that a new movement must occur to address the wealth inequalities and the atrocities being performed in the name of capitalism, and to eliminate racism.
Multiculturalism

For years under White supremacy ideology, Africans and other oppressed people were seen as objects of history rather than subjects of history (Yeshitela, 2010). As a result, references to Africans ignored their contributions to the world (Browder, 1992). The little attention that Africans received in history and social science textbooks was primarily for their roles as slaves in the United States. Multicultural education was created as a reform movement to address school policies and practices that catered to Euro American students and the dominant ideology, so that the needs of all students could be met (Hernández-Sheets, 2000).

In California secondary education in the late 1980s and early 1990s, frameworks were created for history and social science curriculum with standards for ethical literacy, cultural diversity, historical accuracy, and opportunities to examine controversial issues, along with developing critical thinking and democratic social participation skills as part of the effort for multicultural education (King, 1992). Despite these frameworks, California adopted textbooks that met, at best, only the “moderate” rating for cultural diversity. This set off deep criticism and sustained resistance to the textbooks, with many district refusing to purchase them, or demanding supplemental materials to teach about specific ethnic groups and cultural diversity (King, 1992).

Herein lies the problem: multicultural education oftentimes consists of adding in material about ethnic and cultural groups other than Euro American to existing dominant ideology textbooks, rather than true revisionist works that reflect an accurate portrayal of historical events and circumstances. As Arce (1978) noted, this nationalist exhortative pattern portrays historical events already identified in North American history and adds
token figures from oppressed groups to the narrative, rather than focusing on an independent historical perspective. In fact, rather than conceding that there is a more accurate depiction of history, arguments were made that these self-interested ethnic and religious groups simply wanted a glorified version of their history (King, 1992). This same attitude was what resulted in the elimination of ethnic studies in Arizona schools, despite all the data showing improved grades, test scores, and retention of students as a direct result of this curriculum (Romero, 2009).

Too often multicultural education was watered down or taught in a patronizing fashion, still supporting assimilation and acculturation as the appropriate path to success (Ayers, 1988; King, 1992). For example, it reified the European immigrant experience as the quintessential experience of becoming American. This stance ignored and concealed the qualitatively different experiences of African and Indigenous populations, who in fact, were not immigrants at all (King, 1992). In the same way, diversity awareness and training often resulted in politically correct campuses as opposed to politically active ones (Cobham & Parker, 2007).

Many Euro American teachers who teach a multicultural curriculum have not always done the necessary personal work to become competent in their teaching. These instructors may mistakenly assume differences between Africans and Europeans are cultural, without understanding the disparities in power and privilege (Roediger, 1999). The same can be said for Euro American administrators, who play a key role not only in addressing issues of racial bias on campus, but in formulating policy (Choi-Pearson, Castillo, & Maples, 2004). Africans must be involved in higher education research and
policy in order to provide the necessary cultural context due to the effect on the outcomes of African students (Freeman, 1998).

Curriculum that attempts to address issues of culture, ethnic identity, White privilege, and racism (Chaisson, 2004; Sonn, 2008; Stark-Rose et al., 2009), persistently fails to connect the concept of racism to the prevailing structure of White power or White racial domination. Most scholars agreed, however, that racism was a social construct; that is, there was nothing biologically real about race. Racism was only present as long as people collectively agreed and accepted that it existed (Frankenberg, 1993; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Lopez, 1994; Pérez Huber, 2010).

In the classroom, instructors have used a variety of methods to increase dialogue and discussion about racism and the experiences of students. This has been done to counteract “dysconscious racism” or the “limited and distorted understandings” that students have about cultural diversity and equity, as defined by King (1991, pp. 133-134). Methods included writing assignments in which readers provided a postcolonial critical response by examining the political positions of the author, characters, and themselves as readers (Barak, 2003), simulated discrimination exercises (Stark-Rose et al., 2009), writing prompts to explain statistical comparisons between Black and Euro American children’s chances in life (King, 1991), and assignments and discussions built into psychology and sociology courses (Chaisson, 2004; Sonn, 2008). These methods were met with mixed success. Results showed that European and Euro American students did several things in response. First, they minimized experiences of minoritized students, or struggled with accepting the benefits they had as Euro Americans (Chaisson, 2004; Sonn, 2008). Second, they provided explanations that supported cultural deficit beliefs or
liberal assimilationist ideology (King, 1991). Finally, they suggested that Europeans experienced similar discrimination (Chaisson, 2004). Moreover, Euro American students tended to draw attention away from the discussion by minoritized through several methods. Some focused on their own guilt or uncomfortable feelings (Leonardo & Porter, 2010), others chose not to participate or withdrew from the discussion (Dlamini, 2002). Leonardo and Porter (2010) suggested that classrooms need to be redefined as places of risk. Euro Americans must feel discomfort and take ownership of these feelings in order for liberating experiences that facilitate growth and understanding between Euro American students and minoritized students to take place.

While attending diversity awareness trainings has an effect in reducing racial prejudice, even more effective is increased intergroup interactions (Choi-Pearson et al., 2004). In order for a critical multicultural curriculum to work, faculty needs to be supported by colleagues, chairs, and administrators. Oftentimes, when an instructor does attempt to teach students about race and gender in the classroom, they are met with resistance that results in unfavorable consequences for teachers. Research suggests that many Euro American students did not believe racism was a problem (Boatright-Horowitz, 2005; Chizhik & Chizhik, 2005), which stands in contrast to the findings by Bobo and Charles (2009), in which between half and three-quarters of Europeans in the United States expressed negative stereotypes of Africans and Latinos. Students gave poor evaluations or made complaints to the dean or department chair about instructors who taught them to examine White power and privilege (Boatright-Horowitz & Soeng, 2009; Nast, 1999). Further, the hostility experienced by some teachers in the classroom and in
the verbiage found in student evaluations led to concerns for their own physical safety, as well as emotional trauma (Nast, 1999).

A neo-abolitionist global pedagogy was suggested by Leonardo (2002) as a way for students and teachers to work together to reflect upon and dismantle discourses of Whiteness. This was a dialectical pedagogy that entailed acknowledging the close relationship that existed between economic exploitation and racial oppression. The dismantling of Whiteness also meant a dismantling of race (Leonardo, 2002). African students benefited from this because, without minimizing their own racial experiences, they were better able to understand the daily assaults of Whiteness they experienced, including racial microaggressions and the internalization of Whiteness. This was helpful as students who were minoritized often succumbed to colorblind racism and explained away racist acts they experienced using the dominant ideology, just as Euro Americans did.

Euro American students benefit as well, because their daily existence is based on a world view set upon a precarious foundation of assumed superiority that is rapidly showing to be false. A dialectical pedagogy provides an opportunity “to choose critical multicultural consciousness over dysconsciousness” (King, 1991, pp. 143-144). Reducing racial biases aligned with the Carnegie Commission’s five major purposes of higher education, which included educational justice and the developmental growth of the individual student (Chang, 2001). It also aligned with broader educational interests, which included preparing students for a rapidly changing society and the advancement of learning in a way that supported students’ development and ability to live with dignity and purpose (Chang, 2001). Further, campus racial climate that was prejudiced had been
shown to negatively affect the persistence of both African and Euro American students, thus the implementation of broad-based policies that worked to overcome misconceptions could benefit the entire campus community (Cabrera et al., 1999; Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2006; Nora & Cabrera, 1996).

Because multiculturalism ultimately supports assimilation and integration, it has limitations in its use to understand the effects of the historical legacy of colonialism and slavery on the success of African students in higher education.

**Whiteness Studies and Critical Whiteness Studies**

Whiteness studies involve the exploration of a White racial identity with the intention to demystify it and challenge Whiteness as the norm (Ortiz & Rhoads, 2000; Roediger, 1999). Whiteness is a racial discourse, and White people as a group is a socially constructed identity; thus, Euro Americans can conduct their lives using “non-White discourses or strategies of anti-Whiteness” (Leonardo, 2002, p. 31).

When one surveys the literature on Critical Whiteness Studies, four major goals emerge (Nichols, 2010). The first goal is to analyze Whiteness by exploring its historical foundations of colonialism, slavery, and oppression. The second goal is to understand the material effects as demonstrated through intergenerational wealth transfer and systemic inequities. The third goal is to examine the structures, processes, and mechanisms of Whiteness, taking the focus off the individual White body by examining systems. The fourth goal is to develop a positive, antiracist identity. However, this analysis does not provide a goal to act upon the knowledge in a way that would eliminate the systemic creation of the White nation and the racialization of peoples.
One of the criticisms of Whiteness Studies is that this discussion may recenter the focus on Whiteness rather than decenter it. Moreover, the limited resources provided to the study of racism may be diverted to study Whiteness, with a focus on the oppressor at the expense of the study of racism, with a focus on those who are oppressed. There is also a general skepticism about the ability of Euro American people to meaningfully study Whiteness (Moon & Flores, 2000). There is a certain irony in Euro American people using White standards to investigate Whiteness, just as there is a serious criticism about Euro American people treating this as a “new” study when African and other minoritized scholars have been studying it for at least 100 years (Moon & Flores, 2000). Discussions about Whiteness need to focus on Whiteness as a strategy rather than an identity. In this way, one can concentrate on what Whiteness is used for, the mechanisms that created it, and the role of Whiteness in maintaining the current social structure. Any analysis must monitor the discourse on Whiteness for traces of oppressive ideology and rework them as necessary (Moon & Flores, 2000).

There are two central tendencies in the study of Whiteness. The first is antiracism. Antiracism attempts to make Whiteness visible so that it cannot be preserved through its denial. In this way, proponents of antiracism believe that once Whiteness is exposed, it will lose its power to dominate (Moon & Flores, 2000). In other words, the hope is that Euro American people will come to understand that their experiences and material positions have been affected by being “White” and they will then reduce or eliminate racism once they gain this understanding. This antiracism stance is problematic in that it runs counter to Freire (1970/2006) and radical educators’ recognition that
liberation does not come at the hands of the oppressor; rather, it is the task of the oppressed to undertake.

However, according to Moon and Flores (2000) Whiteness scholars also stated that, at this time, a clearly articulated definition of liberatory Whiteness has eluded us. In fact, in Roediger’s (1999) discussion about Whiteness, the idea of a healthy White personality was questionable given that the “White race” was created at the expense of oppressed groups.

Historically, there have been many examples in which the revolutionary work of self-determination for oppressed people has been subverted by allowing White leadership in the organization. This is why SNCC removed Euro Americans from its organization (Forman, 1972; Yeshitela, 2012). A lack of understanding and analysis was also apparent in the formation of the White Panthers, which occurred when the Black Panthers told Euro Americans to form their own organization. One only has to read the 10-point platform of the Black Panther Party and compare it to the platform of the White Panther Party to see the huge discrepancy in the analysis and serious thought that was used to formulate these two platforms (Sinclair, 1968a, 1968b). For example, while the Black Panther Party demanded freedom, self-determination, full employment, habitable housing, and other serious solutions, the White Panther Party, while stating they fully supported the Black Panther platform (Point One in the original White Panther 10-Point Program of 1968), they also stated they demanded “total assault on the culture by any means necessary, including rock and roll, dope, and fucking in the streets” (Sinclair, 1968b, para. 1). Thus, their bent was anarchism as opposed to socialism, and lacked real organization in which to create change.
Leonardo (2002) stated that Euro American students and minoritized students could work together against Whiteness, but for Euro American students their challenge was “undoing the self they know” (p. 46) and coming to terms with a reconstructed identity. He also recommended a new version of the procedural rule of “safety” in discussion about race in the classroom. He showed that this rule as currently used was for the purpose of maintaining White comfort and thus became a symbolic form of violence against those who are not White, reaffirming an already hostile environment. Instead, he stated that one must promote a condition not of safety, but of tension and contradiction. This type of environment would be one in which Euro Americans needed to agree that the higher good is to better understand racism, rather than to look less racist. There needed to be an understanding that when African and other minoritized students gave voice to the oppression they experienced, it made them vulnerable to verbal and physical assault. Thus, it had to be acknowledged that when discussion took place among Euro American students and minoritized students, it was almost never a safe space for those who were historically oppressed. A liberating violence must be permitted in which hostility, frustration, and anger were not silenced, but were allowed so that fears could be acknowledged and an authentic exchange could occur among Euro American students and minoritized students. This pedagogy took considerable skills due to Euro American students’ natural inclination to defend their right to unearned benefits (Leonardo & Porter, 2010).

The most glaring weakness in the antiracist stance is the fixation on a symptom of White power, not the source. Racism, as a by-product of colonialism and capitalism, is merely the ideas in White peoples’ heads (Yeshitela, 2012), and the material conditions of
African people (and by extension, in education, African students) will not change as a result of White people gaining an understanding of how they benefit from White power and privilege. Because of the focus on racism, antiracist groups make few to no references to colonialism, and imperialism, or to the economic and social conditions that Africans face. One such organization, AWARE (Alliance of White Antiracists Everywhere), attempted to foster what they called a “radical identity” for White people by analyzing race, privilege, power, and the system of White supremacy. The organization had a theory of social change that was idealist, meaning that there was no real analysis of how the White supremacist system could be changed. Its focus was on providing the opportunity for White people to develop their own humanity for self-discovery and personal growth (Goldberg & Levine, n.d.). This complete preoccupation with White identity kept White people at the center. In fact, considering the miserable conditions in which most African people live inside the United States and worldwide, it seems remarkably self-indulgent to spend time as Euro Americans in examining our White identity, rather than taking action to concretely overturn the material conditions of African people through actions such as reparations and returning stolen land and resources to African people. An anticolonial stance is a meaningful and viable way to change these conditions. Yet, in one of the most widely used books for teaching students about issues of social justice, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* (Adams et al., 2007), less than one page was devoted to the topic of colonialism, and only as a historical reference as opposed to a present-day reality for most of the peoples in the world.

The second tendency in the study of Whiteness is abolitionist or neo-abolitionist scholarship (Moon & Flores, 2000). Neo-abolitionists rejected antiracism and stated that
it contributes to the problems faced by Africans in society and in higher education. The neo-abolitionist stance argued that there was no way to reconstruct Whiteness (as proposed by antiracists), instead, Whiteness must be abolished (Ignatiev, 1999). White identity was seen as an impediment to the development of alliances based on class, alliances that could be used to fight against the State and its institutions that repressed people (Ignatiev, 1999; Roediger, 1994). Neo-abolitionists preferred to “opt out of Whiteness” (Moon & Flores, 2000, p. 102) and distinguished between European ancestry and identification as White. This opting out took the form of associating with Africans and other oppressed people. Neo-abolitionists rejected White culture, in essence, becoming “race traitors,” as described by Ignatiev (1999) in the journal *Race Traitor: Treason to Whiteness is Loyalty to Humanity*.

However, neo-abolitionist perspectives had inherent problems, as well. First, it forced one to celebrate the acts of race traitors, which inevitably recentered Whiteness by trivializing the actions of Africans and also requiring “Black adoration” (Moon & Flores, 2000, p. 106). For example, when one race traitor described his experience in standing with Africans in protest, he discussed his terror at taking this stand but also felt he was part of a great consciousness. In doing so, he celebrated his one instance of joining in struggle, struggle that Africans had been waging for over 500 years. Thus, the result was trivializing the historical efforts of Africans in fighting for their own freedom, and ignoring that the consequences he faced as a Euro American were very minimal in comparison to his African counterparts. Further, neo-abolitionists tended to highlight what they refer to as institutional racism without examining the maintenance of Whiteness through their own individual practices. The most troubling aspect of the
neo-abolitionist stance was that it demanded the denial of Whiteness, as if Whiteness was a choice or a state of mind, without acknowledging that the power they had as White people was in no way diminished or eliminated by their actions (Moon & Flores, 2000).

Neo-abolitionists make several cogent points. Their analysis that Whiteness as an identity prevents the development of alliances between working class Euro Americans and Africans can be seen in the lynching of Africans from slavery and beyond (Alexander, 2010). Rather than recognizing that Euro American workers faced similar conditions to their African counterparts and joining together against the ruling class, Euro Americans have chosen to unite with the elite due to the hegemony of Whiteness (Alexander, 2010). The failure to fight against the State in this manner demonstrates the power of a White national identity. However, the denial of Whiteness favored by neo-abolitionists that results in the co-opting of Blackness is just another infliction of the colonizer on the colonized (Yeshitela, 2012). This relationship of colonizer and colonized means that it is not possible for Euro Americans and Africans to have truly authentic relationships. Rather than trying to join Black culture, Euro Americans more than ever have a responsibility to work in their own communities to bring their counterparts to an understanding of supporting African self-determination (Hess, 2012; Yeshitela, 2012).

A commitment to social action as discussed by Yeshitela (2012) and Hess (2012) has also been emphasized by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) as part and parcel of a White racial consciousness, in concurrence with Block and Carter (1996). Block and Carter criticized the White racial consciousness model developed by Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994) in which the final stage of a healthy White personality was characterized as having a
pragmatic view of ethnic issues. Block and Carter stated that this implied an identity being free of guilt and passivity with regard to racial and ethnic issues thus supported the status quo and the continuation of a racist society.

Whiteness studies and critical Whiteness studies pose contradictions for Euro Americans who wish to use this conceptual framework because of the possibility of centering on Whiteness and an inability to use a worldview from the eyes of the oppressed. Further, its focus on antiracism and neo-abolitionism means that the overarching issues of class and colonialism are not the focus, which limits their usefulness in the purpose of this study.

**Racial and Social Justice Allies**

In higher education, Euro American students tend to ascribe to colorblind ideologies and do not examine Whiteness as a part of their identity. Some are more cognizant of race and have taken time to examine themselves and their action in the context of race and relationships with students who are not White (O’Brien, 2001; Reason & Evans, 2007). Those who were able to move past colorblind racism and become racially cognizant were more able to view the daily campus interactions through the lens of race and developed a deeper understanding of power, privilege, and guilt (Reason & Evans, 2007). According to Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005), racially aware students shared certain commonalities in their understanding of what it means to be White, and as White racial justice allies embraced their own culture, while rejecting the power and privilege associated with it. These students also had a strong sense of moral courage and exhibited energy, optimism, and good health, despite being engaged in
thinking and behavior that was counter to their upbringing or viewpoints of friends and family.

However, racial justice ally actions as defined in the literature tend to take the form of self-examination and exploration of White identities (Hyde, 1995; Lawrence & Tatum, n.d.; McIntosh, 1990; Michael & Conger, 2009; Reason & Evans, 2007; Reason et al., 2005; Roediger, 1999; Watt, 2007). In education, a focus on White identity appeared to be more important in some instances than focusing on the ability to teach a multicultural curriculum (Hernández-Sheets, 2000). In fact, there appears to be an inordinate amount of time spent in engaging in dialogue about power and privilege at the expense of taking action against it. In-class exploration of racial justice issues, student discussion groups, and using positions within student government to ensure racial agendas were acted upon were examples of actions taken on by allies (Reason et al., 2005). The impact of these actions appears to be somewhat intangible; in fact, one of the most actionable behaviors indicated in the study was a student “writing legislation supporting diversity in the university’s student government” (Reason et al., 2005, p. 541).

Most universities and colleges have support for diversity in their mission statement or strategic plan, and yet African students continue to face isolation and racial microaggressions. Thus, it is questionable that writing legislation to support diversity can be deemed as an action that directly affected the experience of African and other minoritized students.

Reason et al. (2005) indicated that developing cultural competence requires complex reasoning skills, as displayed by upper division students. This suggested that changes may only occur as long as individuals possessed advanced cognitive abilities,
whereas as Bonilla-Silva’s work (2001, 2006) found that the most likely allies were working class and White women. If advanced cognitive thinking was truly a requirement, how is it that college educated people in power positions in the United States have failed to act on the contradictions of this system? Thus, education does not automatically equal liberated thinkers or nonracists (Jackman & Muha, 1984). In fact, education alone does not appear to have a significant effect on Euro American students’ cognitive growth (Bowman, 2010), which indicates that it is not enough to simply become aware as a Euro American of our Whiteness, power, and privilege. If we do not act on this knowledge, then we remain complicit with the White supremacy system. One of the excuses given for not taking ethical and effective action is given by Wise (2005) in his book *White Like Me*, wherein he describes the lack of role models to whom we can look to for inspiration. Yet, Wise does not contribute his earnings to reparations for Africans, even though he is considered to be an influential antiracist in the United States. With a consistently full speaking schedule, he could certainly influence Euro Americans to turn back resources to African people, action that would result in an actual impact on the African community. Thus, the definition of a racial justice ally and the purpose for even becoming one as it currently stands has many contradictions. For Euro American students to become true allies, a break from the traditional standpoint of viewing injustice through the lens of racism would be necessary. That break could logically arise out of a student movement in which Euro American students respond with an anticolonial stance in support of their African peers to overturn the inhospitable campus environment found at HWIs. This anticolonial stance is currently not present in the literature about racial and social justice allies.
Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) evolved from critical theory developed in the area of law during the 1970s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Critical Race Theory has been useful in allowing the voice of minoritized groups such as African students to be heard, as well as forum to examine racism and strategies to disrupt it (Fine, Weis, Powell, & Wong, 1997; Mertens, 1998). Because CRT developed out of a broad base of literature including law, sociology, ethnic studies, history, education, and women’s studies (Solórzano et al., 2000), it shifts the view that socially oppressed communities are disadvantaged and culturally deficient (Yosso, 2005) to one that is rich in understanding of the historical, economic, and social forces that affect oppressed people. Critical Race Theory in education challenges traditional paradigms by emphasizing the intersection of race, class, and gender, and its impact on students who are not from the dominant culture. By centering on issues of race, and using counterstories to illuminate the experiences of students from minoritized groups, CRT has been effective in legitimizing research that uses alternative methods (Bergerson, 2003). Critical Race Theory focuses on giving voice to those injured by racism and empowering them to develop arguments to address oppression (Solórzano et al., 2000).

As a conceptual lens used to examine racism, racial (dis)advantages, and inequitable distribution of power and privilege within institutions and society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), CRT contains five components: (a) the centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with various forms of subjugation, (b) challenging the dominant ideology, (c) a commitment to issues of social justice, (d) the importance of experiential knowledge, and (e) a transdisciplinary approach (Solórzano & Yosso, 2000). One major
tenet of CRT is Interest Convergence which, according to Delgado (as cited in Harper, 2009a), typically compels Euro American people to advocate for the advancement of oppressed peoples only if their own self-interest is better served. Put differently, theorists posit that those in the majority who attempt to create social, political, and economic change on behalf of minoritized people rarely do so without first identifying the personal costs and gains associated with such actions. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) stated that previous attempts to eliminate racism in social, educational, and economic outcomes produced less than satisfactory results because of lack of sufficient convergence of interests. Convergence of interests has its roots in Marxist theory in that the ruling class will work toward progress for the worker only if advances ultimately end up benefiting the ruling class more (Taylor, 2006). A weakness of CRT is that there is an opportunity for Euro Americans to co-opt the theory to further their own interests, rather than truly uniting with the interests of African people and their struggle for self-determination. Further, Euro Americans can opt out of reform efforts if such efforts do not meet their interests.

Critical Race Theory has been useful in giving voice to those who are oppressed, but it does not adequately address the root cause of the failure of numerous efforts to resolve the issues of racism, discrimination, and bias across a broad sector of arenas. Although it has done well to illuminate the experiences of oppressed group, it has limitations because it focuses on racism, a symptom of the root problem, but not the problem itself. Thus, CRT as a framework to examine the ways in which Euro American allies support African students is limited.
Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that grew out of CRT that “calls attention to events and forces operating at the intersection of two or more categories, such as race and gender” (Delgado, 2011, p. 1261). Proponents of intersectionality state that demarginalizing can take place when the voice of individuals who experience oppression in multiple categories is heard.

The problem with intersectionality is the same as previously discussed by Scatamburlo-D’Annibale and McLaren (2004), and echoed by Delgado (2011). The focus on parsing categories into subcategories leads to a preoccupation with the subcategories. These new units of analyses, in turn, may lead to new subcategories, thus refining the various oppressions down into small and particular groups of individuals. Ultimately, this lends itself to an evasion of addressing questions of substance and can ignore the large processes that are designed to work to the disadvantage of large populations, such as Africans (Delgado, 2011). Further, intersectionality does not focus on nor challenge one to action; its focus on small units of analysis and the victimization of small groups takes the emphasis off the perpetrators of injustice. Ultimately, intersectionality is a social construction, just as is race. As such, it does not correspond to anything objective in the real world, because it is a choice to identity oneself based on multiple forms of oppression. Thus, oppression is difficult to overcome and conquer, and the use of intersectionality may also bring attention to issues that critics will form campaigns around. For example, when the plight of children born in the United States of undocumented parents was brought to light, the opposition was able to instigate a fight to eliminate birthright citizenship (Delgado, 2011). Worse, given the changing
demographics occurring in the United States in terms of a diminishing White population and an emerging nonwhite one, focus is deflected from an important voice that is utilized by White power, the voice of the “minority” who speaks in the master’s voice. This is the voice of the neocolonial servant who performs the bidding of White power so that, despite diminishing numbers, the dominant system can still be maintained (Delgado, 2011; Yeshitela, 2010). This is seen in the recruitment of Black police officers who are used to contain the African community, Latino politicians who do not act in the interest of their community, and our choice of president, who acts as White power in Black face (Yeshitela, 2008, 2010).

In summary, Intersectionality also is problematic in the way it detracts from root causes of the problems experienced by African students, in the same ways that CRT, multiculturalism, Whiteness studies, critical Whiteness studies, and antiracism do. In the next section, a review of conceptual models of allyhood is reviewed, and a proposal for an anticolonial lens as a means to take action is discussed, using the theory of African Internationalism.

**Theoretical Framework**

In this section, I discuss the conceptual models and theoretical framework that guide the current study. The conceptual models examine ally development in higher education and three definitions of social justice that are displayed in the practices of allyhood. A theoretical framework using African Internationalism is used to provide an alternate lens for viewing the issues faced by African students and the development of allies, using an anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance.
Conceptual Models of Ally Development Among College Students

The current definitions of racial and social justice allies used in education are problematic, first in defining justice in terms of race—a symptom and not the cause—and second, in the lack of concrete action as a result of this process of self-enlightenment. However, some models have been developed that are useful in the discussion of how Euro American students develop as allies.

Edwards (2006) discussed three types of allies in his Conceptual Model of Aspiring Allies for Social Justice. From least developed to most complex, these types of allies are described as Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest, Aspiring Allies for Altruism, and Allies for Social Justice. Reason et al. (2005) also developed a definition of a racial justice ally but did not differentiate levels of development or understandings within this definition. Waters (2010) proposed a model in which he discussed allyhood as a developmental process involving cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains. Allies develop across these domains from initial to intermediate to mature stages. Although Waters stated that Edwards’ model aligns with allies in the intermediate stage of development, he also was somewhat contradictory by later stating that allies in the mature stage of development align with Edwards’ Allies for Social Justice. Therefore, I contend that Waters’ stages correspond closely to Edwards’ three types of allies, particularly when one examines the way in which each of them lays out the characteristics of allies in each stage (Waters, 2010) or type (Edwards, 2006). Thus, an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest corresponds to Water’s ally in the initial stage of development, an Aspiring Ally for Altruism aligns with an ally in the intermediate stage of development, and an Ally for Social Justice is similar to an ally in the mature stage of development.
According to Edwards (2006), Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest tended to be allies under limited circumstances, those in which someone they knew was directly affected by an action. They saw their behavior in relational terms, such as being a good friend, rather than an ally in a broader sense. In fact, this type of ally still acted in oppressive ways as they actually saw the world as just and fair, with certain shocking exceptions about which they felt they must take action to stop a specific perpetrator. This aspiring ally did not see oppression as systemic; rather, they felt racism and other forms of oppression were individual acts (Edwards, 2006). Similar to this type of ally, Waters (2010) stated that an ally in the initial stage of development had a naïveté about existing inequity, tended to assume that external knowledge from authority was correct, viewed difference as a threat to one’s own culture, and had difficulty in seeing the systemic nature of oppression.

The second type of ally, Aspiring Allies for Altruism, were individuals who had begun to see their White privilege and recognize oppression to be systemic. An unconscious motivator for this type of ally was dealing with guilt about unearned privilege. These aspiring allies attacked others from the dominant group, while at the same time created distance between themselves and the dominant group, as a way to show that they were the exception. These allies may have had difficulty in accepting criticism about their own racist or oppressive behaviors. The Aspiring Ally for Altruism tended to be paternalistic in his or her approach; he or she viewed the minoritized as victims. This aspiring ally sought to empower the minoritized individual, while still taking credit and maintaining control, rather than supporting self-determination. Further, these individuals did not comprehend how the system of oppression also hurt them; they saw their actions as altruistic and many times sought to affirm this with those being
oppressed, thus becoming a liability (Edwards, 2006). This type of ally aligned with Waters’ (2010) ally at the intermediate stage of development. At this stage, the ally had increasing awareness of multiple perspectives, actively challenged external perceptions, was processing the systemic nature of racial inequity and may have been fearful discussing their new understandings because of appearing to be racist, or offending minoritized people.

The third type of ally described by Edwards (2006), the Ally for Social Justice, saw issues in terms of classism, racism, and other forms of oppression, rather than as isolated individual acts. They also recognized that liberation for oppressed peoples also meant liberation for oppressors, and that seeking to end systems of oppression also meant rejoining humanity as a member of the oppressor group (Freire, 1970/2006). Social justice allies also held themselves accountable and were accountable to oppressed groups. They tended to work for spiritual liberation, worked with minoritized groups, and advocated for them. Allies for Social Justice viewed their job as one in which they escaped, impeded, amended, redefined, or dismantled systems of oppression. They also aligned with intersectionality. This type of ally aligned with Waters’ (2010) ally in the mature stage of development. An ally in the mature stage of development had a worldview that was culturally informed, recognized unearned privilege, openly challenged the social construct of race, and engaged in meaningful relationships with minoritized people.

Similar to the Ally for Social Justice and the mature ally, Reason et al.’s (2005) allies for racial justice were defined as “White students who actively work against a system of oppression that maintains their power” (p. 530). Like Edwards’ (2006) and
Waters’ (2010) most developed allies, this type of ally was cognizant of their power and privilege, and had done some exploration of their White identity.

For purposes of this study, I chose to use Edwards’ (2006) Conceptual Model of Aspiring Allies for Social Justice. While I feel there are some limitations with this model, it provides good information about the motivation, interests, and beliefs of allies. This model also coincides with Waters’ (2010) developmental model. Both Broido’s (2000) and Reason et al.’s (2005) social and racial justice allies respectively share some of the characteristics of Edwards’ and Waters’ models. However, they do not make distinctions in progress or development of allyhood. I chose Edwards’ model as the one that would illuminate the development and practice of allyhood the best. The use of the three categories of allies allows for grouping participants and providing examples that exemplify the category or stage of development.

A Conceptual Model of Social Justice

In order to understand the various social justice practices and actions taken on by allies, a brief discussion is necessary to define social justice within historical, political, and social contexts. In conjunction with Edwards’ (2006) model of social justice allies, examining the different definitions of social justice may illuminate the level of allyhood or the stage of development of allies in terms of the types of behaviors and actions they exhibit. For this purpose, I am utilizing Starr’s (1991) definitions of conservative, liberal, and socialist social justice.

The conservative view of social justice is associated with a conservative, right wing political ideology and speaks to various freedoms: individual freedom, freedom from control or obligation, and free will. This individual doctrine believes in birthright
opportunities for education, wealth, and power, and is tied to free enterprise capitalism. Everyone is believed to have an equal opportunity for wealth and property, as long as they work hard. This concept is enhanced by providing at risk populations with extra aid to give disadvantaged persons a head start. This type of social justice relies on elitism and hierarchy; some will succeed at the expense of others. Inevitably, “band-aid” measures are used to rescue some people, but competition drives everything (Starr, 1991).

The problem with conservative social justice is that relying on individualism and meritocracy means that there is an implicit inequality among classes of people. Some own the means of production and can hire labor, while others are forced to sell their labor. The belief that a trickle down of economic growth is never realized, although it is a mantra of those who hold this conservative viewpoint. This inequality of worth produces a deep social divide because there is not equal political and social power (Starr, 1991).

According to Starr (1991), the liberal view of social justice aims at freedom from oppressive governments, a free enterprise marketplace, freedom of speech and religion, and the ability to achieve one’s full potential. The liberal stance has a value of political neutrality coupled with a belief that fairness can be achieved within the existing social and political structures. Not everything has to be equal, but everyone should be able to achieve personal fulfillment and participate in society. Individualism means there is an emphasis on developing a strong sense of self-esteem. In addition, everyone should develop tolerance and understanding of people. As this is achieved, new attitudes and values will develop, thus changing society. Liberal social justice strives for inclusiveness
and works to make changes in areas such as law, employment, and education to address prejudice and marginalization of individuals (Starr, 1991).

The problem with liberal social justice is that a politically neutral stance is impossible; therefore by attempting neutrality, the liberal really is complicit with the existing system and practices. This means that liberal social justice does not threaten the status quo and fails to address the inequity in power that is necessary to make change; thus it is a reformist practice and limits the potential for emancipation for those who are oppressed. In addition, the emphasis on individualism curtails community choices and ignores the necessity of human cooperation to survive and flourish (Starr, 1991).

A socialist view of social justice criticizes both conservatism and liberalism for failing to address the fundamental causes of social injustice which prevents the ability to develop values of equality, self-determination, and justice (Starr, 1991). A socialist view attempts to uncover historical and political processes that have resulted in oppressive structures, practices, and social constructs. Once uncovered, this type of social justice requires revolutionary action to eliminate oppression, which is called *emancipatory praxis*. Emancipatory praxis requires “reflective reconstruction and emancipation with all groups having the freedom to control and shape their social situations, rather than having control imposed by others” (Starr, 1991, p. 23). This praxis involves action informed by theory and vice versa to redistribute social wealth and remove oppressive structures and conditions (Starr, 1991).

A critique of socialist social justice is the view that human nature would not allow building a socially just society. In addition, there is a fear that the prevailing hegemonic elite will be eliminated by another hegemonic group (Starr, 1991).
These three definitions of social justice provide an understanding of the types of social justice actions exhibited by racial or social justice allies, linking development level to conservative, liberal, or socialist actions.

**African Internationalism**

In light of the shortcomings of the current conceptual models and theories pertaining to allies, I chose to use the theory of African Internationalism to frame my study. African Internationalism, developed by Omali Yeshitela, is a grass roots revolutionary theory that “deepens the insights brought to revolutionary theory by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*” (Bush, 2005, para. 3). It builds on and corrects some of the assumptions found in Marxist theory about capitalism by bringing in the viewpoint of the slave. According to Bush (2005):

> Marx wrote from the perspective of Europeans seeking to explain the impact of Africa’s stolen wealth on European history. Yeshitela focuses on a much more comprehensive understanding of the relationship of the history of Africa and African people throughout the world to the history and development of capitalism.

(para. 5)

Not only does African Internationalism give an explanation of the current state of the world, it provides some important considerations in the discussion of inequity. The first tenet of African Internationalism is the understanding that capitalism as a world economy was born out of slavery of Africans and the resultant assault on other areas of the world. This includes the genocide of the Indigenous population in the so-called Americas (Yeshitela, 1987, 2010). As a result, one must view the conditions faced by African people through the lens of anticolonialism and anti-imperialism. This lens allows for a
broader understanding of the current conditions faced by African people by identifying them as a colonized population within the United States and other countries. As colonized populations that were essentially kidnapped from Africa, the status of African people is less than that of its oppressors. Conditions such as unemployment, imprisonment, and single-parent families are generally viewed by the dominant population as problems inherent in Black culture. However, these conditions are illuminated when viewed from an anticolonial, anti-imperialist lens. This stance highlights not only the historical legacies of slavery, but the continued enslavement of Africans through policies that allow for differential sentencing of Africans in the criminal justice system, and police containment policies of the African community that involve heightened surveillance and racial profiling over policies of economic development. In essence, the continued counterinsurgency tactics to keep Africans from organizing and protesting conditions are apparent using this framework.

The second tenet of African Internationalism is the recognition that the consolidation of a political economy and national identity as a result of slavery is attributable to the wealth of Europe and the United States at the expense of exploited and impoverished Africans, and other oppressed people around the world.

African Internationalism was further developed by an analysis of the Black Power Movement of the 1960s and how that revolution was militarily defeated through counterinsurgency tactics of the U.S. government through its COINTELPRO program (Yeshitela, 1987, 2010). The counterinsurgency intelligence program (COINTELPRO) was developed by the FBI with the following goals:
To prevent the coalition of militant Black nationalist groups . . . to prevent the rise of a messiah who could unify and electrify the militant Black nationalist movement . . . to prevent violence on the part of Black nationalist groups . . . [to prevent] militant Black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability . . . and . . . to prevent the long-range growth of militant Black nationalist organizations among the youth. (Day & Whitehorn, 2001, pp. 286-287)

Therefore, a third tenet of African Internationalism is that parasitic capitalism will preserve itself by preventing Africans to unite under one national identity to realize their power. Parasitic capitalism is the term used to explain how capitalism acts as a parasite that requires a host in order to exist. That host is African people. Without the continued exploitation of African and other oppressed people, capitalism would cease to exist. Capitalism in its very essence requires permanent underemployed and unemployed classes to fight against each other so that the maximum amount of profit can be made.

The final tenet of African Internationalism is that all Euro Americans hold the status of an oppressor, regardless of class, because they enjoy the benefits and privileges of parasitic capitalism at the expense of those who are not White. Figure 2 summarizes the major tenets of African Internationalism.

Because African Internationalism is a grass roots theory, little can be found about it in academe. However, its presence is felt worldwide because of the multiple campaigns the Uhuru Movement has led over the past 40 years. The Uhuru Movement is the collective name of a number of political and economic organizations created by the African People’s Socialist Party. Important campaigns have put the theory into practice.
1. African Internationalism utilizes a world view seen through the lens of anticolonialism and anti-imperialism.

2. Europeans consolidated a White national identity as a way to accumulate wealth and power at the expense of exploited and oppressed people.

3. Parasitic capitalism works to prevent Africans from uniting under one national identity as a way to preserve itself.

4. All Euro Americans hold the status of an oppressor regardless of class or socioeconomic standing.

*Figure 2.* Major tenets of the theory of African Internationalism.

For example, the successful defining of the question of rape between White men and African women as a colonial one rather than a feminist issue was effectively demonstrated through the campaign to free Dessie Woods (“Africa Loses Courageous Warrior!,” 2006-2007). The question of the State controlling resources between the haves and have-nots was brought to light with the legislation of Measure O for community control of housing in Oakland, California (“Volunteer and Join!,” 2011). The Uhuru Movement has also raised the issue of reparations to a level of awareness previously unheard of, by holding multiple world tribunals on reparations throughout the world since 1982 (“International Tribunal Postponed,” 2007; Yeshitela, 2010). Further, some of the tenets of African Internationalism can be seen in books such as *The New Jim Crow*, by Michelle Alexander (2010), and *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery*, by Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jennifer Frank (2006). It can even be found in everyday newspapers (Beckert & Rockman, 2012).

These books discuss the continued use of slave labor in the prison system and the ways in
which the North relied on slavery because “the lifeblood of New York City’s economy was cotton, the product most closely identified with the South and its defining system of labor: the slavery of millions of people of African descent” (Farrow et al., 2006, p. 4).

Another tenet of African Internationalism is that all Whites hold the status of an oppressor nation because they enjoy the benefits and privileges of parasitic capitalism at the expense of those who are not White. Without the enslavement of Africans and the resultant colonization of much of the world, Europeans and Euro Americans would not enjoy the disproportionate wealth they experience today (Yeshitela, 1987, 2010). African Internationalists state that the way to overturn this parasitic relation is to lead an effort of self-determination by the African working class, heretofore only seen as objects of history as the primitive accumulation of capital discussed by Marx (1867/n.d.). Marx wrote that a primitive accumulation of capital (the preexistence of a significant mass of capital and labor) was necessary to establish the capitalistic production of Europe, and that that primitive accumulation was in fact the enslavement of Africans (Marx, 1867/n.d.). As a result, African Internationalism identifies the root problem to be capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism, rather than racism. This is why a focus on racism will not address effectively the problems faced by Africans, because it is unable to change the material conditions experienced by Africans. In turn, when one focuses on the inequities in education, one can utilize the theory of African Internationalism to understand why every effort to eliminate racism, discrimination, bias, and inequity in education has failed. Thus, there is a certain futility in current practices of addressing the challenges experienced by African and other minoritized students because of the focus on the symptoms of colonialism and capitalism (racism), rather than the root cause.
African Internationalism addresses the contradiction of antiracist actions by identifying it as liberalism. Liberalism subscribes to the very things that ensure that Africans will never achieve self-determination: a focus on individualism, an insistence that everyone is “equal,” and to indicate otherwise is reverse racism, and belief in the idea that anyone can achieve success through hard work (Starr, 1991). Organizations such as the NAACP, Urban League, and others are in concordance with this liberal policy by focusing on assimilation and relying on the goodwill of Whites with power to change the dismal circumstances experienced by Africans (Yeshitela, 1997b). The fact is, Africans do not experience injustice because White people do not like them, but because Africans “do not have the power to render their hatred or dislike impotent” (Yeshitela, 1997b, p. 17). This approach collides with the White liberal agenda because it takes the center away from White people and allows Africans to pursue self-determination independently of White peoples’ opinions or thoughts (Yeshitela, 1997b). Thus, the antiracism movement is firmly opposed to anti-imperialism, because it seeks to include Africans into the existing system, rather than deal with the contradictions of a system born of slavery and genocide, a system that cannot exist without the continued exploitation of African people. This opportunistic alliance of the liberal White ruling class and the Black petty bourgeoisie class requires assimilation into the White power structure. As such, proponents of this alliance deliberately and erroneously identify the pursuit of self-determination as a separatist, extremist, and radical action because they refuse to view the complexities of imperialism, colonialism, and parasitic capitalism as an explanation of the conditions faced by African and oppressed people (Yeshitela, 1987, 1997a, 1997b).
African Internationalism aligns closely with Starr’s (1991) definition of socialist social justice. However, African Internationalists would criticize at least one thing with regard to socialist social justice in terms of the necessary first steps to achieving this type of liberation. Because not every group is equal in terms of its experience of oppression, it would be impossible for all groups to participate equally in the emancipatory praxis. This is why African Internationalism states that liberation must be led by the African working class, as the most oppressed group; justice for this group would ensure justice for all groups.

African Internationalism recognizes and works under the idea of dual and contending power, a strategy of revolutionary national democratic power of the people that is consciously in contention with the power of the existing state in the service of the imperialist-serving ruling class (Yeshitela, 2010). Dual and contending power is “the ability of the African working class to provide for themselves through self-sufficient and sustainable means, without depending on their oppressor for food, shelter, or energy” (Uhuru Solidarity Movement Conference, 2009, para. 5). Allies in support of African liberation must be willing to take actions that provide material support for dual and contending power. Thus, a definition of action under African Internationalism for students might include political education about the theory and practice of African Internationalism; outreach and presentations to raise awareness and gain material resources from the general student and campus community to support goals and issues of African students; providing skills and expertise Euro American students have acquired as part of their unearned White privilege that are systematically denied to the African students; and supporting actions and campaigns of African student organizations, as
directed by African leadership, including protests, rallies, and direct action. Most importantly, however, allies must be a part of an organization. They cannot act as individuals because revolutionary theory and science have shown that only through organization can transformative change be achieved.

The White identity that seems so elusive in the literature has been articulated succinctly by the grass roots theory of African Internationalism, and came through over 10 years of struggle between the African People’s Socialist Party (APSP) and its creation of the African People’s Solidarity Committee (APSC). This struggle consisted of Euro Americans working under the leadership of the APSP but still attempting to work in their own interests or co-opting economic institutions of the APSP in direct opposition to the intention of economic self-determination for African people (Hess, 2012; Yeshitela, 2012). According to this theory, the role of Euro American people in overturning White power is one in which the self-interests of Euro Americans can only be deterred through a disciplined stand of solidarity under the leadership of African liberation. In other words, Europeans cannot successfully lead any liberatory movement in which White power is dismantled unless it is done so under the direct leadership of Africans and other oppressed people. As Paolo Freire (1970/2006) said, “This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well” (p. 44).
CHAPTER 3—RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methods used to examine the attitudes, development, and practices of Euro American students allies, and how they supported the interests of African students in ways that addressed the racial microaggressions and forced assimilation experienced by African students at Historically White Institutions (HWIs).

In terms of research design, I first discuss the qualitative method of inquiry and why it is best suited for this study. Next, I describe the methodology used to address the research questions, the context and setting of the study, the data collection process, and the procedures used for analysis. I conclude with the steps used for trustworthiness of the findings, confidentiality, the role of the researcher, and the limitations of the methodology.

**Research Questions**

The research questions that were used to guide the design and execution of this study were as follows:

1. What attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice are held among Euro American students identified as allies at HWIs in the Southwestern region of the United States?

2. What sociocultural factors situated within HWIs challenge and reinforce prevailing attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice among Euro American students?
3. How do critical events, factors, experiences, or incidences relating to race influence Euro American students’ attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice?

**Research Design**

In this section, I discuss conducting a qualitative study and the use of phenomenology as the research method selected for this study.

**Qualitative Method of Inquiry**

Understanding how people construct meaning and make sense of their experiences is essential to qualitative methods of inquiry (Creswell, 2009; Merriam & Caffarella, 2007). A qualitative methodology was most appropriate for this study, because it was consistent with a social constructivist perspective in which it is assumed that individuals will strive to understand the world in which they live and develop meanings about their experiences (Creswell, 2009). As a researcher using this perspective, I relied on the participants’ experiences as African student leaders and Euro American allies and the meanings they ascribed to their experiences. This approach was used to better understand how African students and allies experienced the culture of a Historically White Institution. Further, for the allies, understanding their experiences as allies on campus was reflected best through qualitative methods. Qualitative studies tend to provide a more detailed and rich description of the participants’ lived experiences than quantitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Particularly in this study, the social and historical meanings that participants provided to the questions and their interpretations based on social, historical, and cultural contexts generated a body of information that could not be gleaned through other methods (Creswell, 2009).
Phenomenology

A phenomenological methodological approach was used for this study. This method focuses on a commitment to understanding social phenomena from the actor’s own perspective of how he or she examines his or her experience of the world. A key assumption in phenomenology is that individual’s perceptions of reality are significant in shaping how they experience and make sense of the social contexts and interactions. The foundational question in phenomenology is: What is the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people? (M. Q. Patton, 2002).

Phenomenology was developed at the end of World War I by Edmund Husserl, although its origins can be traced back to Hegel and Kant (Groenewald, 2004). Husserl sought to return to the concrete, stating that anything outside of immediate experience becomes unreliable. The content of personal consciousness captures the external world, since objects in the external world do not exist independently from personal consciousness (Groenewald, 2004).

A phenomenological approach was the appropriate method for this study because I was concerned with illuminating and deconstructing issues and relationships of oppression, marginalization, power, and privilege in a critical way. Further, phenomenology involves an extensive exploration of a small number of participants (Creswell, 2009). I wanted to explore the meanings that individuals attached or ascribed to their experiences as African students or as allies, and the exploratory nature of this study brings clarity to the experiences described and reflected upon by the participants.
Theoretical Perspective

The theory used in this study as a framework for viewing and analyzing the findings is African Internationalism. As discussed in Chapter 2, the major tenets of African Internationalism are (a) that capitalism as a world economy was born out of slavery of Africans and an assault on other areas of the world, (b) that the consolidation of a political economy and national identity as a result of slavery is attributable to the wealth of Europe and the United States at the expense of oppressed people, (c) that parasitic capitalism will preserve itself by preventing Africans to unite under one national identity to realize their power, and (d) that all Euro Americans hold the status of an oppressor, regardless of class, because they enjoy the benefits and privileges of parasitic capitalism at the expense of those who are not White. African Internationalism concludes that the way to overturn this parasitic relation is for the African working class to lead an effort of self-determination.

In its application to the campus environment, Euro American students who act as allies would support issues of African students while working under African student leadership. The anticolonial focus of African Internationalism provides a lens for understanding the experiences of the participants in this study.


I also relied on Starr’s (1991) definitions of conservative, liberal, and socialist social justice as a way to illuminate the level or the stage of development of allies in terms of the types of behaviors and actions they exhibit.
Research Setting and Context

The purpose of this study was to identify Euro American students at HWIs defined as allies and explore their experiences as they sought to make the campus more affirming and hospitable to African students through principled actions of solidarity. Identifying and examining the experiences of Euro American allies can assist in creating a student-driven movement in which Euro American students support the interests of African students on campus, concretely overturning the campus climate in which racial microaggressions, forced assimilation, and systemic practices of neocolonialism occur.

Research Setting

Allies were interviewed from four institutions in the Southwest region of the United States. I have provided pseudonyms for each of the campuses. Two institutions were large public universities; West Coast University was a HWI founded in 1960 and had experienced a racialized party in 2010 that drew national attention. Sunny State University was a HWI founded in 1897. The other two institutions were community colleges; Downtown College was founded in 1914 and Suburban College in 1964. The study was initially focused on West Coast University but was expanded to other colleges and universities. This was due to the inability of African student leaders at West Coast University to identify more than one ally on their campus.

West Coast University is located in one of the wealthiest communities in the United States. This area has average incomes of $113,521 in 2007 and median incomes about $20,000 higher than the surrounding community, and $30,000 higher than median incomes in the United States (“Family Income,” n.d.). The undergraduate enrollment of the university in 2012 was nearly 30,000. Currently, 66% of the undergraduate
population is deemed “Students of Color.” However, Asians comprise 44% of this demographic and African students are less than 2% of the total university population. Sunny State University has an undergraduate enrollment of about 26,000 students, with nearly 40% of students listed as White and 3.9% as African. In contrast, in the surrounding community, Africans comprised 6.9% of the population (U.S. Census, 2013).

The two community colleges were part of a three-college community college district. Downtown College is located in the heart of downtown and has over 17,000 students enrolled; 26% were White, and 12% were African (“Demographics,” 2012). Suburban College had an enrollment of 34,000, with 40% White students and 7% African students (“Annual Report,” 2012).

Description of Sample

I interviewed two groups of students for this study using purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is choosing a sample of a population that fits the characteristics of the study’s purpose and its research questions (M. Q. Patton, 2002). Snowball sampling is identifying individuals through other participants who know potential interviewees (M. Q. Patton, 2002). These selection criteria were formulated based on the assumption that African students who are in elected leadership positions are viewed as leaders by their peers. I felt they could speak knowledgeably about the campus climate and culture due to their involvement on campus. In the selection of allies, I assumed that African students would be the best experts in determining those who belong to this group.

Three African student leaders who held positions in student government or student organizations comprised the group of students selected through purposive
sampling. Two of the students were from West Coast University and one was from Sunny State University. The primary intention was to elicit referrals for potential allies who supported the interests of African students on campus through snowball sampling from the interviews with the African student leaders. This approach was selected because even the best-intentioned Euro Americans sometimes do not always understand how to support African students (Michael & Conger, 2009). By soliciting potential ally interviewees from African students, more credibility is established in terms of their allyhood in comparison to asking Euro American students who identify themselves as allies. In other words, sometimes Euro American students may believe themselves to be allies, but African students may not consider those students to be allies. The other purpose of interviewing African student leaders was to understand their perspective of the campus environment in terms of support for African students. This helped to establish a comparison point when asking allies similar questions, in order to see the differences, if any, in how the campus was perceived.

As mentioned previously, there was some difficulty in identifying allies, and the study was expanded to three additional campuses in order to interview a minimum of 10 ally students. Further, even after this expansion, other methods had to be employed to find allies because African student leaders at the campuses were unable to name enough allies. I sent approximately 30 emails to Black/Afrikan Student Unions and other African cultural campus organizations across California and other states, eliciting no responses. Therefore, secondary methods were used to identify allies. Table 1 provides information about how allies were identified at each campus.
Table 1

*Method of Identification of Allies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Method of identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>West Coast University</td>
<td>African student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Sunny State University</td>
<td>African student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Sunny State University</td>
<td>African student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Sunny State University</td>
<td>Professor (Chicano)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Sunny State University</td>
<td>Professor (African)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td>Sunny State University</td>
<td>Education professor (African)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>West Coast University</td>
<td>Friend of ally who was identified by African student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan</td>
<td>Downtown College</td>
<td>Counselor who coordinated Uplift program (African)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula</td>
<td>Suburban College</td>
<td>Sister of ally identified by Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Suburban College</td>
<td>Professor (African), verified by African student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Suburban College</td>
<td>Professor (African), verified by African student leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At West Coast University, which had less than a 2% African student population, one ally, Jacob, was readily identified by two African student leaders. An additional ally, Taylor, was in turn identified by Jacob. At Sunny State University, two students, Trevor and Mark, were identified by two African student leaders, and three others, Sarah, Jennifer, and Brittany were identified by professors who taught in either ethnic studies or education classes that dealt with race, ethnic identity, or cultural issues. At Downtown College, a student, Megan, was identified by an African counselor who worked in the Uplift program. This program was designed to support African students but was open to all students. In turn, this student brought her sister, Paula, into the study as an ally. At Suburban College, the Chair of the Black Studies department identified two allies, Linda and Madison, and confirmed this selection with African students in her classes and with
leaders in the Black Student Union. Thus, out of the 11 allies interviewed, only 5 were selected on the basis of African student leaders’ identification.

The purpose of selecting these two groups of students was to determine how each group felt about the current campus climate with respect to support for and inclusion of African students, and the actions the allies took to support African students’ interests. However, the primary unit of analysis was the Euro American students identified as allies. The African student leaders were members of student government or student cultural organizations. The reason for including a broader scope of African student leaders was to mitigate the possible lack of African students in student government board or council positions. Many times, African students will be leaders within cultural organizations, so I drew from these organizations as another source of leadership. Interviews with African student leaders were conducted in order to determine their perception of the campus climate and support for African students, as well as their own personal experience of being African on their respective campuses. While these students were not the focus of the study, this information allowed me to compare their perceptions about the campus environment with those of the Euro American students in the study.

The 11 students regarded as allies by African students or professors were interviewed to gain an understanding of their knowledge and awareness of the conditions faced by African students on campus and what motivated them to become allies. The actions that they had taken to challenge colonialism and racism on campus and their attempts to create a more affirming environment on campus were also explored. African student leaders were recruited by reviewing the campus Associated Students web pages and contacting students who were either Board members or Council members
through electronic mail. There was only one student who held a student government position, so I also contacted leaders from the Black Student Union via the same electronic process. Euro American student allies were selected through snowball sampling, first based on referral from the African students who were interviewed in this study and then through contacting professors on campus who taught courses related to ethnic studies or cultural competency.

In the recruitment of allies, this group of students was asked to confirm that they identified themselves as allies. I provided a definition of an ally and asked the students if this definition was something with which they identified. Once this was confirmed, they were asked to participate in the interviews. The following definition was used for Euro American allies: a member of the dominant culture who works to end the current system of oppression that allows them privilege and power based on social group membership.

**Data Collection Strategies**

Purposive sampling of three African students and snowball sampling of 11 Euro American allies was conducted. Data collection occurred from October 2012 through May 2013 through semi-structured one-on-one interviews with the three African students and 11 Euro American allies. I used purposive sampling to identify the African student leaders because I was looking for participants who had knowledge related to the research topic (Groenewald, 2004). I conducted one interview each with the African student leaders who were involved in either student government or campus cultural organizations dedicated to the interests of African students. One of the students, Jeremy, was a senior, and had been involved in the demands made by the Black Student Union regarding West Coast University’s racialized Harlem Ho-down incident. He also was active in student
government. Michael, a sophomore at West Coast University, was involved in the BSU and other cultural organizations. Ricky, a senior at Sunny State University was involved in three African cultural organizations at his campus. These interviews lasted approximately 1 hour. Snowball sampling allowed me to interview ally participants, based on recommendations from the African student leaders and professors, who acted as gatekeepers or key insiders (Groenewald, 2004). In addition to providing potential allies to interview, African student leaders provided their views on the campus environment including the voice and power of Euro American students in comparison to African students, physical and emotional safety on campus for both African and Euro American students, and perceived support for African student interests from administration, faculty, and students. Because African students’ experiences were not the focus of this study, their voices are used in this study as a barometer or mode of comparison of their realities to the perceived realities that Euro American allies hold regarding support for African students’ interests on campus.

I conducted two interviews each with the allies, which ranged from 30 to 90 minutes. The first interview protocol had approximately 40 questions and the second one had approximately 15 questions. I used face-to-face interviews because indirect information provided through the lens of each interviewee provides historical information which can result in rich findings (Creswell, 2009).

Second interviews with students occurred to clarify preliminary concepts and categories that emerged from the first interviews and to confirm my initial interpretations of the experiences they shared (Creswell, 2009). Interview protocols can be found in Appendices A, B, and C.
The initial interview protocols were piloted with students with similar characteristics to the two groups in order to ensure that the questions elicited thoughtful responses. Some of the interview questions were drawn from the In-Depth Interview Schedule DAS 98-Form B (Bonilla-Silva, 2006) and the survey of White college students’ racial attitudes (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000).

I also collected some basic demographic data not captured during interviews using Survey Monkey, an online survey tool. I collected this information because, as I began to analyze data, I wanted additional information on students’ upbringing in order to see the similarities and differences among the ally students in terms of socioeconomic status, neighborhood and school environment, and political upbringing.

I submitted the research study design and data collection instruments to the San Diego State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. This IRB approval can be found in Appendix D. An approved Informed Consent Form (see Appendix E) was signed by each participant to ensure that they understood the research process and their rights to decline to participate or answer all questions.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Interviews were transcribed by professional transcribers and me. I transcribed 10 of the 25 interviews. The remaining 15 were transcribed professionally. I then coded the transcripts using a constant comparison coding strategy (Charmaz, 2006). Constant comparison coding entails making comparisons at each stage of analysis. For example, I compared statements within the same interviews and across different interviews (Charmaz, 2006). A web-based application called Saturate was used to code and analyze data. Saturate allowed me to group my codes into categories and then export the
information into an excel spreadsheet. From that point, I separated out my categories and developed themes. Salient themes and subthemes were identified from the coding process and, once themes were determined, I developed a narrative with a detailed discussion of the themes and an analysis and interpretation of the findings, which is provided in Chapter 4.

There are two perspectives of phenomenological analysis: that of the participant and that of the researcher (Groenewald, 2004). As the researcher, I had to be careful to set aside my own assumptions, preconceptions, and prejudices in order to let the participants’ reality emerge (Moustakas, 1994). Prior to the coding process, I engaged in *epoché*, which is a process of critical self-reflection used in order to assist me in suspending judgment about the participants’ experiences and engage in acknowledging my biases, prejudices, and viewpoint regarding the phenomena being investigated (Moustakas, 1994). During the coding process, I kept informal notes about my thoughts and assumptions; this *bracketing* ensured that I maintained awareness about my own presumptions, biases, and experiences as I read about the participants’ experiences (M. Q. Patton, 2002).

I also wrote brief memos as I analyzed the data as a way to organize my thoughts about particular categories or codes that were emerging, or to give me a composite on each of the participants regarding their experiences and how they operated in terms of level of development as an ally (Edwards, 2006; Waters, 2010) and definition of social justice (Starr, 1991) with which they aligned. This eventually assisted me in articulating my findings in a meaningful and coherent way.
Trustworthiness and Quality Assurance

Systematic steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness of findings. In addition to interviews, I also posed a brief questionnaire to gather demographic data. I used member checking and peer debriefing which assisted in strengthening construct validity (Yin, 2009), as did establishing a chain of evidence during data collection. An audit trail of the original interview protocols and the resulting audio files, transcripts from each interview conducted, personal notes, and Saturate outputs were also part of the chain of evidence.

Peer debriefing occurred in consultation with my dissertation committee and member-checking occurred by providing students with an opportunity to review their transcripts and make corrections or clarify their thoughts. Peer debriefing also occurred through discussions with an African male college student who was involved in activism. This discussion centered on my own ally involvement as a way to reflect on how my views could influence data analysis. The African student leader interviews also provided information that assisted me in the analysis of data because it gave me information about how they perceived the campus. This enabled me to have a basic understanding of the campus environment when asking ally participants questions related to their perceptions of the campus environment for African students.

I maintained confidentiality by giving a pseudonym to each student interviewed. This was important, because this phenomenological study does discuss information that could identify the universities and colleges, so descriptions of the students needed to be sufficiently vague.
Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher can experience a sustained and intensive relationship with the participants which requires him or her to examine personal, biases, values, and personal background that may influence and shape interpretations of the study (Creswell, 2009).

As a researcher, I realized my interpretations would be influenced by my long association in working with African and other minoritized groups in education. My education and background include multicultural counseling and social justice, with specializations addressing the needs of students of color in special education and providing multicultural counseling support to school personnel. I have worked primarily with African and Latino students, as well as low-income, first generation and refugee/immigrant student groups from K-12 to community colleges and the university setting.

In addition, my community involvement includes working with the African liberation movement as a White ally. In this work, I organize in the Euro American community, gaining resources and support for reparations and African self-determination. Thus, the theory of African Internationalism is one with which I am intimately familiar and involved.

Since coming into contact with the theory of African Internationalism in 2010, I have moved from a multinational, antiracist stance to one that embraces African Internationalism, which now guides my approach in both my professional work and personal life.

I chose to do my research at neighboring institutions, rather than the institution at which I am employed. Had I interviewed student leaders enrolled at my place of
They would have known me and my position at the campus, thus perhaps influencing the study. Although I was familiar with the colleges and universities, I did not have any well-established relationships with either faculty or students at three of the institutions. I was acquainted with the chair of the Black Studies department who assisted me by referring several students in consultation with the Black Student Union leaders. The fourth institution was my previous place of employment; however, I did not begin data collection until nearly 6 months after I left the university. I did interview three students whom I knew at that university, but those interviews came about through the established processes discussed previously; I did not know in advance that these students would be referred to or volunteer for the study.

I took steps to maintain balance and objectivity throughout the research process by using peer debriefing with my dissertation chair and committee, as well as having the participants review their interview transcripts and check for the accuracy of their thoughts and the information they shared.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research methods and provides a description of how this qualitative research project was conducted using a phenomenological approach. A description of the research setting, the data collection and analysis methods that were employed and my role as the researcher were also discussed. The next two chapters discuss the result of the study and implications for future researchers and practitioners.
CHAPTER 4—FINDINGS

Findings from interviews with 11 ally participants are discussed in this chapter. Ally experiences are described, many times with verbatim quotes from the participants. There were four main themes that resulted from the data: (a) what it means to be an ally, (b) ally development, (c) conceptualizing racial injustice, and (d) the practice of being an ally. Each theme had several subthemes; these are introduced by using a data presentation technique called “in vivo,” in which student quotes are used to illuminate the subthemes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). These findings provide insight into the shared experiences of participants, as well as the range of the ally experience in terms of the depth and breadth of understanding and actions taken as allies at Historically White Institutions (HWIs). In addition to examining the themes and subthemes that emerged through participant interviews, I also discuss participant perceptions as they relate to the three research questions. Therefore, this chapter is organized by first looking at the themes, and then examining each research question and participants’ responses that illuminate information about the research questions.

In analyzing the development of allies, I used Edwards (2006) conceptual model of Aspiring Allies for Self-Interests, Aspiring Allies for Altruism, and Allies for Social Justice. Not every student fell cleanly into one category only; depending on the questions they answered, they moved between categories, but only going up or down one level of allyhood. For example, a student who fell predominantly in the category of an Ally for Social Justice did not appear to have any responses that were at the first level, an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interests. However, this student may have had some responses that aligned with the category of Aspiring Ally for Altruism. Although I used Edwards’ model, my
analysis of the findings also incorporates Waters’ (2010) developmental model in which I believe the allies in the initial, intermediate, and mature stages of development align closely with the characteristics of Edwards’ three types of allies, respectively. The research questions that guided this study are also addressed through these findings.

**Ally Profiles**

Ten of the 11 allies were between the ages of 18 to 26. The one exception was a 47-year-old woman, Linda. Five participants (Megan, Mark, Taylor, Jacob, and Sarah) came from predominantly White neighborhoods, and three (Trevor, Madison, and Linda) stated they grew up in White only areas. Two participants (Paula and Brittany) grew up in diverse neighborhoods with many ethnicities, and one student, Jennifer, who lived in a predominantly African neighborhood, explained that when her grandmother originally bought her home the neighborhood was White, but over three generations it became predominantly African. Table 2 depicts student demographic information.

In terms of socioeconomic status, Jennifer described her background as poor and working class and Jacob stated he came from an upper middle class background. The remaining students considered themselves to be middle class, with Trevor stating that he came from both a poor and middle class background. Linda, the oldest ally, described her upbringing as radical or revolutionary, stating that she came from a labor movement family. Trevor felt his family was politically liberal with a background in the labor movement, as well. Megan, Brittany, Taylor, Mark, Paula, and Sarah came from liberal family backgrounds. Jennifer described her upbringing as politically moderate, while Jacob found his to be conservative. Mark felt his upbringing included liberal, moderate, conservative, and racist elements.
Table 2

Student Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Socioeconomic status</th>
<th>Precollege school environment</th>
<th>Political upbringing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Diverse</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly Asian</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Diverse, many cultures</td>
<td>Rad/Revol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Diverse, many cultures</td>
<td>Lib/Mod/Cons/Racist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Middle/poor</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Lib/Labor Mvt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Up middle class</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Diverse</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly Black/Mexican</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Mostly Black</td>
<td>Poor, work class</td>
<td>Diverse, many cultures</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants’ precollege schooling was all based in the public education system. Linda, Mark, and Jennifer described their schools as diverse with many cultures. Brittany explained that her school was predominantly Asian, while Paula said her schooling was with predominantly African and Mexican students; she was one of four Whites at her school. Trevor described his school experience as White only, mentioning that he knew one African student during his precollege days, and the remainder of participants described their school setting as predominantly White.

What It Means to Be an Ally

Although they were not the focus of this study, it is important first to recognize the contributions made by the African student leaders to this study. These students identified Euro Americans they recognized as allies, and provided insight into how they
could determine this. Further, the African students provided rich information regarding the campus environment and how they perceived it in terms of support from administration, faculty, and students; safety on campus in comparison to Euro American students; and voice and power African students on campus had in comparison to Euro American students. This information allowed me to compare their reality with the perceived reality of their Euro American counterparts.

One of the African student leaders, Michael, provided this definition of how he determined if a White student was an ally, and he used this definition to decide who he would refer to me for this study:

Someone who truly wants to understand the struggle [that] African students go through on campus but [who do] not want to be sympathetic. They want to have that understanding and be in coalition with Black students. At the same time not overstepping the boundaries of thinking they can . . . how can I say it . . . someone who is there to understand and not thinking they can talk about the Black experience or know how Black people act or know what the entire population needs.

This definition is important because it provides clear guidelines to Euro American students about their role. One of the other African student leaders, Jeremy, told me he knew a lot of White students who perhaps tried to be allies but who were not “there” yet:

I know a lot of students who are in the process about being allies; they just need to work on a few things. They personally feel this injustice for people they call their friends, people they break bread with, people they are close to and . . . their
feelings get hurt when they’re not included or not seen as part of the same community.

Jeremy stated that some White students who tried to fit in with African students on campus wanted all the privileges of a community as a Black person. He said this unwarranted desire was why his roommate, another African student leader on his campus, was conducting workshops on how to be an ally:

They also have their own struggles with their own identity. They start analyzing themselves in relation to culture, and they get to this realization that “I’ve been deprived of culture because of Whiteness.” This is a really hard thing to process, especially when you are on the road to allyship.

Jeremy’s statement indicated that Euro American students’ struggle with their own identity could mean that they attempt to appropriate African culture. Jeremy went on to state this very thought by stating that as allies start in the process they like to adopt other cultures, “It’s not overly offensive; it’s just that they do not have to do this; they don’t have to put on things.”

The final African student leader, Ricky, stated that he felt allies were:

People who have realized their privilege and are working to try to do something about it. I think that is one of the big things; first recognizing the privilege in being White and then actively trying to do something about it in terms of, not just working with Black students, but really just within themselves trying to really see where privilege is taking hold in their attitude and beliefs and trying to really restruct—think differently.
He went on to say, “I don’t even know if they talk about White privilege on this campus . . . not . . . White students. I’ve never heard them engage in any type of conversation about White privilege.” Clearly, African student leaders had concrete ideas about and examples of White students as allies and could recognize those who were well developed in their allyhood, as well as those who perhaps were taking the first steps to engage in ally behaviors. The struggle for Euro Americans to recognize their own White privilege is an important step, yet this discussion appeared to be absent from the consciousness of many Euro American students on campus. In the words of one African student leader:

There is this thing of people wanting to act Black or consume Blackness in body, and that makes [us] uncomfortable. Why do you feel you have to be down? Why can’t you be yourself? And I think that’s the best . . . those are the best White allies . . . those who feel they can be themselves without feeling they have to put on or use a certain type of jargon or slang.

There was a theme with the African students regarding how Euro American students react to the discovery of White privilege. Not only is White privilege difficult for Euro American students to grasp, but when they do, they tend to want to appropriate African culture or turn their backs on Whiteness in ways that are not always conducive in showing their allyhood.

Ally definitions from the study participants ranged from simple to sophisticated. Six of the 11 students used the words “support” or “supportive” in their definition, with three using the word “help.” These terms were used to describe what an ally does for African students. Two students thought that everyone should be “equal”; one felt he did not particularly support African students over other minoritized groups (although he was
identified as an ally by African student leadership) and did not think different races
needed to be supported; they just needed equal treatment. One student defined allyhood
in terms of collaboration and empowerment; another student felt that allyhood included
sharing and expanding a knowledge base that worked to benefit both African and Euro
American students. Two students began their definitions by stating that an ally was not
an enemy, or was the opposite of an enemy.

**Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest**

Several participants appeared to be Aspiring Allies for Self-interest as defined by
Edwards (2006). Aspiring Allies for Self-interest tend to look at oppression as acts of
individuals rather than a consequence of systems, and take a charity stance in that they
may feel they are “helping” African students, rather than fully understanding the need for
self-determination. This perspective can be seen in some of the students’ definitions,
such as Paula’s, who said, “An ally is someone who is there to help other people and be
there to support them.” Madison, who exhibited properties of both an Aspiring Ally for
Self-Interest and an Aspiring Ally for Altruism, stated the following:

An ally is someone who is the opposite of an enemy. It is someone that they can
... a person they go to, to get help or support in whatever you’re trying to get
support or help from. It’s a person that you can just ... someone like a friend,
something that you’re not scared to go to and is not necessarily that race has to ... or ethnicity has to be a controlling factor of.

Sarah felt an ally was “a supportive person who is willing to stick up for what they
believe in”; and Megan stated that her definition of an ally was “someone willing to stand
up for the Black community.” Brittany also appeared to fall within this category, defining
an ally as “someone who other people can trust and feel comfortable coming to and understand that I’m not going to judge them or be prejudiced or stereotyped or anything like that” as did Jennifer who felt an ally was “someone who is going to collaborate and maybe empower the other person.”

These definitions indicated that the participants’ responses to this question aligned most closely with the characteristics of an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest (Edwards, 2006) or an ally in the initial stage of development (Waters, 2010). The responses were uncritical and focused on being a “friend” or providing help. In some definitions, the focus was more on the participant rather than the groups they professed to support; this is seen in stating that they would stick up for something that they themselves value.

Several of these students indicated a personal interest in being an ally because of a friend or acquaintance who they felt experienced unjust treatment, which is characteristic of an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest. Other participants made comments about how difficult it was to believe that White privilege still existed. This showed a lack of understanding of oppression as a system, and an unwillingness or inability to see White privilege. For example, when asked about White privilege and what it meant to her, Brittany responded:

For me . . . I never thought that I experienced it until now that I am at [Sunny State], and I’m hearing stories from other people in the way that their lives are impacted by it. And it makes me realize that “Oh, maybe that [White privilege] did happen to me.” Maybe I did experience it; I just didn’t know because since I am White, I don’t have to really face it. Somebody doesn’t have to tell me it was happening, and the only way a White person’s gonna know that they are getting
White privilege or those types [sic] is that they realize it on their own. I don’t think until recently that I am really learning that maybe I am receiving these. Sarah mentioned on a couple of occasions that her close (Euro American) friend’s boyfriend, who was an African involved in the criminal justice system, may have had a better outcome with the judge because his White girlfriend was in court with him showing support. Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest tend to concentrate on personal friends or individuals they know, as opposed to support for groups of people who experience oppression. Paula, who had been accused by African students of getting good grades in high school due to White privilege, thought that she experienced reverse racism as a result of this accusation. When asked if she felt she experienced discrimination based on her skin color, she said she did. However, she said she also recognized her White privilege in comparison to some of her African friends. In this case, Paula was unable to distinguish racism as having a relationship to power; she felt that Africans could be racist also.

The allies in this section provided descriptions and definitions of an ally that embodied most of the characteristics of the Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest. Further, the participants who provided these descriptions were all selected by professors; none were selected by African student leaders.

**Aspiring Allies for Altruism**

According to Edwards (2006), Aspiring Allies for Altruism are those individuals whose primary motivation is to eliminate oppression for others and are interested in helping the helpless. Two students who were selected by African student leaders defined allyhood in terms of believing that people should be treated equally. Linda felt being an
ally meant “[Understanding that] everybody’s created equal and that we’re all humans on the planet. We’re just another species of animals . . . we’re all the same because we can breed with each other.” Linda tended towards Edwards definition of an Aspiring Ally for Altruism. This perspective suggests that this type of ally still feels superior to others (whether conscious of it or not) and that uplifting the oppressed is an admirable act.

Trevor exhibited aspects of both an Aspiring Ally for Altruism and an Ally for Social Justice, based on a number of his reflections during his interview. Trevor said:

I would consider myself an ally, but it’s not a title I would give myself because I don’t think myself as particularly supporting Black students over Latino students or Asian students. I don’t really see as if the different races need to be supported, especially for me, it’s more of an everybody should be treated equally, and therefore I think I would fall under the terms of being a Black ally, but at the same time I wouldn’t necessarily put that on my resume.

Madison, whose definition of an ally aligned in many ways with that of an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest also met some of the characteristics of an Aspiring Ally for Altruism. She looked at herself as an “exception” compared to other Euro Americans, as can be seen in some of her statements:

So most of the books I’m reading for class, it’s like all White people or all Caucasians, and I’m like I’m the one exception. Stop saying all White people!

And it kind of attacks me and I realize that it’s not me, it’s them.

This feeling that she was an exception is typical for Aspiring Allies for Altruism who tend to separate themselves from other Whites and distance themselves from White privilege.
Allies for Social Justice

Allies for Social Justice saw issues in terms of classism, racism, and other forms of oppression, rather than as isolated individual acts (Edwards, 2006). They also recognized that liberation for oppressed peoples also meant liberation for oppressors. Although Madison, Trevor, and Linda met some of the criteria for Aspiring Allies for Altruism in their definitions of what it meant to be an ally, overall in their interviews they also displayed characteristics of Allies for Social Justice. Allies for Social Justice understand the systemic nature of oppression and work to support minoritized students in their interests, rather than feeling as if these students need their help. Two other students, Jacob and Taylor, clearly met the definition of Allies for Social Justice as well.

Linda grew up in a revolutionary household that was deeply involved in labor movement issues. She had an interesting mix of sophistication about some issues and talked about racism and White privilege as an individual issue in the following way:

I mean I’m gay, and I’m a woman, and I’m a little bit more masculine to others but White privilege? I like to think it doesn’t happen, but I know it does. I think it’s wrong; I wish that people would see beyond color. But it’s more of an issue of class warfare. It means that Whites have an edge up when looking for a job, bank loans, etc.; the playing field is not level . . . I feel, personally, in the daily contact I have . . . there’s not a lot of people out there that are racists. . . . And I’m really happy for that, but this White privilege needs to stop.

Linda recognized that class was an overarching issue but at the same time felt that racism was more of a problem in the south and with a few individuals in her region. This individualistic approach seesawed with her recognition of systemic issues; her responses
during her interview fell into the three categories of allies, depending on the question asked.

Mark was another student who had elements of both an Aspiring Ally for Altruism and an Ally for Social Justice. His main goal in life was to make a difference in the world, no matter how small. He was identified by African student leadership because he was one of the few Euro American members of both the campus Black Student Union and another organization for African males. His involvement in these two organizations came about by a personal invitation from the then-president of the BSU and later, an invitation from a member of the organization that was comprised of African men. He met the BSU president during a campus welcoming event at which the organization had a booth, and members were teaching African dance to passersby. Mark was one of the only Euro Americans who joined in on the dances. This appeared to have an impact on the president, who invited him to join the BSU. When asked about White privilege, he said he had engaged in several discussions of McIntosh’s (1990) work in a sociology class and at a recent BSU meeting:

I think it’s self-explanatory, in that it’s the privilege that Whites or Caucasians have. The hidden thing is that a lot of the privileges, we don’t really see them in ourselves, or that we treat members of our own community with privileges that we don’t give to other ethnic groups.

Mark described an ally as

for one thing, not an enemy. Someone who supports [African students] and can support them in a lot of different ways; support them doing labor, or at events,
also through discussion. I try to help expand the knowledge base, both my knowledge base and their knowledge base.

In this description, Mark acknowledged the collaborative nature of the relationship and did not appear to use the terminology of support in a demeaning way; he clearly showed his role as working with the students, not on their behalf, which was indicative of an Ally for Social Justice. At the same time, he felt supporting African students was the right thing to do and that it aligned with his goal to make a difference in the world, which was more in step with an Aspiring Ally for Altruism.

Two students showed an in-depth understanding of what it meant to be an ally, recognizing that their own liberation is tied to the liberation of the oppressed (Freire, 1970/2006). Their definitions met or exceeded the definition of being an Ally for Social Justice discussed by Edwards (2006). The most complex definition was provided by Jacob, who stated:

I think that the definition of an ally, and what I really strive to be as an ally, is somebody that [sic] recognizes the struggles that people are in. So for Black students, the struggles that Black folks are in while also simultaneously acknowledging that I don’t want to insert myself into their struggle. I don’t want to privilege myself and say, yes I know what you’re going through; I know the struggle. I know there’s a difference between feeling it as an ally and being in solidarity, and saying yes, I understand what you’re going through as a Black body. So I think that an experiential definition of being an ally is being in solidarity and recognizing peoples’ struggles without trying to insert myself into the struggle.
Jacob was able to understand that he could not live the experience of an African and that it was not appropriate to pretend to understand the struggle. Instead, he knew he could support the struggle of African students in a respectful way that did not invalidate their experience. One of the women interviewed, Taylor, who also landed on the higher end of the complexity scale stated that:

First and foremost [an ally is someone] who recognizes their privilege . . . understands the struggle but also understands that they will never be able to fully . . . undergo that struggle. Someone who definitely understands the power structure and struggles, [but] recognizes that “I don’t live this” and do my best not to be imposing on their space in any way. It’s about these communities; it’s not about me.

Both Jacob and Taylor attended West Coast University, which had less than 2% African students, and both of them really developed as allies after they began to attend the institution and participated in actions on campus that directly impacted African students. Their ability to provide a complex and critical definition of allyhood, as well as the tone and nature of their responses throughout their interviews, indicated that they understood White power and privilege, and recognized the systemic nature of oppression.

Just as the 11 participants varied in their level of allyhood, they also experienced varied ways in which they became allies. Their narratives about the ways in which they became aware of social injustice and disparities provided further insight into their understanding of the meaning of being an ally.
Development as an Ally

The 11 allies discussed the various ways and means by which they developed as allies in their interviews. The students came into their understanding of what it means to be an ally through a variety of means. In this section, I provide detail about how they began their journeys as allies through their upbringing, awareness, critical incidents, and education, and the steps they took to develop themselves further. It is interesting to note that many of the participants had their own experiences of being marginalized. Linda and Jacob stated that they were gay, and Madison and Mark had learning or developmental disabilities. Trevor and Jordan indicated they were raised primarily in a single parent home, while Madison experienced two different types of upbringings in terms of diversity, as a result of moving between her divorced parents’ homes. Brittany was a former foster youth, and Jennifer experienced growing up in poverty. Some, like Paula and Jennifer, because of their interaction with minoritized students at school or in their neighborhoods, observed the differences that existed based on color or race. Jacob did not become an ally until college experiences and further educational exposure made him reflect on the disparities and inequities that were previously invisible to him. Finally, for some of the participants, a critical incident occurred that politicized them and put them on their path. These experiences may have given the participants the ability to see the world through the lens of some sort of marginalization.

Upbringing

The students discussed their upbringing and how it attributed to their eventual path of being an ally. Trevor described his upbringing with his single mother parent:
I mean growing up, my mom was fairly aware of this sort of stuff. She would read *Mother Jones*, which is a magazine that deals with a lot of sort of liberal issues and stuff, not specifically for Black people but certainly would include issues, when they would come up. So she was fairly well-informed and kept me fairly well informed about stuff. Throughout school, we definitely went over some of the mainstream issues of things, like general equity between Blacks and Whites being a good thing.

Trevor felt that because there were so few students who were not White in his schools, there was not much opportunity to put into practice anything to do with diversity, something he actively put into practice once he attended college. He explained, “I grew up in a school that was 96% White people, and so there’s sort of a thing that goes on where we all get together like ‘Hey aren’t we . . . shouldn’t we all be really nice to Black people?’”

Jacob shared a similar background with Trevor in terms of the homogeneity of his upbringing and school experience, but differed in that he came from a conservative background as opposed to Trevor’s liberal one. Jacob’s father was a pastor and Jacob felt he lived “in a very bubbled, privileged environment.” Linda, who showed varied understandings of social justice said:

I was raised an atheist. I was raised a socialist and brought up to believe that everybody’s equal. We were raised in a labor movement household. So color’s not something that we were brought up to focus on. We hate capitalists, not people.
Linda again showed her liberal tendencies in a belief that “everybody’s equal,” while simultaneously displaying socialist social justice in recognizing that capitalism was integral to the oppression of Africans.

Because of a learning disability, Madison was put in special education classes in middle and high school, which meant she was exposed to more African and Mexican students, due to the over identification of these students into Special Education:

I went to a predominantly White school, and my parents thought that that predominantly White school could help me because I have a learning disability. . . . There were predominantly more African-Americans or other ethnicities, and I was one of the few minorities in the group. . . . And so I didn’t know where I belonged, I couldn’t be an ally or I couldn’t be an enemy, I was just neutral.

Madison also explained that her parents’ divorce was a compelling factor in her exposure to other cultures and ethnicities because she lived in two different households, one that was mostly in a White neighborhood and the other in a more diverse area. As a result, she said, “So the two different households, I ended up seeing two different sides to the world.” Madison’s exposure to students who were culturally different than her meant that she had many more interactions with minoritized students growing up. This led her to being open to opportunities of increased learning once she got to college, which was one of the reasons she voluntarily started taking Black Studies courses.

Paula experienced a certain kind of culture shock when she moved back to California and began attending a high school in which she was only one of four White students. She said:
Before that, I went to predominantly all White schools and so I got my first taste of mixed schools starting eighth grade, and it was really hard. Seeing the way that they would treat White people, it just was crazy to me because I would get picked on. I felt like they weren’t used to me or something.

Paula said her overwhelming shyness made her a target as well; it was not until high school that she became friends with many of the same students who had “picked on” her in middle school. Yet, instead of feeling animosity towards her African peers, she tried to prove that she was not racist and eventually developed friendships with them.

Brittany, who also had the experience of being a former foster youth, talked about a similar experience of moving from one neighborhood to another, which led to her feeling more comfortable around groups of people who were not Euro American:

I moved to [city] for sixth grade. And as soon as I started there, I wasn’t around White people for the rest of my academic career. It was predominantly Asians and Mexicans and some Black people, so for me as to why identify with most . . . I don’t identify too much with the White community, so that’s why.

Brittany noted that this early exposure meant that she was comfortable being in the Educational Opportunity Program which served predominantly minoritized students, once she was in college.

Megan, Mark, Sarah, and Taylor all grew up in predominantly White neighborhoods and attended predominantly White schools, with the exception of Mark, who noted that his school was diverse. Says Megan, as she reflected on her early exposure to racism:
I went to a predominantly White school in [town] and it’s still a problem [racism] in [town] and in the jails. I remember on my campus, there were only two African-Americans on my [high school] campus. Most of the racism fights happened between the Hispanics and Whites. [My town] is considered to be a really racist part [of the County].

Megan’s expression of pain showed how uncomfortable she was with her school environment, which contrasted with her family’s values which she felt were not racist.

Mark talked about growing up with a chemical imbalance and an autistic sister, both of which appeared to affect how he thought about the world. He stated that he was “a real brat” until he met a friend in third grade who had a profound effect on him, to the point where he resolved that his goal in life was to help change the world. He talked about the butterfly effect, saying “A small act of kindness here or there can have a big influence later on.” He was open in disclosing multiple attempts at suicide in his teens blaming that “part of myself being unable to handle the world, letting the emotional, chemical imbalance in my brain take control of me.” However, he felt that due to the influence of his childhood friend, he came out of his “loner shell”; he said he would never have joined the Black Student Union if he had not learned from his friend to try new things.

Sarah talked about her first recollection of racism and how she felt growing up when she heard racist remarks from people:

I remember I had a friend whose dad was racist and it just struck something inside of me as just being wrong, hateful and I don’t like that . . . well, I think there’s an automatic distaste for it, I can recognize when it is wrong and I definitely, it
would make me really uncomfortable if someone was saying something like that in front of somebody else. Almost like I would want to protect them and say “Hey, look that is wrong that you’re saying that.”

She explained that although her family never discussed racism or equality, she and her father would sometimes watch National Geographic or documentaries, such as one on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and have discussions about things related to equality and conditions around the world.

Taylor, the one student who acknowledged an upper middle class background, talked about the importance of her relationship with her father growing up:

My dad is really liberal. His family, they’re very progressive so growing up being parented by him that’s . . . I’m really rooted in my dad. . . . I am a lot like my dad and when he raised me it was . . . always, always, always instilling in me just the sense of respect for everyone, for the sake of yourself even.

The profound influence of her father, whom Taylor did not speak with for several years because her mother had demonized him during their divorce, was apparent. Taylor reflected, “Being respectful to everyone is always going to get you to the most healthy [sic] place in your life and in your sense of self. It’s just the best thing you can do. I really tried to practice my life like that all the time.” She felt because of the things her father taught her, she developed an “innate” sense of wrongdoing. As a result, she said, “I feel like I’ve developed a sense of noticing when people are being entirely invalidated and questioning why it was that way.”

Many of the students attributed their upbringing to their development as an ally. For some of the participants, their families’ values and political views informed their
development. The neighborhoods in which their families chose to live and the schools they attended all had a certain influence. Closely related to this, the next section discusses how the participants first became aware of racial injustice

**Awareness**

All the students were able to discuss when they first became aware of injustices or disparities between Africans and Whites. Taylor described an incident when her awareness about injustice hit her in a visceral way and made her begin to question the world around her. She was feeding the homeless at Christmas and served food to a man who had a condition that forced his head to tilt completely back, and “he had a homeless friend that was helping him eat, actually, and when I looked at that I just broke down and completely lost it.” She paused, took a deep breath, and then went on to say:

I just couldn’t stop crying because I was like, this is a group of individuals who are likely here because of reasons they had no control over, for example mental illness that’s completely rampant in homeless communities, and because others have deemed him as “savage”—like in way for whatever reason he’s denied resources, like access to healthcare that could have probably easily fixed that condition when he was a kid. But because he was born in a condition that he has no control over. he just has to suffer the brunt of this, and it’s for no reason whatsoever. It’s perpetuated, too.

She said that this experience caused her to “hit a really low spot” and forced her to look at the world in a critical way and question everything she saw:

Oh, why are all these billboards—why is it only White people? Why is that it?

Why are luxuries exclusive to the exact same type of person? And why are the
people who are doing well at my school all look a certain way? Why are the
people that [sic] are in detention with me when I am tardy—why do I suddenly see
a sea of Black people that I never see in my other classes? With my [Advanced
Placement] classes?

Trevor had thought deeply about diversity and racism growing up, due to his
mother’s influence; he made a decision to attend Sunny State University because he read
about how diverse it was. In comparison to his own upbringing, in which his contact with
African and other minoritized groups was minimal, he was eager to explore living and
interacting in a diverse setting because he felt he wanted to experience something
different that would open up his eyes:

I still feel like I kept a lot of the basic attitude I had back in upstate New York but
it’s not like it was a bad attitude necessarily, it was just like an attitude that lacked
any . . . like “let’s all be equitable,” but we don’t actually have to do anything.

However, he was very surprised by the lack of interaction among diverse groups that
occurred on his campus. He truly had believed that once a person was in a diverse
setting, he or she would have to actually do something because the disparities were
apparent and required interaction among groups:

It was actually one of the weird things I noticed when I got here. I was like, why
do all the races hang out with each other? Why are all the Mexicans hanging out
with the Mexicans, and why are all the Pacific Islanders hanging out with each
other, and Black students always hang out over here? And there wasn’t actually
all that much mixing going on.
It had not occurred to Trevor that more had to happen than just bringing different ethnic groups together in proximity to each other; he felt that interactions would naturally happen as a result of this. For Trevor, this is still one of the saddest realities he has had to face.

Jennifer was the only student who grew up around Africans and felt this contributed to her awareness because of her exposure to things that would not normally occur in a White neighborhood. She said:

I grew up in a predominantly Black neighborhood, so for me, I felt like I was the odd man out a lot of times. And just growing up, my school focused a lot on Black History month and learning a lot about the Black powerful people in history.

She also explained the reason for growing up where she did, by saying:

Well, my grandmother bought her house in 1959, and it was predominantly White at that time. And she’s lived there ever since. I am the third generation that has lived and grown up in that house, or second. And so it wasn’t exactly by choice and not by choice at all.

When asked how growing up in a Black neighborhood affected her awareness, Jennifer said:

Growing up very young I realized that things weren’t equal between Black and White people and especially for me being one of only White people growing up in my neighborhood at my school. I saw that a lot of my peers felt like things weren’t equal between them and other people. But I never quite understood that until maybe middle school or junior high school where I saw that people really
weren’t treated the same way. It wasn’t just in books; people weren’t treated equally.

For Brittany, although she had experienced moving from a White neighborhood to a diverse one at the start of middle school, she did not recall really thinking about disparities until community college:

But when I took an advanced speaking class at [my college], we had to do a group theater speech. My group decided to do the [MLK] “I Have a Dream” speech. It wasn’t until that moment that I really started to reflect, and I never understood or knew anything about his speech until that moment when we did it. That’s when I really looked into it and started thinking about the way people were treated. And now I have . . . it’s interesting to see videos about how people were treated back then, and I can’t believe it’s like . . . to me it’s like really? Really that happened? Are you kidding me? Why? But not until community college did I start thinking about it.

Brittany’s interviews had a theme of surprise that racism and White privilege still existed, with a belief that with future generations, it would all be resolved.

Megan felt she really began noticing things during middle school. She lived in a small town in the county that was infamously known for being racist:

Probably more like in middle school I started becoming aware when I was maybe 12. . . . So I would hear a lot, they [the students] would talk a lot and say the N-word and it’s . . . you know it’s crazy to think you’re so young and people could talk like that. And I feel like people weren’t educated, too. I feel like they’re kind
of naïve, and they’re young, and they’re hearing their peers talking about it and their parents. And that’s when I noticed that there’s a difference.

Megan believed that education was key to eliminating injustice, such as racism. She felt that a lot of what she experienced in attending school was simply a matter of ignorance on the part of her peers.

Jacob, who attended a very small all White high school, talked about his lack of awareness about racism by recalling an event that took place at his high school and how he did not realize until much later how contradictory that event was:

We did this event in high school that now, looking back, it’s so problematic. We did this event where our gym teacher—we had a mock slave auction to talk about how bad slavery was. But it was a bunch of White kids up there and it was a mock slave auction so was just the most problematic thing, but we were like “Oh yeah, this addresses slavery in a really good way, and talks about how bad it was.”

Jacob was the one student who probably did not develop any real awareness about injustice until college. It was surprising to learn he had only begun his transformation as an ally for about a year, given his level of activism and thorough understanding of injustice and the power of privilege.

When asked about any early experience that made him aware of injustice, Mark recalled a video clip he had seen while in middle school:

It had a Caucasian little boy playing with an African-American little boy and, as they’re playing ball, the Caucasian mother pulls her child away, “You can’t play with this boy, he’s impure, and he’s not like us. You shouldn’t be associating
with him at all.” That’s the first thing I remember, obviously, of there being a distinction.

Linda’s real awareness came at a young age when she would ride the bus with her mother and see so many African women on the bus. Her mother explained to her that the women were riding the bus into Linda’s all-White neighborhood because they were maids. Her mother further explained that the reason that particular bus route was established was for the purpose of bringing the maids from the south part of the city in which the African population was concentrated, into the wealthy neighborhood in which Linda resided. Linda said in later years she felt great satisfaction to see Africans riding the bus from that neighborhood to the downtown area, where they held jobs. For her, to see the African population creep towards and into the previously all-White neighborhoods meant progress was happening.

Most of the participants could pinpoint experiences in which their awareness of racial and social injustice was affected. For some, these experiences changed their views in remarkable ways and, for others, the experiences became starting points in which they began to become more cognizant and upon which future experiences were built.

Critical Incident

For some allies, it was a critical incident that moved them into action. Jacob attributed his allyhood to direct action. Although he had taken a Critical Gender Studies course that discussed the various intersections of oppression, he did not feel the class contributed to his practice as an ally, nor did the incident of the Harlem Ho-down (the actual name of this incident has been changed to ensure anonymity of the university), a racialized party that occurred on the campus when he was a freshman, and drew national
attention. At the time, he was grappling with his own sexual identity, coming out queer while in college. It was not until the Occupy Wall Street Movement, and its ensuing Occupy actions around the world, did he feel he gained the awareness and understanding that changed his life.

I ended up coming out to myself as queer about halfway through the year. And so I was kind of dealing with that which is a very new thing, and going through an identity crisis with myself. I didn’t really understand the political nature of that [Harlem Ho-down] and why it was so important to be an ally and show solidarity across struggles. So when the Harlem Ho-down was happening I completely ignored it. I said “Oh you know, these Black students on campus are overreacting and organizations have free speech, so they have the right to say whatever they want.” This being the dominant discourse that was happening around for people that [sic] weren’t in these spaces that understand solidarity and allyship.

Jacob then went on to describe a direct action on campus that involved taking over one of the many libraries on the campus that was shut down due to budget cuts.

I met folks [from my campus] at Occupy San Diego the first weekend. [T]his guy was like, “We’re starting a new . . . anti-budget hike or anti-budget cut coalition on campus. You should come out.” And so that was how I first got plugged into the activist community at [my campus].

Jacob said that from that experience he met students from the Student Affirmative Action Committee (a longstanding politically powerful organization of primarily African, Mexican and other minoritized students on campus that advises campus administrators on issues concerning minoritized students) when they took over the library during finals
week in 2012. Jacob felt that the Occupy Movement, although problematic, was what really politicized him. For Jacob, he may not have become an ally if it were not for this movement, because prior to it the issues faced by African students were either invisible to him or he accepted the dominant discourse that African students had unjustifiable anger about events or situations on campus.

Two students mentioned being bullied by African students at their schools as one of their earliest understanding of how things were different between African and Euro American students. For Paula, this experience made her work very hard to prove herself to the students. As the youngest ally at 18, she perceived that she was bullied primarily because she was shy and would “just stick to myself.” However, after several years, she became good friends with some of the African students who picked on her. When asked how it felt to be bullied and how it made her feel about the students who were picking on her, she stated, “I just tried to stick through it. I kind of just like . . . I felt like I had to show them I wasn’t like that.”

Linda also experienced bullying by African children at her middle school, in particular by two twins who bullied Linda and her sister, who were also twins. However, she was philosophical about this experience when asked if it gave her a negative view of African people, stating “Nothing with my view of anything . . . my grandfather used to say that just a few bad apples spoil the barrel. But what you do is just reach in and take those bad apples out.” She further explained, “I can’t judge a whole community just based on one person . . . we weren’t raised like that.” She also said her mother had told her “they’re probably jealous or there is something going on that is upsetting them and it usually is not what you think it is so . . .” In other words, because of her revolutionary
family background, experiences that could have been negative were taken in stride. Both Paula and Linda’s examples of being bullied could have led them to have negative opinions about Africans, but instead they appeared to want to understand better why the African children treated them that way. In this way, these experiences could be looked at as critical incidents.

Taylor, who had experienced an emotional response when helping feed the homeless, felt she became politicized through her participation in high school in the Obama campaign:

I started working on the Obama campaign for a while, in [2008]. When the Occupy Movement came up with the 99%, that’s when I really got pulled in. The discrepancies in wealth—though race played a very large role in these discrepancies, I was very new to this so I just saw it at face-value, “These people are really rich, there’s only a few of them. These people are really poor.” It was only when I started studying it more in school and came into different organizations, I really understood what dynamics went into that and still perpetuate that.

She explained that when she really decided to step into activism, it was in response to police brutality in Riverside and Irvine. There were protests going on in solidarity with the students, and students were sleeping on campus in front of one of the buildings. She said she stepped in and asked, “Hey, what’s this all about?” and from that point, began her involvement in activism.

A critical incident sparked some of the allies into action, but was not necessarily a factor in all their experiences. For example, given the level of Jacob’s understanding and
involvement in activism, one would have thought that the “Harlem Ho-down” would have politicized him as a critical incident. In this instance, this event may have given him a baseline for understanding African students’ anger and subsequent demands that later made sense once he began working with other activists.

**Education**

Students discussed the ways in which they became educated or educated themselves regarding racism and racial justice. For Megan, it was accidental; she enrolled in a math class that was designated primarily for students in the Uplift program. The Uplift program was designed to support African students through a cohort model in which students took classes together and also had discussions about race, privilege, and social justice. Said Megan about being involved in the Uplift program:

> I really liked to interact with students. I have a boyfriend who is an African American, and he taught me a lot about the history from his perspective and that the students from my class, their perspective of the history instead of just what I’ve heard. So it makes me have a clear understanding of what they’ve been through. And I feel more strongly about sticking up for them because I can relate now the understanding of what they’ve been through.

Megan’s statement indicated that she tended to see the problems experienced by African people as something in the past. Megan was invited by some of her classmates to join the Uplift program (similar to Mark’s experience) so she continued in the cohort classes, and as a result felt much more involved in school and with her African classmates. She was planning to enroll in an Ethnic Studies course as a result of her interactions and participation in the Uplift program.
As a communications major, Brittany felt an intercultural communication class contributed greatly to her understanding of people and cultures different from her own:

In the Communication department, we . . . have intercultural communication. So that class is designed to learn how to communicate with people from different cultures and different ethnicities and also to analyze or understand why people communicate the way they do. So from that, the biggest thing that I learned was the difference between an individualistic culture and a collectivistic, and so that has helped me to not stereotype but to understand why people who are different from me do what they do.

Brittany also was the president of the EOP Student Club at her campus. Educational Opportunity Programs serve primarily students from minoritized groups and low socioeconomic backgrounds. As a former foster youth, she became involved in that program because it also housed a support program for former foster youth. As president of the organization, she strove to work with other campus groups and felt they should be poised to take political or other action regarding issues that affected them, such as tuition hikes. Although she felt she had not done as much as she could to reach out to the campus BSU, it was something she wanted to do.

Both Sarah and Jennifer were in majors that required a multicultural component to their studies. As a result, they had taken several classes that made them realize the impact they have in their future careers as a teacher and social worker, respectively. Said Jennifer, “As a social work major undertaking numerous classes on social justice, multiculturalism, different practices within cultures, and social policy classes, and all sorts of different classes that have really opened my eyes to a lot of it [social injustice].”
She felt strongly about the social justice aspect of her major and described an incident in which the class had a discussion about a vignette in which White students held a racialized event about Chicanos. One girl thought that students dressing like cholos or pregnant Chicanas and drawing tattoos all over their bodies was funny. Said Jennifer:

And I couldn’t hold back. I said if you think that then I don’t think you belong in social work, period. And if that’s the way you think then maybe you shouldn’t voice your opinion on that. Because people are going to realize that you’re not actually fighting for injustice. If you think that’s funny, you shouldn’t be in this field of work.

It was clear that Jennifer felt that she had a certain responsibility as a future social worker to actively fight against injustice and speak up when necessary.

Linda, as the oldest ally and from the most radical background, discussed the reasons why she enrolled in Black Studies courses:

I took these two classes . . . I wanted to see where we were at in the revolution; I wanted to see where the Blacks were at. And I’m shocked, the kids don’t know the story. . . . They [the parents] stopped listening to the story and these people grew up and had kids, and they didn’t tell their kids. And I’m heartbroken about that.

Linda also said she had been active in the African community in Gary, Indiana because the city was predominantly African. About this experience and what she was seeing currently in her classes, she said:

When I lived in Indiana, everyone knew the history of the struggle and [was] very involved in the labor movement. The unions are supported there. I am very
happy that this Black Studies program has teachers that have brought the true
story to them [African students at her current college].

Mark, who was involved in BSU and an African male organization, acknowledged
that for most of his schooling European history was at the forefront. He said he started
seeing injustices more clearly in ninth grade and wanted to understand more about people
against whom injustices were perpetrated. He thought that his high school was quite
progressive and had a healthy environment in terms of ethnicity and gender. In addition,
Mark believed he looked at the world logically and mathematically to counteract the
emotions he felt due to his chemical imbalance. He said that the minuscule percent of
difference among human beings was not enough of a genetic differentiation to justify the
injustices perpetrated on people who are not biologically different from each other. In
college, he expanded his knowledge by taking courses in African Studies, Native
American Studies, sociology, and history to have a better understanding of the world and
how to change it.

Like Mark, Madison was also a member of the BSU on her campus and was a
Black Studies minor as well. She incorporated the things she was learning in her Black
Studies classes into her other classes, as a way to raise awareness with other studies, by
writing on a topic concerning issues affecting African people or by bringing in an African
perspective into a class discussion.

Paula, the youngest participant, had only been in college for one semester but both
of the classes she signed up for were in the Black Studies department. She planned to
continue to take more Black Studies classes because she felt they were important classes.
Trevor also felt Black Studies was an important discipline and discussed a world history
class in which he learned about Africa, and which led him to taking classes in Black Studies:

I took this class back when I was a sophomore in college. It was a world history class actually, and we ended up talking about the empires in Africa and the fact that there had been these gigantic empires in Western Africa during the time that Europe had been in the dark ages. And I hadn’t realized this at all, ‘cause there’s this sort of narrative you’re taught where everything had been sort of in the dark ages, like in the dark ages, the whole world was barbarism and there wasn’t . . . .

For Trevor, this class was such an eye opener; it actually resulted in adding a Black Studies minor to his course of study:

There was things going on and I realized that I didn’t understand the whole picture of the world, and I didn’t understand everything that had gone on. And it’s one of the reasons I became a Black Studies minor, was because I really . . . I don’t know the whole story of Black people and especially in America, they’ve gotten a rough situation moving from slavery to intense discrimination, having laws put against them, sort of being labeled as criminals. There’s a whole number of things; it just sort of opened up my eyes like a sort of cracked wall of only knowing about White people.

Jacob too had added Ethnic Studies as a double major as a result of his activism on campus. However, he still felt his activism was the thing that provided him with the most education. He described how he was involved in a coalition that took over one of the closed libraries on campus and how it helped him envision what a People’s University would look like:
We went and took over the space and ran it ourselves for the entirety of finals week. We had a sleep space, a food space; we had activities there, someone would lead yoga. . . . We started having TAs [teacher assistants] hold classes there and sections and office hours there. So it really became an ideal space of what an Open University would look like and run by students, faculty, workers, and staff.

Taylor, who was also an activist involved in the building takeover with Jacob, discussed taking an ethnic studies course and how it armed her for discussions with White people, who she said, always want proof, facts, and figures to support anything that attacks White power:

I took an ethnic studies class last year. . . . We talked in-depth about imperialism, capitalism, corporate capitalism which plays into this a lot. . . . That class was great because I got a very concrete historical look at the numbers, which is nice when I’m arguing with people because I have—I know the theory. I can talk all day about theory but actually being able to say like, “Oh, this tribe . . . ” in this instance is very helpful.

The theme of ally development showcased the various ways in which the participants embarked on their journey as allies. For some, early experiences played a role in their development, while others felt that some of their college experiences, especially courses and more exposure to diverse populations, were the dominating factor. A number of the participants also had some experiences being marginalized, such as being gay, being a foster youth, having a disability, or being poor, which the data show influenced their development.
**Conceptualizing Racial Injustice**

All the participants were interviewed regarding what they felt the problems were between Euro Americans and Africans and their ideas on possible solutions. Again, the range and complexity of ideas and thoughts in this area corresponded closely to their development stage as an ally.

For some, racism and other problems were seen as individual occurrences, problems of an older generation, or even problems that occurred primarily in the South, and not in their region. For other participants, their understanding recognized the systemic nature of racism and social injustice, but within this understanding was also a range and complexity of ideas, particularly in the role of colonialism and imperialism in social justice.

**Racism as an Individual Problem**

Seeing racism as an isolated incident or as something inflicted by a few “bad” perpetrators is indicative of an Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest. Brittany tended to see racism as an individual problem or a problem of holding on to the past, which can be seen in this statement:

> I think there is still . . . a . . . I believe this is the correct word . . . it is a stigma of racism occurring. I think that nationally when racism was abolished, or slavery, that we should have moved forward from it, but it’s still affecting us as a country, and people are still holding grudges against it. So I think that it shouldn’t be happening anymore but that’s my own personal belief. Because I’m the type of person who says, “Why look back, you’re gonna trip. So keep moving forward.” But it’s still hard to believe people still focus on the past.
When asked what she thought of the stereotypical portrayal of Black males in society and its accuracy, she said:

Something went wrong with them being brought up. I don’t think that . . . when you see that, it’s like, well, not every Black person is like that. You’re looking at the neighborhood, you’re looking at the income, you’re looking at how that person was brought up, and then they’re generalizing it and that’s not okay. I personally think it’s more of a family, individual thing but I know there’s [sic] attributions or relations to societal level, too.

Brittany actually exhibited colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006) in her statements because she was unable to see the historical legacy of slavery that was still dominating systems today. In particular, she used the frame of cultural racism to blame Africans for the problems they experienced. At the same time, she did admit there was some culpability as a society.

Megan had difficulty articulating the problems in society, although she acknowledged they were there. However, she still appeared to define the problems more as individual problems than systemic:

I feel that people have the wrong perspective of a lot of Blacks. Like they just see them as, you know, these, like, humans are just . . . I don’t know how to describe it . . . you know what I’m trying to say? . . . I feel like they stereotype a lot of Blacks because of everything that’s happened for the last 50 years.

These examples of racism as an individual problem align with Edwards’ (2006) Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest, which is consistent with both Megan and Brittany’s stance or developmental stage as an ally.
Racism as a Problem of Lack of Education

For a few of the participants, education was an important component in solving problems pertaining to social injustice. Sarah and Megan felt the primary problems regarding Black-White relationships were related to a lack of education. This belief again indicated an individual problem and solution based on Edwards’ (2006) model of Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest, and focused on individuals as perpetrators rather than the system. Sarah said:

Well, for me, what I see is that a lot of people are uneducated about it, and that’s where hate stems from and judgmental views stem from. I think if someone would consider themselves [sic] an ally they may want to be an ally but they truly don’t know what that means. A lot of people I know say “Oh I’m color blind; I don’t see color when I look at Black people.” But that is not necessarily the way to be, that is a microaggression, so in a way it could be insulting them.

Despite Sarah’s focus on the individual nature of racism, she still was cognizant of racial microaggressions and colorblind racism. She also was aware that having a colorblind stance was not an acceptable behavior of an ally.

Megan also felt more exposure was needed for Euro Americans:

People need to be more educated about others. Not just, you know, learning about slavery, but I feel like they need to be surrounded by other people. I feel like once I started working at my job, like I said, it is very diverse, I feel like, that is where I first started becoming more exposed to more different racial cultures, and I started gaining more of an understanding and I really started valuing who they are as a person. So I feel like people just need to be surrounded by others.
Megan had simultaneously gained exposure through participation in the Uplift program and working in a job that was diverse in terms of people’s ethnic background. She felt both of these experiences were crucial in her gaining a better understanding about social injustice. She was also in a relationship with an African man. She was still relatively new to the insights she had gained through these two venues but was open to continuing her learning.

For Mark, communication was an important factor related to education:

There’s a huge barrier in discussion. I feel that I am pretty darn accepted in BSU and in [my Black male organization], but I still feel the barrier every time we go. No one’s trying to . . . construct or something. But, there always seems to be this air or something, a barrier that makes it hard to start communication about topics. Even between two individuals, one Caucasian and one African-American. Especially, larger groups, as you increase the number of people in a basic topic area, it gets exponentially more complicated and personal. Which is a little weird because more people makes [sic] it more personal.

Mark was acutely aware of being a part of these two organizations but still feeling the barriers based on skin color. He felt discussions between Africans and Euro Americans was very important but also was aware that statements could be misconstrued no matter how carefully worded, because he had experienced this when trying to enter into some of the discussion.
Racism as a Problem of Past Generations

Several students attributed the problems between Africans and Euro Americans to generational issues or even as problems in certain parts of the United States. Said Brittany, who thought racism was more of an individual problem:

It’s [racism] harder to identify here in my generation because my generation is more open to it or more open to diversity and understanding others because we weren’t raised with that mentality and we just learned about in textbooks. But I understand that in other parts of the country it still happens a lot and that’s unfortunate.

Sarah also felt that problems of racism happened more in other parts of the United States. She said, “I feel like it is much less of a problem today, however; there is [sic] certain areas in certain states that I have been to that I have seen that were a lot worse than California. Definitely, I think California has come a long way with that.” Like Sarah, Madison also felt that racism occurred more in other parts of the United States. She said:

I think in our society there’s still that segregation . . . we’re still segregated and we’re still White. Besides me, White groups are still oppressing Black groups. Well, back in the south there’s [sic] still old men, old White men who are still very strong in their conservative ways that no Black man can be power [sic] and let’s go shoot [them] down. And so I think that the people just can’t connect and they don’t want to connect, but they’re put into a setting where you have to work with this person, then maybe we can get over this but it’s gonna take a couple more generations I feel.
Madison had a very good understanding of slavery and its legacy, based on her interviews, but she also struggled with understanding the systemic nature of oppression. However, it was clear that she had studied a lot and worked hard to become an ally.

Jennifer felt that the history of slavery and the resulting Civil Rights Movement have caused a lot of hatred between Africans and Euro Americans, and that this was an issue of past generations. She said:

For example, my family, my grandma came from Iowa before she moved to San Diego, and she was raised a certain way, and I feel my dad learned a lot from her because of the way she was raised. But as generations pass, I feel like we’re finally trying to get past that, that ideal of colonialism and just having a better understanding of equality between people.

In terms of solving problems of racial and social injustice, Jennifer said, “I feel that as time passes, the generation maybe after me will have a better understanding than I did and be more accepting of other people.” Linda attributed the problems to economic disparities which showed her understanding of some of the systemic forces, but she also looked at racism as an individual act. She used the example of moving jobs out of the country, which she felt resulted in people competing for jobs which caused animosity between people. She also recognized how White privilege played a role:

We are told we are equal but then you are rejected for a job or housing because of your skin color. Being White brings access to economics, housing, schools. Affirmative action was supposed to fix this but White people ruined that too. A big issue I have is how Blacks are shown on TV as drug addicts, ‘ho’s and murderers. This causes animosity. . . . I know there are really big assholes out
there, ok? But I do think that the percentage[s] of people who are racist are shrinking.

While Mark did not discuss racial injustice as a problem of past generations, he did feel that injustices merited a solution because of slavery and genocide, the ills of past generations. He was the only student who mentioned reparations as a solution; he said he could not think of any other real solution, although he had pondered it. He also felt while Africans were owed reparations, Native Americans were owed even more because of not only genocide but taking of land. In this sense, Mark did not look at reparations on a global scale by taking into account the continued expropriation of land and resources occurring currently in Africa, but as payment for past transgressions:

So if we gave 10 trillion dollars to African-Americans, as a whole, as reparations, we would have to give 100 trillion or so, just using basic order multiplication of one decimal place. Then the major leaders would form a committee to figure out how to divvy out the reparations. Of course, that wouldn’t solve emotional issues or other issues, but it would help equal out the economical [sic] base, because one, it’s going to weaken Caucasians, economically, to give up a lot of money. And it helps, especially if the African-Americans and Native Americans invest well, future generations are going to be on a lot more equal footing with Caucasians in education, jobs, and art, and the stuff they could put out with the reparations because money moves the world.

As shown in this section, several students believed that with each generation, the problem of racism, specifically, would disappear. These students did not link racism with economic disparities or other social disparities such as the overrepresentation of Africans
in the prison system. Rather, they viewed racism as a lingering problem from past
generations, and largely occurring now as an individual issue. Overall, they did not seem
to think critically about the existing conditions faced by African people in the United
States as having any real relationship to a structural or systemic issue. However, as seen
in the next section, several students had given a great deal of thoughtful analysis to the
prevailing system of White power and its impact on African people.

**Racism as an Expression of Colonialism, Imperialism, and Capitalism**

All participants were asked about the relationship of colonialism and imperialism
to the problems seen in social justice issues between Africans and Euro Americans. This
was done in order to discover if the participants had thought about these problems in
terms of globalization and systemic practices. The responses ranged in terms of insight
and complexity. Paula admitted she was not really familiar with colonialism but at the
same time, recognized colonialism in the United States and around the world in that she
felt people in other countries were being controlled. In addition, she felt there was
colonialism in the education system in terms of the disparities in schools in higher income
neighborhoods in comparison to lower income neighborhoods. Sarah also indicated there
could be some colonialism going on in the United States in terms of its education system,
because new teachers are frequently placed in predominantly African or Latino schools,
when the students would be better served with more experienced teachers. When asked
about imperialism, Sarah felt that the United States was less of an economic power now
than in past years, thus did not see the United States as an imperialist force. Further, she
felt that imperialist actions were not really directed towards African Americans. She gave
an example about Haiti in which she stated that she felt the United States was there to
help, in terms of providing relief to the Haitian people, “So I don’t think that from that standpoint we are racist as a nation; I think we just help.” Megan said this about colonialism:

I feel like colonialism is slaves; they enslaved Africans, African Americans and they took them from their country, and I feel like they’ve been torn apart from their families, and they don’t have a really strong family background. I feel like a lot of the African Americans are kind of lost in sort of a way due to colonialism. And they still have a lot of anger, even the younger generation still have [sic] a lot of anger, and you know there’s still remorse about the whole situation.

Jennifer said, “I feel like a lot of our government or maybe imperialism dictates the way the whole United States feels. So if we can go into another country and mistreat those people then who’s to say that we can’t mistreat our own people?” These responses were expected given the characteristics these participants exhibited throughout their interviews in terms of development and level of understanding. Their responses ranged in the Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest and Altruism; there was not a critical analysis of how the United States and Europe control resources and people in other countries.

Madison also gave a mixed response, showing a lot of insight regarding conditions in the United States for African people, but less able to articulate how imperialism was responsible, if at all, in creating conflict around the world. She exhibited a similar attitude as Sarah in viewing the United States as a country that helps, rather than exploits, other countries. For example, Madison felt colonialism could be seen today in the prison system, which she indicated was a new form of slavery, given the overpopulation of Africans in prison. In terms of imperialism, she had less insight and
seemed to align with a White power viewpoint; she appeared to struggle between seeing the United States as a country that helped others and a country that was imposing its will on others:

So . . . I have to say America needs to figure out America first. We have so many problems in America that we shouldn’t really be taking control over these other states or other countries. I definitely think that we should be allies with them just in case something is to happen to us, but I don’t think that we necessarily need to help everyone and change everyone. We’re not the best example of that. I definitely feel we need to give back to Africa because we have taken so much from Africa.

Her response suggested that if America did solve some of its own problems, then it should feel free to involve itself with other countries. She did not appear to see the United States’ current involvement with other countries as a means to extract resources or labor. She went on to say:

I don’t know a whole lot about the war on Iraq and Iran, but what I heard is that we’re still there and we’re trying to change their government. Well, how about inciting \textit{sic} them on how we’ve done it and so you give them examples, and if they like it then they take it; you don’t force them into changing it.

Three students, Trevor, Taylor, and Jacob, again showed why they were identified as social justice allies based on their responses to questions about how colonialism and imperialism are factors in the problems faced by Africans in the United States and around the world. Trevor tied colonialism to capitalism stating that, “\textit{I}t is very difficult to break out of where somebody owns the means of production, and because they own the
means of production they get the rewards of a much larger share of the rewards then the
effort they’re putting in.” He recognized the tremendous wealth gap between European
Americans and Africans as a class difference with historical implications of slavery and
said this about African people:

So because they can’t really get access into the means of capital, then they never
overcome that system; they never have extra money saved up so they could
purchase stocks, get some of the capital or something. It’s a very difficult system
to break into because once you have a ton of wealth, which is the sort of White
privilege, it goes back to that.

Trevor gave an example of imperialism as it related to the United States and
Europe controlling patents and thus controlling countries as a result, in particular in oil
refining. He said the United States prevents Mexico and other countries from refining oil
themselves, forcing them to buy it at prices set by the United States. He said, “It’s the
countries are [sic] on top saying, ‘Well, we have our place and you have your place.’”

Taylor was also very thoughtful when it came to questions on colonialism and
imperialism. She said that we contribute to colonialism every day: “I can say that we
marginalize and exploit still to this day and have no problem reserving labor and
minimum wage to all these communities that are marginalized because that’s what
exploitation is.” Taylor identified colonialism and capitalism as the root problem
between Africans and Euro Americans saying, “I really think capitalism is the root of this.
That’s my very radical view, theory behind all of this, in which capitalism, with the
capitalist mindset comes imperialism, that’s another thing.” She had definitely thought
long and hard about the interplay between colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, and
racism, concluding that racism was a way to justify capitalism and colonialism. About this, she said:

I don’t know why one group thought it was okay for them to place themselves above the other in the first place, when racism was initially enacted in a certain way but it has. That’s like the origination of racism, and I just have no answer to that. I have no clue why.

Taylor concluded her discussion by saying, “I think of it as racism, in that kind of warfare, is a tool that they employ to win in the game of capitalism.”

Jacob also saw racism as a tool used in capitalism and discussed the prison system much in the same way Madison described it:

You know, prison and prison labor and that kind of thing has really become a new form of slavery in the 21st century. . . . All these big bastions of capital are all tied into one another and really perpetuating these systems of racism, sexism, heterosexism, and trans-phobia and all these things . . . the root of it really is capitalism to me.

Jacob said he felt racism was still a huge problem and that most activists failed to see that racism was caused by capitalism and colonialism. Jacob was also adamant about colonialism still existing in the United States, stating, “People can point to the Emancipation Proclamation and say, ‘See? Colonialism ended there because Black people are free,’ but that’s not true because we still feel the effects in discourse in the way that Black people are represented today.”
Mark also had ideas about colonialism in the United States:

You can have a government or you can actually have a population of settlers, like the United States has now been here for easily 200 years and our population has gone to 300 million. It’s essentially impossible to give all the land back, because where are we going to put 300 million people?

Taylor, Trevor, Jacob, and to a certain extent, Mark, showed that they had done a critical analysis of the problem of racism and had concluded that capitalism and colonialism were the root causes. This was expected, as in most of their discussions they were at the most mature stage of allyhood and thus were able to see racism as more than just an individual problem that would go away in time. They realized that structural changes to the existing social system were necessary in order to create equity for African people. In contrast, the other participants had less developed understanding about how deeply social injustice was rooted in the history of the United States.

**The Practice of Being an Ally**

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the biggest differences in the theory of African Internationalism and other theories and concepts referenced in this study is what defines the actions of being an ally. A simple and yet most profound way of explaining this is to employ a quote from the revolutionary Che Guevara: “It is not a matter of wishing success to the victim of aggression, but of sharing his fate; one must accompany him to his death or to victory.” For African Internationalists, this means that one cannot stand by and hope that things will change, or act as an individual. Instead, one must be part of an organization and make a commitment to creating change.
In Chapter 2, I provided an in-depth discussion of the importance of action over well-wishing, couched in understanding conservative, liberal, and socialist concepts of social justice. In this section, I examined the actions the participants took as allies and the impact of their actions of African students. In doing so, I was mindful of the three types of social justice described by Starr (1991), which are conservative, liberal, and socialist definitions.

Although the interviews and responses with the African student leaders are not a focus of this study, these participants’ interviews were important in helping to gauge the campus climate and culture as seen through the eyes of African students. Of the three student leaders who were interviewed for these purposes, two were enrolled at West Coast University with less than 2% African students and had the Harlem Ho-down incident, and the other one was from Sunny State University founded in 1897. All three students considered the campuses to be hostile settings for African students and were unequivocal in their confirmation of the coldness of the campus. Ricky, who attended Sunny State University, said, “It’s easy as a Black student to be invisible, even in a classroom with Black teachers.” Building personal relationships with his Black professors was the way one of the African students felt able to navigate on the campus and turn what would be a negative experience into a positive one.

It’s a culture shock because you expect it to be something . . . because they promote something that it really isn’t . . . The campus is promoted to be multiethnic, multicultural, inclusive, and you’d think that . . . and in comparison to [West Coast University]—that’s one of the reasons I chose this campus, but
you can go a day without seeing a Black face walking around on campus, let alone trying to find a Black faculty or professor.

Jeremy, from the neighboring West Coast University stated that the campus was “cold.” He said, “I would call it racism from a political standpoint but [the campus] has a bigger problem of ignorance more than racism.” He talked about the students who had never interacted with African students and the perceptions that they held of African students; they were dependent on financial aid and did not work hard enough to be on the campus. The other African student who interviewed, Michael, bluntly stated that the campus “lies too much” and tried to sell itself as something it was not. He felt it was particularly unethical when doing outreach to students who were not White because it really painted an untrue picture of the campus and what the students would be facing in terms of isolation and loneliness.

Michael and Jeremy both stated that the Harlem Ho-down incident seriously affected African students. They told stories of students who to this day still could not speak of the incident because it had traumatized them so thoroughly; some were suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome as a result. Others left the campus altogether. For those who stayed, their sense of physical and psychological safety was deeply affected, as the response from the majority of the campus was one of hostility, indifference, and contempt. The Koala, a campus newspaper that also has a television show, aired a show in which predominantly White students talked about the overreaction of African students and used the “N” word on air. The Koala publishes racist commentary under the guise of ironic humor and in 2010, the year of the Harlem Ho-down, the Koala devoted one of its publications to ridiculing African students on campus as a result for speaking out against
the Harlem Ho-down, including a section on “C.O.O.N.S.: Coalition of Outreach and Opportunity for Negro Students” which provided this description:

Welcome to [campus name] brother/sister! As a Black student, we understand your special needs, and in an effort to make sure you feel safe and welcome here at [West Coast University], we have created the C.O.O.N.S. program! Based on the BSU’s list of 32 t [sic] and our more realistic expectations, we have created a comprehensive program of special treatment and privilege [sic] to perfectly imitate the environment the Black student is probably used to. No matter what kind of ghetto you may or may not have toiled in for 18 years, C.O.O.N.S. is here to make you feel like you never left that warm, snuggly safe home completely devoid of black-on-black violence. (Gregorian, 2010, p. 4)

Microaggressions for Black students used to be the main problem until the Harlem Ho-down. Said one of the students, “[White] girls flinch at me like I’m going to run them over.” He said girls would not sit next to him in lecture halls, and other small things that some would claim to be hyper paranoid, but taken together, are meaningful. It is a very cold campus.

At Sunny State University, the African student leader, Ricky felt that not only did Euro American students lack political awareness, but African students did as well. By this he meant that African and other students were more concerned with social aspects of the campus than in addressing the disparities and injustices prevalent on campus and that the students did not seem to have any real development in understanding root causes of racism. This was in marked contrast to his experience at Suburban College, from which he transferred; on that campus he felt that the Black Studies department and BSU were so
strong that many students gained more in-depth political awareness. He believed many of his peers at Sunny State had bought into the concept of a “postracial” America, even while at the same time they complained of the lack of representation of African students on campus and differential treatment as African students. This indicated that the campus environment was not very political, which resulted in both Euro American and African students lacking insight into some of the issues faced by African students. In fact, several of the Euro American participants stated that they thought most White students were unaware of any substantial difference in the campus experience for African students.

The African student leaders who participated in this study identified “safe spaces” that they frequented as a way to cope on the campus. Both campuses at which Michael, Jeremy, and Ricky were located (West Coast and Sunny State Universities) had multicultural centers that were home to many African students. They also felt that involvement in the Black Student Union was also important for African students to cope in their day-to-day existence. Both Michael and Jeremy, who attended West Coast University, home of the Harlem Ho-down, also spoke about how important it was for them to do outreach specific to African students, telling them about the true reality of the campus and how they would have to navigate the campus in order to be successful. There was a delicate balance in encouraging potential African students to attend the university, while stressing the importance of being actively involved on the campus so that African students could have a voice.

The insights provided by African students were contrasted with those of the White allies when asked about the safety of African students on campus, and whether African students had voice or power. The majority of the participants believed that their campus
was welcoming to African students, and that, for the most part, African students had a voice on campus. Those who differed with this general opinion were Jacob and Taylor, the two students who strongly met the criteria for Allies for Social Justice. They stated unequivocally that the campus was indeed a hostile place for African students and marveled at the coping skills displayed by their African counterparts as they progressed through their academic careers. The depth of understanding portrayed by the Euro American participants about the reality that African students faced at HWIs was a factor in the type of actions allies took, as discussed in the next section.

**Ally Actions**

In discussing the actions taken on by the participants in this study, it is first important to remember that only 5 of the 11 participants interviewed were selected by African student leaders. These five students were probably the most active in comparison to those who were selected through other means. Second, ally actions ranged from supporting African students “in their heads,” to organizing events or supporting specific actions taken on by African students.

The African student leaders identified allies by the actions they took, not about how these individuals felt about their self identity or how they reflected on their Whiteness. One of the student leaders, when asked how allies showed that they were truly allies, said “The interactions I’ve had [with allies] show strong allyhood. And they just view themselves . . . like they don’t feel uncomfortable around . . . Black students and they don’t feel the need to have to be their friend. They understand.” He went on to describe specific actions that one of the allies in this study, Jacob, took to show that he merited the title of ally. He stated that Jacob came to Black Student Union general
meetings, he asked questions without taking over the conversation and consistently volunteered at events and programs. In addition, he said that Jacob participated in direct action (the takeover of one of the campus libraries shut down due to budget cuts), supported the demand for a Black Resource Center on campus (one of the demands resulting from the Harlem Ho-down), and in general seemed to earn his respect over time based on how he comported himself with African students. At the same time, this student leader said:

I don’t see a lot of White allyhood. They’ll come with interest and come with questions to our general body meetings of the BSU . . . or some of our events like Kwanza. I can’t hold every White student accountable for wanting to participate because they have their own things to do.

Several students, Jennifer, Paula, Mary, Megan, and Brittany, had not overtly supported any campus actions or issues of African students. Primarily, these students were true commuter students, who were not involved very much on campus and only attended for their classes. Some of this was due to work schedules; Megan for example, worked full time and only attended school part time. Paula was just in her first semester on campus and was planning to become more involved as she adjusted to being in college. Sarah had supported other actions in her community, particularly around the fight for gay marriage and environmental issues. Jennifer also worked and was not very involved on campus.

However, when given a scenario, all the students agreed they would want to support African students in any action, as needed. Some were not sure if they would play a leadership role, some said they would look to African leadership to determine their
appropriate role, but, in general, they were enthusiastic about taking action. Said one, “I would first want to see how [African students] feel towards things? I want to know how they feel about it; I would back them up.”

Linda, coming from a revolutionary background, stated that she signed whatever petition was put in front of her by African students. She would also attend protests on campus if she heard about them. She was the one student who believed that any revolution in the country would naturally start with the African community. She wholeheartedly believed a revolution was necessary. At the same time, she contradicted this in some ways with several of her statements that indicated that the system could be reformed. She was also cognizant of how the right to express oneself was being eroded in the country, thus she felt she would not want to take on a leadership role due to her fear that “the FBI is going to come to my door all the time and take me away to Cuba.” Despite this fear, Linda said about Africans leading a revolution, “So they have the right in my mind, to revolt and overthrow this government. If anyone has the right to, it’s them. I will fully support them.”

Trevor was selected by Ricky because his student organization sponsored “A Day in Solidarity with African People” at Sunny State University, an event that allowed Euro Americans the opportunity to learn more about the theory of African Internationalism and why they should support the African liberation movement. Ricky stated that it took courage to bring Omali Yeshitela on campus because he was a revolutionary, and, for this reason, he considered Trevor to be an ally. Said Trevor about supporting the actions of African students in a scenario such as a racialized party:
I think you just have to treat them like these stupid kids, because this is really what the situation is, because you can’t treat them like they really thought this whole situation out. . . . You have to have them somehow interacting with Black students, and having Black students telling them why it isn’t ok and why it hurts their feelings and why it makes them feel less than. And help them understand.

Trevor also vacillated in some ways about taking action. He stated that he might not support any actions on campus because he already supported the African students “in my head.” Immediately afterwards, he said that perhaps this was the problem why African students have difficulty identifying allies; if he only supported their actions in his head then it was not demonstrable. Trevor was one of the most anguished students in that he felt in many ways that actions were futile:

I mean another thing for me is, I feel like I understand a lot of the basic things that are going on, and it’s a little depressing for me to almost deal with it on a daily basis because there’s a lot of systems at work that I have a difficult time reconciling with.

For Trevor, insight into the workings of capitalism and colonialism had made it difficult even to continue to live in the United States; his plan was to go to some place such as Nigeria or the Middle East and work elsewhere. He did not see organizing and protesting as an effective means to changing the system; he truly saw the system as so powerful that it could not be changed. He gave an example about the prison system which he said would require laws to be enacted differently, police officers to be trained differently, judges who would need to be trained differently, and juries that would need more education:
It would require a public outcry about things that the public doesn’t really care about. . . . You would have to fix every single step along the way and there is just not really a way of doing that without addressing the whole socioeconomic class.

For Mark, his interactions with African students were sometimes difficult. He said, “It’s taxing sometimes: emotionally, mentally, I want to make sure that I don’t say something wrong or hurtful.” Mark was mindful of how he came across when he supported the interests of Africans by participating as a member of both the BSU and the Black male student organization. He felt that discussions were very important and that it helped him to better understand the issues and concerns of African students. The ways in which Mark navigated his life as an ally was compelling:

Because I feel like the part of the community . . . but I also feel like but every time I go to the meetings. . . . Anything I provide is always from an outsider perspective. I tried to be as clear as I could be, because it’s across the room, so I have to try really hard to be clear, try to think ahead, “Can this be misinterpreted?” and I don’t want to have to worry about that.

He went on further to discuss how, due to his commitment to a vision to change the world, he had to work hard to interact with others and join organizations; through the impact of his early childhood friend, he strove to become more social, but at the same time, struggled with his involvement in African-based organizations. He said he felt sometimes he had to force himself to be there and that he was aware he could be a disrupting force based on his skin color.

I’m a member of the organization but I’m not one of its intended members. . . . So it feels like I’m intruding, it feels like I’m disrupting. I also . . . what right do I
have to say I want to bring a point up in there? . . . [I]f I want to say this about African-Americans, what right do I have to say that this is true about African-Americans when I’m not one myself?

Madison also supported African students by participating in the Black Student Union, and attending events and rallies. On the day she interviewed for this study, she had attended a rally to save Ethnic Studies on campus, because the Black Studies department and other departments were under attack, and administration was questioning the validity of instructors’ credentials to teach such interdisciplinary courses as U.S. History: Black Perspectives, Afro-American Literature, and Black Psychology. More importantly, though, was Madison’s work in the White community. She did many things to strike up conversations with Euro Americans in order to educate them on the many things she had learned from taking her Black Studies courses:

I talk about it all the time at work. Then I realized it probably wasn’t the political thing to do because I got in trouble. So then I started saying things in class. . . . I would go to a restaurant and I would start talking loud about this. And people would get up and leave or people would chime in. . . . Or I would say things at workshops.

For Madison, it was important to plant seeds and to raise awareness in the White community. She became very animated when talking about the things she had learned:

Like why wouldn’t you, why wouldn’t you educate yourself? . . . So if people come up to me and ask me questions, I’m willing to tell them what I know. . . . Why can’t I say something about the truth when the truth quote unquote should set you free?
For 9 of the 11 participants in the study, most of the actions they took tended to be individual ones, with isolated incidents of organized support such as an event or a rally. In other words, most of the participants were “well-wishers.” However, Jacob and Taylor’s actions took on a very different tone. Both of these students had participated frequently in direct actions; both were involved in radical public education coalition that aligned with the Student Affirmative Action Committee and took over one of the campus libraries that had been shut down due to budget cuts. In addition, both were actively engaged in student organizations, student government, and oftentimes worked under the direct leadership of the African students. Jacob attended the Black Student Union meetings, although he was not an official member, in order to gain an understanding of the issues and obstacles that African students were facing and to stand in solidarity with them when they asked for his support. Taylor worked for one of the African students who had a position in student government, assisting in every possible to raise awareness of the issues faced by African students. Although Taylor had not been selected as an ally by African students (Jacob had referred her to the study), it is likely that she would have been selected if I had contacted the African student for whom she worked. When asked about ways in which she took action, Taylor explained a variety of things she did. Her actions included postings on social media sites to open up dialogue and educate, conducting one-on-one meetings with other Euro Americans interested in working on issues, and developing a series of workshops to educate students in the Greek system. She said the latter was especially important because the students in these organizations were the worst abusers of White power and privilege. These actions were coupled with protests, direct action, and outreach, many times guided by students in African
organizations. Taylor also told about how she and African students would have White students strategically meet the Chancellor when she or he was out walking on campus, or in a meeting about some issue. She said:

It is because I’m White; if I show up to a protest, admin is going to look at that in a much less of a pooh-pooh way because I’m White. That’s just how it is. That’s a way that I can use my White privilege in a way that’s conducive to success for them [African students] as an ally.

Taylor felt the main way that she could support African students on campus as an ally was to supply people power. With less than 400 African students on a campus of over 30,000 students, she said, White students really needed to be there as bodies, because there simply were not enough African students there to make an impact.

Jacob was involved in the public education coalition, as well as a sustainability organization that had four major campaigns concerning dirty energy, food justice, border issues, and water. He also worked closely with AAC and some of the organizations under AAC, such as Students for Justice in Palestine who held a vigil for the most recent victims of the Gaza. He particularly supported the Black Student Union in continuing to pursue the demands made by them as a result of the Harlem Ho-down. He said he felt it was advantageous that the Associated Students (A.S.) for the first time was much more progressive:

Some of us have been talking about forming a progressive caucus within A.S. that meets outside of council but it is comprised of council members that want to focus on these and kind of getting back to the roots of working more closely with AAC,
and working more closely with other progressive organizations to organize these
kinds of events and focus more specifically on issues of power and privilege.

Both Taylor and Jacob felt that a revolution was the only solution for the
conditions faced by African people, and, like Linda, were prepared to support such an
occurrence. Jacob felt a revolution would be led either by a coalition of the most
oppressed communities or some sort of Marxist-Leninist revolution, “But I don’t know;
I also think that the potential exists for communities of color and working-class
communities to come together, for radical unionists to come together and to actually lead
something from the bottom.”

Taylor thought there was potential for revolution because “the numbers exist and
the conditions exist but the sentiment isn’t there.” She did not feel a violent revolution
was the only way it could happen; she believed taking back the power and flipping that
power structure so that people could have a more socialist lifestyle to take care of basic
needs would be a primary aim. Their discussion about revolution could mean that they
saw the potential for students to participate in revolutionary or socialist social justice
actions to make changes to the structure of higher education.

Overall, ally actions ranged from well-wishing, liberal practices to those that were
more radical or socialist in orientation. Again, the depth and breadth of ally actions
aligned with the conceptual model of Edwards (2006) in which the more developed the
ally, the more meaningful the actions were in terms of impact on African students.

Organizing as Allies

In this discussion about conservative, liberal, and socialist acts of social justice
(Starr, 1991), the actions described by the current research tend to fall within liberal range
of practices. Both Taylor and Jacob worked on multiple fronts as allies and took on socialist social justice actions in nature. They participated in direct action, supported campaigns of African and other minoritized students on campus, participated in electoral processes, worked under direct leadership of African students and raised awareness in the White community. They both were highly aware that the struggle was not about them and worked hard to “check their privilege” and to remain on the sidelines, rather than the center of the struggle. These actions aligned most closely with the socialist social justice in comparison to the other participants in the study. Trevor also took on some socialist social justice practices, such as bringing Omali Yeshitela to campus. He did this because he found the idea intriguing; he had pondered so much about the state of the United States and the world. Participating in this campus event was probably the only real action he took as an ally. The event solidified and confirmed some of his thoughts, although he admitted he struggled with some of the concepts that Omali Yeshitela introduced during his presentations. However, it was his openness and willingness to engage in dialogue that created the opportunity to bring such a speaker. Of the 10 or so student organizations asked to sponsor the event, his organization was the only one to take it on, and did so due as a result of his influence.

For many of the other participants, their actions were more liberal. Most stated they would support an issue on campus if it did not interfere with their work or school. This is one of the problem behaviors of Euro Americans who purport to be allies. Because the struggle for self-determination is not a White struggle, there is not a sense of urgency in taking actions. Instead, Euro Americans tend to engage if and when they
choose. Therefore, they can choose to take action on their own terms, thus keeping
themselves and Whiteness at the center.

Other behaviors were found in some of the allies in that they had a charity stance
rather than a solidarity stance. This was in keeping with the definition of conservative or
liberal social justice (Starr, 1991). A charity stance means that Euro Americans feel that
they know best what is needed for African and minoritized students on campus, and they
are available to guide African students in the right direction. Stating that they want to
help out African students indicated a charity stance because there is an assumption that
African students need White students’ help. Language is very powerful; two students
used the word colored when talking about African students, although one immediately
caught herself and realized her blunder. Another student referenced practices on the
continent of Africa that she implied were primitive, without seeming to understand how
colonialism imposed on African people brought about certain practices. These are
toys of a charity stance in which, despite a genuine desire to assist, ingrained beliefs
affect the understandings and actions that the students took.

In the late 1960s, SNCC concluded that Euro Americans needed to organize in
their own communities. This was a significant conclusion because the organization
saw shortcomings with Africans and allies working together in an undifferentiated
relationship. Despite this, the prevailing trend towards solving injustice is an
integrationist approach of working together as if everyone is equal. I asked the
participants to provide their thoughts on how they could organize as allies on campus in a
way that they were able to heighten awareness with their Euro American counterparts to
inform and expose the inequities, racial microaggressions, and other issues experienced by minoritized students.

When asked about her vision of White students forming an ally organization to support the interests of African students, Paula was initially confused and asked, “Are you saying a White organization just coming up to take care of these people?” When I responded that it would be designed to support any issues experienced by African students, she said, “I think it would be a good idea because White voices can branch a little farther, so if we were there to help them, we could help them to get a little farther.” Linda thought, “Why would you want to separate them like that? The White kids should be joining the ethnic studies club or the ethnic club they have on campus.” She continued this multinational theme but said the main problem is moving people into action; she felt students were simply too comfortable right now, and it would be difficult to get them involved in an organization such as this. Brittany also concurred with the multinational theme, stating a preference for a diverse organization that had everyone working together with a “social justice empowerment goal.” She went on to say that she felt an organization such as this would be more political and would require African student input, rather than just White students alone in order to have credibility.

Megan explained her thoughts along the same lines as Linda and Brittany:

I think they would work together. . . . I feel like it should be one big club; that the leaders are diverse, and they work together, and they vote to decide who the leaders are going to be. They communicate with each other and hear each other’s insight and maybe do certain events together with each other.
Megan was concerned that miscommunications would arise if the Euro American students were not working closely with African students. Sarah continued the multinational theme stating the organization should not be just Whites but a combined group and that, “I think everyone should have a piece in building it together. All ethnicities.”

Trevor also forwarded the idea of working as a coalition but not because he felt everyone should be working together as one group. It was more for cautionary reasons about the way White students may proceed and blunder, perhaps causing more harm as a result of good intention gone astray:

That’s a really interesting concept. I mean part of it; I think an organization like that would benefit more from being not just White people. Because I think when you get a bunch of White people in the room, they don’t understand how to get to the bottom of an issue. Especially those sort of issues because they don’t necessarily have the experience of being oppressed and knowing the tensions that come from that.

Mark had often thought of starting a Caucasian student organization, not for purposes of allyhood, but as a way to celebrate the positive aspects of European American heritage. In fact, he said:

I would have no vision for an organization that focuses solely on minorities’ stuff because that would go against the definition of “cultural” org because, if it’s a Caucasian cultural thing, what part of Caucasian culture are we celebrating if we’re not focusing on any aspect of our own group’s culture?
Mark’s thoughts on a Euro American cultural organization were interesting because he thought it was important to celebrate the positive aspects of his culture, and to recognize that Euro Americans do in fact have culture. At the same time, he realized how easy it would be for the organization to be taken out of context and viewed as a White power type of organization. It seemed that he had a difficult time conceptualizing an ally organization. Instead, he talked quite a bit about the danger of creating a “victim” mentality, either by advocating for African student issues, or even within the African cultural organizations. He said that this was a subject sometimes discussed by the African students, in which some of them felt they were focusing too much on perceived injustices as opposed to celebrating their culture and traditions.

Madison’s views on a White student ally organization showed greater depth and analysis than the multinational theme envisioned by Linda, Megan, and Sarah.

I think I’d be all for it. But again, you have to make sure that you’re not overpowering or you’re not being oppressive in any way. That you’re actually getting their words out, and you’re only picking their words up as a voice and not as your own voice.

Madison had experience being a president of a student organization, and she emphasized the importance of having a constitution that clearly states the purpose of the organization being that of one that stood in solidarity with African students on campus. In order to accomplish this, she felt the organization would definitely have to be in coalition with the BSU, almost as a subgroup of that organization.
Taylor also agreed that any language for the organization would have to be carefully worded because of the danger in forming a “White” group on campus and the misconceptions people could form as a result of not understanding its purpose.

To me, it would be a group that explicitly defines what it means to be an ally within that group, talks about privilege extensively in our mission statement, educating each other, sharing stories, stuff like that. It could function as both a support system for allies, because being an ally sometimes can be really rough. . . . [It would also ] be geared towards what we’re identifying, what we are supporting, and how we’re going to support it, and ways that we can approach other groups on campus too and presenting our ideas.

Taylor saw an ally organization as multifaceted. She had talked about how rough it could be sometimes as an ally. One of her most memorable moments was when an African student told her to “cry your White tears.” She was cognizant of how carefully she needed to tread as an ally. Thus, for her an ally student organization would not only organize campaigns and events, but it would provide political education and support to the ally students involved.

Jacob said he had already had such an experience in working with his radical public education coalition and felt such an organization could be very useful:

I think my vision for a White organization that could be a place of mutual aid to other oppressed folks’ organizations on campus would be an open fluid space. Where anyone was welcome to come or go; it would be a space primarily of I would say two main goals of education, because I think that especially for White folks, that is the most important things is to educate ourselves and be educated.
. . . But then also being a space where there are bodies that are available to stand in solidarity. So there are bodies that may be able to be arrested during a sit-in if other folks either can’t or don’t feel comfortable doing that and a body of folks that maybe aren’t willing to do that sort of thing. But also not standing on the front lines of the struggle that we should not be standing on.

Similar to Taylor, Jacob saw an ally organization as both a means to educate other Euro American students and to take action to support African students at protests, rallies, or other events in which they were voicing their concerns.

Each of the participants had a thoughtful response to the question of a White ally organization that worked to support the issues of African students on campus. Some were uneasy with the idea of a “White only” organization because it could be misconstrued and perceived as a racist organization. A few thought it should be a diverse group working together. Others understood the importance of Euro Americans working with their own White campus community, while at the same time wanting to ensure that African leadership provided guidance and input into their actions.

**A New Type of Ally: The Solidarity Ally**

In Chapter 2, the framework of African Internationalism was described in order to provide a basis for examining the ways in which allies took action. Although I utilized Edwards’ (2006) conceptual model, there were three main weaknesses in the current literature regarding allies that were illuminated during this study. First, the definition and development of allyhood appears to be more theoretical than practical. In fact, it almost appears to be a concept developed in isolation of the people who should be most affected by the actions of allies: minoritized students. Most of the actions still put allies at the
center of the work, instead of how the allies conducted themselves in relationship to oppressed people. Ally actions seemed to be primarily about the ally in that there was an emphasis on developing a strong sense of self-esteem, and having tolerance for and understanding of people.

Second, there appears to be a disconnect between allies and their minoritized counterparts. Rather than working under the leadership of minoritized people, allies appear to work either independently from them or, at best, alongside them. This means allies are vulnerable to putting forth their own interests because there is not the necessary hierarchical relationship in terms of minoritized people leading the work for their own self-determination.

Finally, allies tend to work as individuals. There was little to no mention of how allies would organize together to tackle issues and campaigns in a systematic way. Allyhood aligns with liberal social justice (Starr, 1991) exhibiting the values of individualism and political neutrality. The belief that fairness can be achieved within the existing social and political structures is also apparent. This liberal stance results in little tangible work being achieved due to lack of goals and established processes to achieve them. Table 3 compares the Solidarity Ally with the Ally for Social Justice.

The theory of African Internationalism is useful in addressing these weaknesses and as the framework to create a new definition of allyhood for higher education: the Solidarity Ally. Because there has been over 30 years of developing the role of the ally from theory to practice, most of the problems that arise as Euro Americans progress towards being allies have been addressed, and a structured approach has been successful
Table 3

*Comparison of Solidarity Allies With Social Justice Allies*

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<tr>
<th>Solidarity ally</th>
<th>Social justice ally</th>
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<tr>
<td>Works under African or other minoritized group leadership</td>
<td>Works with or on behalf of People of Color, or without their knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes on anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance</td>
<td>Takes an antiracist stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not co-opt issues and is mindful of opportunism (colonizer/colonized)</td>
<td>Can be opportunistic and may act in self-interest (horizontal or “equal” relationship)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts as part of organization, not as an individual</td>
<td>Acts primarily as an individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes in white campus community; focuses on transformational change, not reform</td>
<td>Organizes in both the White and minoritized campus communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on impact and outcomes for African students, not self</td>
<td>Focuses on reform and fixing the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligns with a socialist social justice viewpoint</td>
<td>Focuses on White self-identity and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aligns with a liberal social justice viewpoint</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in realizing many productive actions and campaigns. This can be adapted for use on college campuses.

In the current study, two participants, Jacob and Taylor, met the characteristics of Solidarity Allies, both in their assessment of the root causes of injustice and in the actions they took to support African students. They actively worked under African leadership, without inserting themselves into the African organizations. They also developed a coalition that in many ways worked in the way a solidarity organization would work, by
defining goals and campaigns and taking action that resulted in tangible changes for the campus as a whole.

**An Examination of the Research Questions**

There were three research questions posed in this study:

1. What attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice are held among Euro American students identified as allies at HWIs in the Southwestern region of the United States?

2. What sociocultural factors situated within HWIs challenge and reinforce prevailing attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice among Euro American students?

3. How do critical events, factors, experiences, or incidences relating to race influence Euro American students’ attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice?

**Research Question 1: What Attitudes and Beliefs About Race, Oppression, and Social Justice Are Held Among Euro American Students Identified as Allies at HWIs in the Southwestern Region of the United States?**

With regard to the first research question, participants in this study varied in their development as allies and their beliefs and understandings that they held relevant to these questions. While all the students were committed in many ways to being allies, their expression of these beliefs and their actions as allies differed based on their understanding of the root problems in the prevailing social system that brought about the conditions that African students faced on campus. Therefore, some participants had a more limited understanding about racism and how oppression could be solved. Most of
the students displayed liberal tendencies in their social justice actions. This means that, for the most part, they believed that changes could occur within the existing social system. Changes in beliefs as the next generation passed, an emphasis on education as a way to make changes in people’s belief systems, and viewing racism and injustice as isolated or individual acts were examples of this liberal attitude. The students in this category moved in and out of principled allyhood due to their lack of full understanding. This was problematic because it meant that they sometimes held onto liberal practices that were not in the best interests of African students.

Others, particularly Jacob, Taylor, and Trevor, were able to understand how capitalism required the continued oppression of Africans and minoritized people and how this translated into the experience of African students due to the preservation of Whiteness in the campus system and policies. Some of the students moved in between liberal and socialist views on social injustice in that they recognized the systemic nature of oppression. This could be seen in the students’ discussion of racism and their beliefs that it was more than just an individual issue, that major changes would need to take place in order for there to be true equity. Only two students, Jacob and Taylor, consistently held a socialist viewpoint throughout their interviews, acknowledging that change would only truly occur with a complete change in the social system.

**Research Question 2: What Sociocultural Factors Situated Within HWIs Challenge and Reinforce Prevailing Attitudes and Beliefs About Race, Oppression, and Social Justice Among Euro American Students?**

The means by which allies were selected played a significant role in this study. Allies selected by African students tended to have a stronger solidarity stance than allies
selected through professors. These allies provided more thoughtful and critical analysis than their counterparts. Participants who were selected by professors showed commitment by their interest in classes that helped them to become aware of disparities and injustice; however, these students were less inclined to take concrete action, and African students on campus seemed unaware that these students would possibly support their interests. This may be one of the reasons African student leaders had such difficulty in identifying White allies, and why, by their own admission, they did not engage in social relationships with Euro American students except when required.

Ally actions were directly related to the depth and breadth of their solidarity stance. Allies who were more developed in social justice—such as Taylor, Jacob, Trevor, and to some extent Mark and Madison—tended to take more critical and meaningful actions, including working under direct African leadership, participating in rallies and organized campaigns, while those who were still developing their ally stance—like Brittany, Megan, and Sarah—tended to be involved more in discussions and individual or isolated acts of solidarity. The students who had a more developed sense of allyhood, such as Jacob, Trevor, and Jordan, realized that conditions for African students on campus would not change without a major shift in paradigm and felt it was very important that all Euro American students committed to supporting the issues of African students. These students understood that a student-driven movement on campus would be required to really create change and overturn the conditions, and held a hard-won stance of principled solidarity to the point that they were recognized by African student leaders as true comrades for the cause.
Professors were able to recognize students who had a made a commitment to learning about other cultures and peoples, which is why they were recommended as allies. As shown in the literature, the majority of Euro American students tend to be resistant to learning the teachings of ethnic studies and multicultural coursework. Professors named students as allies who showed interest in the classes and did not display resistance to what they were learning. Yet, these students had not been recognized as allies by African student leadership, and the differences in their understanding and commitment was markedly different from those students who had been referred by African students.

All the participants were interviewed about their perception about whether the campus was welcoming or unwelcoming to African students, including the support of campus administrators, faculty, and student government. In terms of the campus environment, the Euro American participants generally felt that their respective campuses were welcoming to all students. The exceptions were Jacob and Taylor, who were the students who fit the criteria for Solidarity Allies. These students’ perceptions of the campus environment aligned more closely with those of the African student leaders who participated in the study. This is significant because it illustrated how important it is for allies to be connected to African student leadership; in being connected, these allies were more accurate in their assessment of the campus climate.

Many of the participants took at face value the marketing strategies utilized by their campuses to advertise its diversity. When asked about whether the campus administrators, faculty, and staff support the interests of African students, most students replied that the campus claimed that diversity was embraced and did not appear to give a critical response regarding the possibility that there was a discrepancy between the
advertising and the actual conditions. These students also made assumptions that, because the campus seemed welcoming to them, it must be the same for African students. Thus, in many ways, some of the participants displayed a lack of critical thinking about the campus experience. They seemed unable to look at the campus experience from the eyes of an African student. As a result, they did not have a sense of urgency about supporting the interest of African students. They felt it was enough that they supported them “in their heads,” and they did not participate in many actions that would bring about real change. At the same time, they generally believed that most Euro American students on campus were simply oblivious to the challenges faced by African students. Euro American students tended to be unaware that African students might even need support for their interests, because Euro American students had not engaged in a critical analysis, primarily due to a colorblind ideology.

Jacob and Taylor, as Solidarity Allies, recognized the difference between marketing strategies and realities faced by African and minoritized students. In general, these two students felt that the campus was hostile and that African and minoritized students faced multiple racial microaggressions as an everyday factor in their educational experience. They were able to see the contradictions between diversity as a “numbers game,” and true social justice, in which the needs of African students should be imbedded into the structure of the university, as opposed to Whiteness being imbedded. Mark, Trevor, and Madison also perceived this to some extent. They also felt a huge responsibility as Euro American students to engage their own White communities and raise awareness about conditions. At times they were angry and passionate, but they channeled their emotions into positive actions, such as protests, events, and supporting
the need for a campus Black resource center, all designed to overturn conditions, and they felt an ongoing and urgent commitment to learning more about revolutionary theory and practice, so that they could be armed to meet the challenges they faced in supporting the interests of African students.

**Research Question 3: How Do Critical Events, Factors, Experiences, or Incidences Relating to Race Influence Euro American Students’ Attitudes and Beliefs About Race, Oppression, and Social Justice?**

Nearly all the students could recall an incident or event in which they first recognized disparities and injustice. However, it did not necessarily follow that a critical incident politicized them into an ally stance. For example, although Jacob had been on campus during the Harlem Ho-down, he dismissed the African students’ demands as an overreaction. It was only after getting involved in direct actions was he able to view this incident through the eyes of African students. Upbringing and educational opportunities played just as an important a role in bringing students into awareness as allies and the desire to take action. Some students, Paula, Brittany, and Jennifer in particular, felt that the circumstances in which they grew up around minoritized people meant that they gained a much better appreciation and understanding of the challenges imposed upon minoritized people. For others, such as Trevor, a strong desire to be around a more diverse population after growing up in a heterogeneous environment was a factor, and taking classes to develop a better understanding of the experiences of African students was an important step.

All participants could recall critical moments in their upbringing and awareness in which they were able to discern disparities and injustices. These incidents may have
impelled them into some sort of action, or they planted seeds that helped the participants’
progress on their path to allyhood. Most participants also indicated a commitment to
continuing in their allyhood even after college, although some admitted that their
participation may lessen due to dealing with the reality of jobs and other commitments
after they left school.

The participants were in agreement that formalized education through
coursework, as well as the ways in which they self-educated, were important components
in their awareness and understanding. Coursework was significant in that several allies
changed majors or added minors related to ethnic studies as a result of their exposure to
an independent (nonmainstream) analysis of history, politics, and social studies.
Participants generally felt that ethnic studies courses were very important and should be
mandated for students to take, but were somewhat divided on how Euro American
students would respond to these mandates. Some participants felt that if mandated during
the freshman year, most students would simply comply just as they do with other general
education requirements; others felt students may be resistant.

Most of the participants who had taken ethnic studies courses felt that the
professors teaching these courses had a strong interest in the success of African students,
sometimes holding them to a high standard as a way to encourage their achievement.
They also could name specific instructors whom they felt supported African students and
who worked for social justice.

Participants had a range of views regarding a Euro American ally student
organization. Not surprisingly, these views aligned with their stance in the categories of
Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest, Aspiring Allies for Altruism, Allies for Social Justice,
and Solidarity Allies. Participants who tended towards the first two categories envisioned a multinational type of organization where everyone worked together, along the lines of an integrationist perspective. Those who were more aligned with social justice and solidarity could envision how this organization would operate and what its relationship would be to African student organizations. The main concerns were how the organization would be perceived, how it would maintain its focus on educating Euro Americans and determining the actions it would take, and how it would align with student cultural organizations or minoritized student groups to provide the correct stance of solidarity.
CHAPTER 5—SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CLOSING

This study examined 11 Euro American students’ experiences as allies and their actions taken to support African student interests at Historically White Institutions (HWIs). I conducted interviews with 11 students identified as allies through snowball sampling from African student leaders or referrals from professors who taught ethnic studies or multicultural classes. This chapter provides a summary of the study including methodology and key findings, and provides discussion about the participants’ experiences in comparison to the current literature and through the lens of the theory of African Internationalism. Implications for postsecondary educators and for future research round out the remainder of the chapter.

Summary of the Study

This study explored the experiences of Euro American students identified as allies. The research questions were:

1. What attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression and social justice are held among Euro American students identified as allies?

2. What sociocultural factors situated within the institution challenge and reinforce prevailing attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice among Euro American students?

3. How do critical events, factors, experiences or incidences relating to race influence Euro American students’ attitudes and beliefs about race, oppression, and social justice?
The purpose of examining the experiences of Euro American allies was based on the concept that the problems experienced by African students on campus should not have to be solved solely by African students or even by African faculty and administrators. Rather, the challenges faced by these students are a direct result of a social system of imperialism that requires the continued subjugation and colonization of Africans in order to function effectively. As such, the responsibility for change must also lie with Euro Americans, as they are part of the oppressor nation inflicting these injustices on African students. In the setting of higher education, Euro American ally students can play a significant role in raising awareness and educating their Euro American peers. They can also influence relationships and power within the realm of student government.

The other purpose in examining the experiences of Euro American allies is that the current literature does not sufficiently address this area of research in terms of providing a deep analysis of root causes and the reasons that Euro American allies are important. The prevailing antiracism lens provides only a limited understanding of the full force of oppression experienced by African students and results in recommending actions that do little to change the conditions experienced by African students and deflects from creating a meaningful response and role of Euro American students on campus.

This study used qualitative research methods, specifically, a phenomenological approach in the collection and analysis of data. Phenomenology focuses on understanding social phenomena from the actor’s own perspective of how he or she experiences the world; individual perceptions of reality are significant in shaping how a person experiences and makes sense of the social contexts and interactions. In other
words, the lived experiences of the individual participants were targeted and described through a phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994) for the purpose of understanding the experience of Euro American allies at HWIs. To achieve this, I conducted two audiotaped interviews each with 11 participants at four campuses in the Southwestern region of the United States over the course of 7 months. I also asked participants to complete a brief questionnaire using SurveyMonkey to gather some demographic information related to participants’ ages, socioeconomic background, neighborhood and school setting, and political upbringing. I then personally transcribed some of the interviews and used paid transcribers to complete the remainder.

African student leaders were identified through purposive sampling and interviewed to get a sense of how they experience the campus at which they were located and to provide access to potential Euro American allies through snowball sampling. Three African student leaders from two university campuses were interviewed for this purpose, and three allies were identified during the process. When African students were unable to provide a sufficient number of students they identified as allies, faculty at the four campuses were asked to assist. Data were coded and analyzed using Saturate, a web-based qualitative data analysis application. The themes that emerged from the interviews were: (a) what it means to be an ally, (b) development as an ally, (c) conceptualizing racial injustice, and (d) the practice of being an ally.

Ally for Self-Interest, or ally in the initial stage of development; three fell into the
category of Aspiring Allies for Altruism, or ally in the intermediate stage of development;
two met the criteria for Allies for Social Justice, or ally in the mature stage of
development; and two could be defined under a new definition of a Solidarity Ally.

In terms of how participants developed as allies, the key factors that emerged were
their upbringing, the ways in which they developed their awareness, critical incidents, and
education through courses or personal means. Many participants were influenced by their
family, primarily through values learned. For some, particular situations or experiences
from their childhood or school experiences resulted in their thinking and questioning how
the world worked. Others did not gain awareness or understanding until they became
involved in college courses that gave them a broader view of history that had previously
been unknown to them.

The participants’ emerging identities as they pertained to sexual orientation, class,
age, race, and gender were likely influences in their development and expression of
allyhood. Participants in this study primarily were in their twenties. The one exception
was Linda, who at age 47 had direct experience in growing up during the 1960s and
1970s. This means she had a greater historical understanding of the power of students.
At least two students, Jacob and Linda, identified as gay or queer; these identities resulted
in experiencing some marginalization, which may have attributed to their development as
allies. Living with a learning or developmental disability also was a marginalizing
experience that affected both Madison and Mark in their development as allies. Other
experiences of poverty or being raised by a single parent were also influential. The fact
that most of the allies experienced some sort of marginalized identity confirms that Euro
American students can develop the ability to view the world through the eyes of the oppressed. However, there is a fine balance between equating these marginalizing experiences with the oppression faced by African students. The theory of African Internationalism also provides a lens for Euro Americans to view the world that ensures any opportunism is exposed and eliminated. One of the strengths of using African Internationalism as a framework is that it illuminates how the marginalized experiences we have as Euro Americans can be tied directly to imperialism and the culture of violence that results from parasitic capitalism. In this way Euro Americans can validate their experiences within the context of this culture and see more clearly why it is in their best interest to work towards the liberation of African people.

Participants varied in their understanding of racial injustice and the challenges encountered by African students on campus. Some viewed racism as individual acts and were not particularly cognizant of larger systems at play; they felt racism would disappear after a few more generations. Others felt that education was extremely important in eradicating racism and that if everyone was educated enough, they would stop acting in racist ways and injustices would dissipate. Several participants grasped the systemic nature of injustices and disparities and identified capitalism and colonialism as the root problem.

Participants also varied in the actions they took as allies. For some, being an ally took the form of discussions with friends and family, as well as pointing out racist or prejudicial statements made by others. A few allies participated in African cultural organizations such as Black Student Unions and supported petitions or rallies that took place. Others were actively engaged in events and direct action. For the majority of the
participants, their support of African students tended to be internal, or in their heads; they said they would support issues of African students if they were invited or if it worked within their school and work schedules. This liberal social justice tendency indicates that Euro Americans who act in this manner may not truly commit to supporting the struggles of African people, or in particular, African students on campus. Because the campus culture of racial microaggressions and hostility are not experienced by Euro Americans, their sense of urgency is not present. These students felt they would continue in their support of oppressed people, although indicated it may change once they were out of college and working. However, some participants felt that their allyhood was one of their primary activities in their life and would shape their future endeavors and life purpose.

When asked to envision a Euro American ally organization on campus, participants again varied in their responses, with many students stating a preference for an organization that was multinational as opposed to White only. For some, it was because they felt Euro Americans should not have their own organization due to the problematic nature of a “White” organization. For others, they felt it was important that Euro Americans did not act independently from cultural organizations; by making the organization diverse in terms of ethnicity, they felt this would assist in ensuring that students worked together. Others believed a White organization designed to support African and minoritized students’ interests was a good idea, and while it could be under its own leadership, it would definitely have to form coalitions with other organizations in order to effectively carry out its purpose. For this reason, a clear constitution would be important to ensure that the work was not subverted or misunderstood.
Discussion

This study involved using a grass roots revolutionary theory and applying it to the educational setting as a way to change the conditions faced by African students on historically White campuses. One of the ways that I approached the study was by reflecting on previous changes that were implemented as a result of student movements in the 1960s during the heyday of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, and examining the role and experiences of Euro American student allies at Historically White Institutions.

Changes from previous student movements included the implementation of ethnic studies departments and courses and educational opportunity programs that were designed to level the playing field for historically disadvantaged students in terms of access, retention, and completion of higher education. Despite the attempts of these movements to produce qualitative change, they were ultimately co-opted by the existing White power system to neutralize their effectiveness by shifting the focus from revolutionary or radical practices to integrating into mainstream ideology. This co-option illustrates how top-down institutional change is difficult to achieve, given that higher education is designed to maintain the status quo (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Jackman & Muha, 1984; Kinshasa, 2009).

The White power or imperialist ideology in higher education is a reflection of the U.S. social system. The past 50 years have shown that, despite all the research, analysis, money, time, and effort being put into understanding why African students have such difficulty in succeeding in higher education, few gains or insights have materialized.
Kinshasa (2009) discussed how African students in the United States and around the world are socialized into the dominant system:

Since most African intellectuals are directly or indirectly trained by imperialist created or funded institutions, it implies that rulers of the oppressor nations must create institutions that will allow them to produce cadres who will defend and fight for oppressive and exploitative capitalist societies. . . . Universities in oppressor nations are spheres that generate ideas and philosophies to promote and justify imperialist economic order. (para. 14)

He went on further to explain how the existing educational systems in capitalist societies indoctrinate African students by training them to accept and spread ideologies that promote imperialism. He said these philosophies do not serve the interests of African students who are taught to accept “the falsification of world history and the disfiguration and slander of African people’s history, personality and culture” (para. 16).

It is only in recent years that the United States has begun to acknowledge that its public institutions of higher education were founded on and developed from slavery as Kinshasa (2009) stated. In 2003, a Committee on Slavery and Justice was formed at Brown University as a result of a protest over an anti-reparations ad in the campus newspaper. A report of this committee found that not only did Brown University benefit enormously from slavery but that all of Rhode Island’s institutions were implicated in the slave trade (Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, 2006). The implications of this report were far-reaching; many universities across the United States are now admitting how they benefited both from slave ownership and the slave trade (Zernike, 2001).
There is a deep contradiction in expecting institutions rooted in slavery and genocide to provide a quality education to African students. Given this, one could conclude that the prevailing system requires revolution, not reform. Said Starr (1991):

Social justice is always controversial in theory and imperfect in practice. In education we talk about things like “equality of outcomes” or “equality of learning outcomes.” To think that we could single-handedly achieve this without dismantling existing power structures is naïve. Some kinds of social justice are just not achievable because they are at odds with the political and economic forces which shape our society. If society stays the way it is, there are some kinds of social justice that we can never have. (p. 24)

African Internationalism is the theory and practice that has worked for the past 40 years to address the root problem of colonialism and imperialism for African people worldwide. As a result, the Uhuru Movement, an organization that utilizes this theory, has built institutions for self-determination, including an independent African economy and marketplace, institutions addressing educational and health disparities, and independent media and publishing, to name a few. It is plausible that the framework of African Internationalism could be used to create transformational change within the educational setting, as well. This premise is strengthened when one examines educational systems developed by Cuba and Venezuela under socialist governments.

Typically, because of the U.S. embargo against Cuba and the exclusion of so-called “Third World” countries from the list of countries with the best educational systems in the world, Cuba is overlooked as providing a model of liberatory education that successfully educates thousands of students without regard to their racial or ethnic
background. How a poor country is able to accomplish this with few resources indicates that money is not necessarily the answer to providing a quality education to a populace, as confirmed in a recent study on the top educational systems in “developed” countries in the world (Pearson, 2012). Venezuela, as part of its Bolivarian Revolution, also has made great strides in providing free education to its people, systematically eliminating illiteracy and expanding all levels of formal public education in a very short period of time (Griffiths & Williams, 2009). Given that these two countries had huge illiteracy rates and little formal education for most of its citizenry prior to its transformation of education, it illuminates the recognition that the problem does not lie within the people but in the capitalist social system itself.

The challenge is combating the way in which the prevailing system of imperialism and White power maintains its stronghold, putting individualism over the collectivism that is required for change to occur. Individualism is purported to be a principled and seemingly neutral basis used to reject group demands. The rights of the individual are so strongly supported that it renders the rights of groups as “illegitimate and unreasonable” (Jackman & Muha, 1984, p. 760).

Given all this, how can Euro American students play a role in overturning the current educational system that is so rooted in colonialism and imperialism that African students will never achieve what is needed most: self-determination?

History has shown that given the right social climate, Euro American students will support the interests of African students. As previously discussed, in the student movements of the 1960s, the majority of the White student bodies were in support of the demands made by African and other minoritized students (President’s Commission on
Campus Unrest, 1970; Rooks, 2006). One could argue that those were different times, but at this moment in history, conditions are ripe for the potential of another student-driven movement occurring, given the current economic and social state (Yeshitela, 2012). The Nation maintains a category of news called StudentNation, which provides updates on all the student movements occurring around the United States. A most recent edition includes news about student protests and actions in Philadelphia, North Carolina, Florida, New Hampshire, Illinois, Rhode Island, Louisiana, New Jersey, California, and Wisconsin (StudentNation, 2013). The past several years have seen many student protests over budget cuts, tuition hikes, and workers’ conditions, as well as the politicizing of large numbers of people through the Occupy Movement.

Revolutionary theory stresses the importance of organization; without organization, change cannot be achieved. Yet, the current approach to developing social justice or racial justice allies takes an individualistic approach. In addition, there is a tangential focus on development of allies in the context of identity development. Further, with an antiracist approach, the defined forms of action are not ones that concretely change conditions for African students on campus.

An identity development model that relies on the exploration of White identity (Helms, 1995; Hyde, 1995; Lawrence & Tatum, n.d.; McIntosh, 1990; Michael & Conger, 2009; Reason & Evans, 2007; Reason et al., 2005; Roediger, 1999; Watt, 2007) tends to focus on a personal or social meaning of allyhood, rather than one that emphasizes how an ally lives his or her life (Waters, 2010). By focusing so much on one’s personal identity and Whiteness, Whites tend to remain at the center of the discussion, and campus conditions do not change or improve. Even those who state that allyhood is not
dependent on self-understanding (Reason & Broido, 2005) still tend to emphasize this in their discussion.

The antiracist model so prevalent in the discussion of allyhood (Alimo, 2013; Reason, 2007; Reason et al., 2005; Waters, 2010; Yeung, Spanierman, & Landrum-Brown, 2013) not only limits the ability of allies to act in meaningful ways, but also disrupts discourse on examining colonialism and imperialism as the root problem. Antiracists tend to be committed to their multinational stance, and it becomes difficult to broaden their viewpoint, because it requires much more discipline and commitment to work from a socialist social justice standpoint as opposed to one of liberal social justice.

Changes in Euro American students’ feelings or the ally journey of self-exploration dominate the discussion about allyhood (Alimo, 2013; Reason, 2007; Reason et al., 2005; Waters, 2010; Yeung et al., 2013). In most of the discussion about ally actions, there is a conspicuous lack of action that translates into real meaning for African students on campus. The definitions that current research identifies as actions of racial justice allies such as “active exploration of racial justice issues in a specifically-designed seminar course, leading student groups related to social justice issues, and using positions within student government to forward racial justice agendas” (Reason et al., 2005, p. 534) are not concrete actions. In some instances, more concrete actions, such as students forwarding a racial agenda in student government positions or writing legislation to support diversity (Reason et al., 2005), were discussed. However, most actions are centers on changing thoughts in White people’s heads about oppressed peoples in terms of gaining appreciation or understanding of cultural differences. When placed against a context of unrelenting genocide and exploitation on a global scale, and debilitating racial
microaggressions and hostility on a university or college scale, actions such as those recommended by Parker (2006) are ineffective:

(a) Wear a white wristband as a reminder about your privilege, and as a personal commitment to explain as to why you wear the white wristband; (b) Set aside sections of the day to critically examine how privilege is working, (c) Put a note on your mirror or computer screen as a reminder to think about privilege, (d) Make a daily list of the ways privilege played out, and steps taken or not taken to address privilege; and (e) Find a person of color who is willing to hold you accountable for addressing privilege. (p. 1)

Even the actions described by Kendall (2006) as recommended for allies appear to be tenuous in terms of truly changing the conditions experienced by African and minoritized students. Kendall’s recommendations include sharing group leadership roles with people of color; taking responsibility for mistakes made rather than making excuses; and talking about oppression as it arises.

In the main, the actions espoused by the researchers did not directly result in improved conditions for African students on campus. In fact, it did not appear important to focus on changing the campus environment, and these primary actions usually occur unbeknownst to African and other minoritized student organizations. The multinationalist approach favored in the research focuses on working together with other cultural and ethnic groups, and frowns upon the development of a national identity for minoritized groups. Organizations that focus on self-determination and national identity oftentimes are seen as radical, divisive, and hateful. This is a contradiction because Euro Americans
have a White nationalist identity and have the power of self-determination; why is it seen as divisive for another group of individuals to aspire to the same conditions?

African Internationalism, on the other hand, makes a call to Euro Americans to complete the work of the Black Power Movement of the 1960s by defending the self-determination of African people through nothing less than revolution, as this is the way to create a just world for all people, rather than continuing the pedestal of White power for a few.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed Edwards’s (2006) model of Aspiring Allies for Self-Interest, Aspiring Allies for Altruism, and Allies for Social Justices. I demonstrated how these three types of allies correspond to Waters’ (2010) developmental model in which he discussed allies in initial, intermediate, and mature stages of development. I also discussed other ally models (Broido, 2000; Reason et al., 2005). In both Edwards’ (2006) and Waters’ (2010) discussions on ally development, there is the potential for allies to develop from early stages of allyhood, to more mature stages.

As a result of this study, I propose a fourth category of ally called a Solidarity Ally based on the theory of African Internationalism and the criteria developed for Euro Americans who work in solidarity under the Uhuru Movement. The key difference in the Solidarity Ally in relationship to earlier models (Broido, 2000; Edwards, 2006; Reason et al., 2005; Waters, 2010) is that it is based on an anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance as opposed to an antiracist stance and does not dwell on White identity development as part of the process. Further, the actions taken by a Solidarity Ally are defined differently than what are defined as actions in previous research. Solidarity Allies do not seek to isolate themselves from the oppressor nation; rather they work within “the belly of the beast” to
fight for liberation (Hess, 2012; Yeshitela, 2012). In contrast to the Ally for Social Justice (Edwards, 2006) and allies at the mature stage of allyhood (Waters, 2010), Solidarity Allies work under the assumption that the only correct action is to dismantle the current social system. These allies recognized that reforming, amending, and redefining as proposed by Edwards (2006) still relies on the exploitation of oppressed people and therefore is unacceptable. In fact, Solidarity Allies focus their work in the White community, primarily for reparations, and do not work in oppressed communities except for a specific purpose as deemed by African leadership. Like Allies for Social Justice, they hold themselves accountable and are accountable to oppressed groups but in qualitatively different ways; there are several critical points that are divergent. While Edwards saw Allies for Social Justice being driven or motivated by spiritual or moral grounds, African Internationalists would disagree. As historical materialists, the question of spiritual or moral correctness does not enter into the actions of Solidarity Allies.

Historical materialism requires concrete action on the part of Solidarity Allies; there is no discussion of freeing people spiritually as suggested by Edwards, because this is seen as a form of idealism. Historical materialism views the production of the means to support human life, and the exchange of things produced are the basis of our social structure. The ways in which wealth is distributed and society is divided into classes is dependent upon production: what is produced, how it is produced, and how products are exchanged (Engels, 1880/n.d.). Thus, the focus is on the active destruction of a parasitic system of oppression that cannot be reformed or modified due to its foundation of slavery, genocide, and exploitation (Yeshitela, 2010).
African Internationalism does not define Whites as victims as Edwards (2006) does, although Edwards states that Whites are victims in unequal ways to oppressed peoples. In addition, Solidarity Allies do not align themselves with intersectionality because it obscures the real question of colonialism as the root problem. Solidarity Allies understand they are complicit with the current system of White power and must actively undermine it; even the poorest and most miserable White person, male or female, benefits from White power over all African and oppressed people (Hess, 2000). Solidarity Allies under African Internationalism conduct their work not with but under the direct leadership of the African liberation movement. One of the key differences between Solidarity Allies and existing definitions of allies is that Solidarity Allies do not engage in the work as individuals; rather, they follow strict protocols of the solidarity organization developed by African leadership. As a result, Solidarity Allies maintain high revolutionary discipline in their interactions with African and oppressed peoples, ensuring that the struggle for liberation cannot be co-opted or destroyed through Euro American self-interests (Yeshitela, 2012).

Solidarity Allies focus on a stance of solidarity as opposed to charity, so they actively engage in returning resources to the African liberation movement through reparations work, fundraising, and providing other material support in terms of skills and expertise that Euro Americans acquire as part of their complicity with the current system and that have been historically denied to minoritized peoples. In terms of how this translates into action on a campus environment, Solidarity Allies would uphold an anti-imperialist constitution and build coalition with other organizations that take this stance. Actions would include strategic intervention in the student government electoral...
process, which could include running a slate of candidates of allies and minoritized students or holding forums to disrupt the status quo by raising up issues that typically are not discussed in campus elections, such as the lack of voice of minoritized students, the proliferation of racial microaggressions against African and minoritized students, and policies that cater to White middle class values and differentially harm minoritized students. Other actions would be to bring speakers to campus to raise awareness about colonialism as opposed to racism as the root problem that affects the campus environment, working with sympathetic professors to incorporate African Internationalism into existing curriculum, and developing solidarity student organizations that put pressure on the administration to move from a multicultural and diversity model to a social justice model that puts the interests of African and minoritized students first.

Finally, what Edwards (2006) describes as accepting critique “as a gift” (p. 52) is qualitatively different from the ways in which African Internationalists engage in criticism and self-criticism. The process of criticism and self-criticism as an organizational strategy not only serves to deepen individual understanding but exposes weaknesses of the solidarity organization, in order to strengthen its effectiveness in carrying out the work on a mass level.

Using the theory of African Internationalism, a new definition of a Solidarity Ally corrects some of the deficiencies in current discussion about racial justice and social justice allies. In terms of developing Solidarity Allies in higher education, the following principles would apply. First, the Solidarity Ally would not spend an inordinate amount of time exploring his or her own Whiteness or identity. The Solidarity Ally understands that allyhood is not about the person; it is about the actions they participate in to combat
colonialism and imperialism. Thus, Solidarity Allies’ identity is shaped by the actions they take, moving away from a preoccupation with how conditions and situations make them feel.

Second, a Solidarity Ally takes an anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance, as opposed to an antiracist stance. The Solidarity Ally understands that reformation of a system rooted in colonialism and slavery cannot be achieved. Therefore, the Solidarity Ally has a clear purpose in overthrowing the current system and in working to incorporate a new structure in its place. This means that a Solidarity Ally makes a commitment to transformational change, not to reform. Indeed, Solidarity Allies actively work against a reform ideology espoused by most Euro American allies, because they understand that this ideology delays, disrupts, and demonizes transformational solutions. Third, the Solidarity Ally would work under African leadership, not with or on behalf of African and oppressed people. Solidarity Allies recognize that their status as colonizers cannot be eliminated or minimized in this current period, and they would be careful to take steps to not reproduce the colonizer role over the colonized. The relationship of African and Euro American students is illustrated in Figure 3.

Finally, Solidarity Allies understand that their work requires real action that demands organization and discipline. Ideally, an organization of Solidarity Allies would be consolidated under African student leadership. They would maintain the discipline of representing the White solidarity arm of the African student interests and act very carefully to ensure that they do not undermine the leadership or self-determination of African and other minoritized students. By engaging in a disciplined relationship with African student leadership, using solid organizational strategies, relying on the principles
Figure 3. Relationship between African student leadership and Euro American Solidarity Allies within the framework of African Internationalism.

of democratic centralism, and engaging in the practice of criticism and self-criticism, Solidarity Allies would develop their identity in a natural process of theory and practice.

Currently, Solidarity Allies who work for African liberation in the larger society engage in fundraising or reparations work. On the college campus, Solidarity Allies would engage in these same efforts to support campaigns of African and minoritized student organizations.

Finally, solidarity actions would include raising awareness about the Euro American role in supporting minoritized students on campus. This would involve actively engaging in outreach, promoting events and speakers, holding political education studies, maintaining blogs and writing literature from an African Internationalist viewpoint, producing radio and internet shows, participating in protests, rallies, and taking on other actions as directed by African leadership.
Edwards’ (2006) conceptual model and Waters’ (2010) discussion of the development of allies was very useful in illuminating the process of becoming an ally. Not all allies will progress to become Allies for Social Justice, or develop into mature allies as described by Waters. With the emergence of the Solidarity Ally, it is possible to visualize this type of ally as one on the continuum illustrated by Edwards. At the same time, it is also possible that some individuals would bypass the process described by Edwards and Waters and develop into Solidarity Allies independently, by taking on an anticolonial stance upfront, as opposed to developing as an antiracist first. Figure 4 illustrates this model by depicting the process as both a continuum of moving from antiracist practices to anticolonial ones, and as an independent process in which one develops an anticolonial stance, bypassing antiracist development completely.

Figure 4. Conceptual model of Solidarity Allies.
Conclusions

The findings of this study are important because it examines the experiences of Euro American allies within the context of material support for African students. These conclusions are apparent given the findings.

1. Whiteness is still central in ally models and in the literature—even those that are created to eradicate racial injustice for African and other minoritized students. The current models tend to prioritize how allies feel about themselves, rather than institutional transformation and concrete actions that make campuses more supportive for African students.

2. Organizational support is needed in order to develop Euro American students as allies. By this I mean that an individual approach to developing allies is not effective, and an intentional approach is needed. There are many students on campus who have a desire to develop themselves as allies and support minoritized students. However, too often these students are left to their own devices to do so. The result can be detrimental to African and minoritized students because these students do not have the necessary political education to act appropriately as allies. Ideally, campuses would provide comprehensive ally training and support ally student organizations so that Euro American students can work in solidarity with African and other minoritized students. Given that HWI invest and defend Whiteness, this may not materialize. This is why my study focuses on a student movement, rather than relying on institutions to provide the necessary support.
3. The new definition of a Solidarity Ally uses the framework of African Internationalism to emphasize an anticolonial and anti-imperialist lens for understanding the issues faced by African and minoritized students. It also may be an effective means in which to develop Euro American allies. The question remains as to whether the Solidarity Ally is an extension of Edward’s (2006) conceptual model or a departure from the model, or even both. It is possible that students who have had little or no exposure to an antiracist model can fully develop as Solidarity Allies using an anticolonial lens, without progressing through the steps illustrated by current models. It is also possible that students who have been entrenched in an antiracist stance can make the leap over to an anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance in their development. It is also entirely possible that students who have invested in their antiracist identity may be reluctant to shift from this paradigm and engage as allies using an anticolonial stance.

**Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study have several implications for institutions of higher education and student services administrators who wish to engage in the practice of developing Solidarity Allies.

First, it is important to bring a greater understanding of the widespread effects of colonialism in education. Current theories and models in education do not capture this concept; there are few, if any, references to colonialism and imperialism in discussions around social justice. Searches to find articles using colonialism as a keyword bring up limited articles, usually in relationship to education on the continent of Africa. In 1978,
Arce wrote that much was written about colonialism in academia; but at present, one has great difficulty in finding any articles or information related to colonialism in education in the United States. This indicates that the understandings we were gaining from the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements of the 1960s have been subverted and sanitized into a reformist movement; indeed, gains made in terms of ethnic studies are now under attack across the United States (Fernandez & Hammer, 2012; Powers & Williams, 2012). In this period of colorblind racism, the fight to create an understanding of colonialism as the root problem in education as opposed to racism is ongoing. The theory of African Internationalism is useful in this context and can be adapted to the educational setting to explain and solve the persistent challenges faced by minoritized students.

Organizing as Solidarity Allies is one that requires a structured approach to allyhood. Allies cannot work in isolation of each other or the oppressed groups whom they purport to support and defend. The current practice of viewing racial justice and social justice allies “one person at a time,” as it were, is in direct conflict with the understandings gained through the theory of African Internationalism. Indeed, this study found that many of the so-called ally participants had no relationship with African student organizations on campus, were unaware of any current campaigns or issues that these organizations were working on, and stipulated that they would join in any efforts if they were invited, and if they had time based on school and work schedules. Further, African student leaders struggled to name White allies despite their active participation in campus affairs and knowledge of various student organizations and venues. These students were in a position to interact with Euro American students who supported their interests.
Clearly, one of the things missing from current research is including African student leaders in the conversation about Euro American students as allies. Even in formulating the definition and practice of being an ally, African and other minoritized students are forced to accept a definition that has not taken into consideration their expertise and experiences! However, in this study, the African student leaders were asked to provide a definition being an ally and were also seen as the most reliable source for identifying allies. These students were able to provide strong definitions that were rooted in the actions they saw Euro American students taking. Further, the students they selected were well developed as allies. Defining allyhood through the lens of African Internationalism puts the interests of African students on campus at the forefront of the conversation and advocates self-determination, even in how these students can articulate and define a role for Euro American allies in their struggles.

According to Penny Hess (personal communication, June 12, 2010), any transformational change in an educational institution would have to come through a student movement. This is the only way that changes have occurred to address the needs of African students, as seen by the changes resulting from the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. This thinking is further strengthened when one reviews the literature about the struggle to incorporate curriculum into the classroom and the resistance encountered as a result (Arce, 1978; Boatright-Horowitz, 2005; Chizhik & Chizhik, 2005; King, 1992). The role that Euro American students can take as Solidarity Allies would be to build student organizations on campus whose mission is to defend the democratic rights of African and minoritized students. A solidarity organization would need to form coalitions with the students it seeks to defend and work under defined leadership of
African and other minoritized students (P. Hess, personal communication, June 12, 2010).

A solidarity student organization on campus would necessarily define itself and establish its constitution based on the principles of solidarity as developed by the Uhuru Movement and the theory of African Internationalism. An anticipated problem would be maintaining allegiance to this proven stance of solidarity, while supporting the issues of African students on campus, who may be indoctrinated into a definition of success as put forth by imperialism in education. Because of the neocolonial forces of higher education, many cultural organizations such as Black Student Unions are apolitical; in fact, many of these students are committed to a multinational stance of assimilation and “making it” within the current imperialist system. Therefore, a Euro American student organization committed to the revolutionary principles of a liberator education may have problems in aligning with the politics or lack thereof of existing cultural organizations. The solution would be to uphold a student organization constitution that is anti-imperialist in its definition and clearly define this stance in its interactions with other student organizations. Further, the organization could support the development of African International Student Organizations (AISO) on campuses, another organization under the leadership of the Uhuru Movement. In this way, a Euro American solidarity organization could do much to raise awareness and educate students regarding the cost of imperialism to all humanity, particularly in terms of issues that are important to students such as tuition increases, decreased course offerings, and policies that differentially and negatively impact low income students.
Implications for Future Research

This study introduced a grass roots revolutionary theory of African Internationalism as the framework for discussing the responsibility that Euro American students have in supporting the interests of African students on campus in a principled and meaningful role as a Solidarity Ally. This is the first time that this theory has been used in the context of higher education and applying it as a new framework for advancing the role of Solidarity Allies in changing the campus environment for African students. As such, further research is necessary to continue to develop a cohesive approach regarding Euro American allies to address the current weaknesses in the literature in terms of definition, practice, and actions of Euro American allies.

Research to either determine or illuminate whether the Solidarity Ally is an extension of Edward’s (2006) conceptual model, a departure from that model, or even both would be beneficial. Exploration of students who have not had much exposure to an antiracist model should be done to see if they can fully develop as Solidarity Allies using an anticolonial lens. This would provide a better understanding of the progression of allies in terms of their development in the steps or levels illustrated by current models. It would also be useful to determine if allies who are confirmed antiracists can progress to an anticolonial, anti-imperialist stance, or if this antiracist identity actually impedes their development as a Solidarity ally. In general, more research on how students either progress as allies or how they may stall out at a particular level or step would also further the field.

It would be useful to conduct a qualitative study of existing Uhuru Movement Solidarity Allies who have had a long history in working under African leadership. This
could illuminate how these members came into their understanding of their role within the African liberation movement and the process they participated in to work constructively as members of an organization committed to a solidarity stance. Such information could guide the political education conducted with students interested in allyhood, as well as the development of a student organization on campus that aligns with African Internationalism. In particular, the issue of White identity development would be important to illuminate in terms of how much attention and exploration is necessary of White identity in relationship to becoming an ally.

Currently in higher education, there is a great commitment to antiracist practices that are in direct contradiction of developing Solidarity Allies within the framework of African Internationalism, as well as an anti-imperialist sentiment that pervades the practices in the antiracist movement. This is familiar to those Solidarity Allies who work against imperialism and encounter members of the antiracist movement. There is also opposition to the concept that reform is not possible within the existing educational system in which we as educators are so firmly entrenched. Exploring how this could be reconciled, not in terms of watering down the theory and practice of African Internationalism, but in winning interest in applying this theory further could be the topic of further research. A qualitative study involving Student Affairs practitioners and faculty involved in multicultural education could provide useful information about how programs, services, and curriculum are developed in higher education in relationship to allyhood.

Most important would be to conduct research on how a group of Solidarity Allies form a student organization designed to support and defend the rights of African and
minoritized students on campus, using the theory and practice of African
Internationalism. A qualitative study involving an advisor who would be willing to assist
Euro American students in developing this type of student organization and the students
who join could be conducted. In addition, including African students in the study in
terms of their reaction and participation in guiding the development of such an
organization merits a look.
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Interview Questions for African American Student Leaders

Reminders before starting the interview:

- Thank the interviewee.
- Remind him that the information collected will remain anonymous and that his identity will not be revealed.
- Review the informed consent form and ask if there are any questions or concerns.
- Briefly share what the study is about (w/o going into too much detail).

1. Tell me a little bit about why you came to this university?
   a. Talk about your family support while in college?
2. Tell me about any student organizations you’re involved in, campus activities you’re involved in.
3. What has helped you develop as a student leader?
4. What have been your overall experiences in interactions with the Associated Students as a whole, anything positive, any challenges?
5. Are there ways that you advocate for Black students within the structure of student organizations? Can you talk about any challenges or success?
6. From your perspective in what ways does the student leadership on this campus support Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the leadership be more supportive?
7. What are the ways you first became aware of injustices or disparities between whites and Blacks? [age, was there a critical incident, situations in life that made you aware]

8. What are ways that you have educated yourself regarding issues of social justice and in particular, as they relate to being Black on campus?

9. From your perspective, tell me about how welcoming or unwelcoming this campus is for Black students?
   a. FOLLOWUP [if unwelcoming] What could make this campus less hostile or more welcoming?

10. Were you here when the [Harlem Ho-down] occurred?
   a. If yes, in what ways did you feel that Black students united together as a result?
   b. What other groups of students unite with you?
   c. If yes or no, describe the unity with White students on this issue or other issues that affect Black students (such as fee increases, racist incidents, etc.)

11. From your perspective, what organizations or groups of White students do you feel are supportive of Black students?

12. What would your definition of a White ally be?

13. Do you know White students who fit that definition?
   a. What actions have they taken to show you they are an ally?
   b. How much interaction do you have with the White allies you named?
14. Would you be willing to assist me in getting in touch with the students you consider to be allies for the purposes of this study? [Ask student to have White students contact me]?
APPENDIX B

Interview Questions for First Interview With Allies

Interview #1: Questions for White Allies

Reminders before starting the interview:

- Thank the interviewee

- Remind him that the information collected will remain anonymous and that
  his identity will not be revealed.

- Review the informed consent form and ask if there are any questions or
  concerns.

- Briefly share what the study is about (w/o going into too much detail)

1. You have been identified by African leadership on this campus as an ally. Do
you consider yourself to be an ally in support of Black students on this
  campus?
  
  a. What is your definition of an ally?
  
  b. Do you consider yourself to be an ally?
  
  c. [If yes] How did you become an ally? What/who motivated you?

2. Are you familiar with the term “White privilege”?
  
  a. What this term means to you?

3. What you feel are the problems in our society as it pertains to Whites and
  Blacks?

4. How do you feel about racism as a problem?
5. Do you have any thoughts about colonialism as it relates to the problems faced by Black people? [Colonialism is “the policy and practice of a power in extending control over ‘weaker’ peoples or areas.”]

6. Do you have any thoughts about imperialism as it relates to the problems faced by Black people? [Imperialism is “the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries”]

7. Describe how you first became aware of injustices or disparities between Whites and Blacks? [age, was there a critical incident, situations in life that made you aware]

8. Tell me about any feelings you may have experienced as you were first becoming aware of injustices?

9. In what ways have you educated yourself regarding issues of social justice and in particular, as they relate to Black students?

10. What classes or workshops have you taken to help you learn more about racism or ethnic identity?

11. How do you think how problems relating to racism, discrimination, etc. will be solved?

12. What organizations or groups do you belong to that discuss White power or privilege?

13. What are some ways in which you reach out to other White students to raise awareness of issues faced by Black students, or oppression in general?

14. How often do you interact with Black students or Blacks in general?
15. Do you ever support any actions or campaigns that Black students on campus initiate; if so, how do you support these?

16. From your perspective in what ways does the student leadership on this campus support Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the leadership be more supportive?

17. From your perspective, in what ways does student leadership on this campus respect Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the leadership be more respectful?

18. From your perspective, in what ways do White students in general support Black students on this campus?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can White students be more supportive?

19. [If interviewee has indicated that s/he is involved in campus organizations]
   Can you talk about any challenges or success in the ways that you could advocate for Black students within the structure of student organizations?

20. From your perspective, in what ways does the campus administration support Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the administration be more supportive?

21. From your perspective, in what ways does the campus administration on this campus respect Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the administration be more respectful?

22. From your perspective, in what ways does the faculty on this campus support Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the faculty be more supportive?
23. From your perspective, in what ways does the faculty on this campus respect Black students?
   a. FOLLOW UP: How can the faculty be more respectful?
24. In what ways are the needs of Black students on campus systematically addressed?
25. In what ways are the needs of Black students on campus when a critical incident, such as the [Harlem Ho-down], occurs?
26. In what ways do you as a White person have a voice and power on this campus?
27. In what ways do you as a White person feel safe on this campus?
28. In what ways do you feel Black students have a voice and power on this campus?
29. In what ways do you feel the campus is a safe space for Black students?
30. In what ways do you feel that Black students are united on campus?
31. Do you have anything more you would like to add about being a White ally?
APPENDIX C

Interview Questions for Second Interview With Allies

Interview #2: Questions for White Allies

- Thank the interviewee

- Remind him that the information collected will remain anonymous and that
  his identity will not be revealed, and the informed consent form is still in place
  for this interview.

1. Would you have taken ethnic studies classes if a multicultural class was not
   required?

2. What do you think about having freshman having mandatory classes in
   cultural competency, examining White identity and privilege, etc.?
   a. In what ways would students be better equipped to support Black students
      on campus as a result of such classes?
   b. What do you think the reaction would be of White students taking these
      classes?

3. Currently, ethnic studies courses are under attack across the nation. How
   would you involve yourself in a fight to retain ethnic studies courses?

4. What are the actions that you think White students should take to make Black
   student leaders aware that there are White students who wish to support their
   interests?

5. What is your vision of a White organization on campus that could be created
   to support the interests and issues of Black and other oppressed students?
6. There have been many challenges in finding White allies identified by Black students on campus. Why do you think this is?
   a. Describe if you feel isolated as an ally or if you able to work with other White allies?

7. Describe how your awareness colors your everyday life; what are the things you see in our society, on the news, in interactions with people that make you reflect on Whiteness?
   a. Describe how you see your allyhood as a way of life for you in future years?
   b. Describe how your allyhood influences life decisions for you?
   c. Describe the impact on family relationships?

8. Scenario: If there was an incident similar to the [Harlem Ho-down] or another racial incident on campus, what actions would you take as an ally?

9. Anything else you would like to add?
APPENDIX D
San Diego State University IRB Approval

Submit your report of progress by 8/25/2013

September 25, 2012

Student Researcher: Wendy Craig
Faculty Researcher: Dr. Frank Harris III
Department: Educational Leadership
Protocol Title: While Students as Social Justice Allies at Historically White Institutions: Their Responsibility in Changing the Culture Experienced by African Students
Contract/grant number: N/A
IRB Number: 810088
Risk Level: No greater than minimal
Regulatory Determination: Approved per 45 CFR 46.110, Categories 6 & 7

Dear Wendy Craig,

The referenced protocol was reviewed and approved in accordance with SDSU's Assurance and federal requirements pertaining to human subjects protections within the Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46). This review is valid through September 25, 2013, and applies to the conditions and procedures described in your protocol. Please notify the IRB office if your status as an SDSU-affiliate changes while conducting this research study (you are no longer an SDSU faculty member, staff member or student).

Please note your expiration date. To request continued recruitment, data collection and/or data analyses, a Report of Progress must be submitted prior to the expiration date of your study. A lapse in approval requires that all research with human subjects be suspended until approval is obtained and may result in a temporary hold on funds. If your study is funded, the investigator will be out of compliance with federal regulations and university policy if human subjects continue to be involved in this project without a valid IRB approval.

The approved consent form(s) (labeled "Craig_810088_Consent_IRB STAMPED") has been uploaded to your protocol file within the iROB system, within the Supporting Documents section. This document bears the SDSU IRB's stamp of approval. Print a copy of this stamped form to use when documenting informed consent from research participants. Changes may not be made to the consent document without prior review and approval of the IRB. You are required to keep signed copies of the consent document for three years after your project has been completed or terminated.

Please note the following:...
a) For studies that require consent translation: The SDSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) does not verify the accuracy of the translated document. IRB approval of this document for use in subject recruitment is based on your assurance that the translated document reflects the content of the IRB approved English version of the document.

b) If recruitment will take place through an outside agency or organization, confirm with that institution that you have permission to conduct the study prior to initiation of any study activities.

c) Approval is contingent upon the completion of the SDSU human subjects tutorial (found at: http://www.rohans.sdsu.edu/gra/login.php) by all members of the research team. This certification must be renewed every 2 years.

d) If any changes to your study are planned, you must submit a modification request and receive IRB approval prior to the implementation of study changes. To submit a modification request, access the protocol via the WebPortal, on the protocol Main Page, you will need to click on "Modifications" under Protocol Maintenance and enter a report. Once you have filled in your responses on the report form, click "submit".

Requirements:

- To document your modification in detail, access your currently approved protocol in the "Full Document Viewer." Copy and paste the document into Word and use "track changes" to document revisions to your protocol. Save the file (Name_Modification_Date) and upload it to your protocol file. When approved by the IRB, this document will be the current version of your approved protocol.

- If a change to the approved consent form(s) or other uploaded document(s) is being requested, changes must be documented using the "track changes" feature in Word. Upload the revised form to your IRB protocol file. This form will be reviewed by the IRB. If you do not have a copy of your approved consent form in a Word format, request a copy from the IRB office.

e) The SDSU IRB requirements investigators to report any problems that arise during the course of an IRB-approved research study. Serious adverse events or unanticipated problems that are lifethreatening or have resulted in serious injury or death must be reported to the IRB immediately whenever possible or within at least 48 hours from the onset of the incident. All other problems must be reported to the SDSU IRB within 5 days. To complete and submit an adverse event report, go to the Protocol Main Menu, click on "Adverse Events" under "Protocol Maintenance" and follow the instructions. For more information and consultation, contact the IRB office directly via email at: IRB@mail.sdsu.edu or telephone: 619-594-6622, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
1) To submit a request to extend IRB approval, log into your WebPortal account and access the protocol. On the protocol Main Page, click on "Progress Reports" under Protocol Maintenance and enter a report. Once you have filled in your responses on the report form, click "Submit". You should receive an automated email verifying IRB receipt of your Report of Progress.

REQUIREMENT: Within the description box of the Report of Progress form, indicate which, if any, consent form(s) you are requesting to renew. Refer to the Consent Form Development section of the protocol and provide the IRB with the specific file names and date(s) of upload of the consent document(s) you are requesting to renew.

For questions related to this correspondence, please contact the IRB office ((619) 594-6022 or e-mail irb@mail.sdsu.edu). To access IRB review application materials, SDSU's Assurance, the 45 CFR 46, the Belmont Report, and/or any other relevant policies and guidelines related to the involvement of human subjects in research, please visit the IRB web site at http://gra.sdsu.edu/research.php.

Graduate Students: This notification may be used as documentation to register in Thesis 799A. Attach a hard copy of this notice to your Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee form prior to submitting the completed form to Graduate and Research Affairs - Student Services Division.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Pamela Perez
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Chaya Washington
Regulatory Compliance Analyst
APPENDIX E

SDSU/IRB Stamped Informed Consent Form

San Diego State University

Consent to Act as a Research Subject

The Role of White Students as Social Justice Allies at Historically White Institutions

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you give your consent to volunteer, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand what you will be asked to do.

Investigators:
Wendy Craig, M.S., current doctoral student
Dr. Frank Harris III, Ph.D.

College of Education
San Diego State University

Purpose of the Study:
The purpose of this study is to identify European American students at Historically White Institutions (HWI) who can be defined as social justice allies and how they demonstrate it through their actions on campus. For purposes of this study a white social justice ally is a member of the dominant culture who puts the interests of African students at the forefront of campus activities and initiatives, thus supporting African student self-determination at HWIs.

Three African student leaders (student government and student organizations) and ten European American students who are identified as allies by African students will be recruited for this study.

Description of the Study:

Screening Procedures:
African Student Leaders: You must either be Board members of the campus Associated Students organization or hold an officer position in a recognized student organization, and agree to be part of the study.

White allies: You must be identified by one of the African leader participants or an African cultural student organization member, or other African student on campus, and agree to be part of the study.

Location

Institutional Review Board
San Diego State University
Approval Expires 9/25/2013
Study Number: 818/268
The study will be conducted at a mutually agreeable location determined by me, the researcher, and you, the individual participant.

Duration and Type of Participation

If you are an African participant, you will be asked to complete an individual tape-recorded interview with me lasting approximately 90 minutes. European American students will be asked to:

- complete one individual tape-recorded interview with me lasting approximately 90 minutes.
- Complete a follow-up interview lasting approximately 90 minutes. You will be asked to review transcripts for accuracy and to make changes if desired.

If you choose not to be audiotaped, you will not be able to participate in the study, because I would be unable to properly review and code your interview as necessary to my study.

Types of Questions

African students will be asked questions regarding your participation in campus life and leadership, as well as questions about campus climate, and to identify European American students you consider to be allies.

European American students will be asked questions relating to how you became aware of differential treatment of African American students as an ethnic group, steps you have taken to become allies, campus climate and student leadership on campus, and perceived support for African American students on campus.

Risks or Discomfort:

The potential risks involved in this study are minimal. The possible risk associated with this study is psychological in that you will be asked questions about your feelings, thoughts, and experiences regarding racism, colonialism, and discrimination that may make you feel uncomfortable. You will be informed and reminded throughout the study that 1) your participation is strictly voluntary, 2) you may choose not to answer any question or discuss any topics that make you uncomfortable while still remaining in the study, and 3) you may conclude your interview and withdraw your participation at any time and at your discretion. You will also have the opportunity to review your complete written interview transcript and make any changes you wish to make. This will take approximately one hour.

Benefits of the Study:

You may benefit individually in that you have the opportunity to discuss the university climate and your level of comfort and participation in campus life as a result of this climate. If you are an African student, you will have the...
opportunity to air your concerns (if any) and receive validation that your concerns are of importance to the educational community. If you are a European American ally, you may benefit in that you are providing insight into your actions as allies and validate the work you are doing to support African students. It also may help you to reflect more deeply about how your actions affect African students.

I cannot guarantee, however, that you will receive any benefits from participating in this study.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent allowed by law. My dissertation committee and I will have access to the data. The data will be stored on laptop computer that requires a password to access. Hard copies of transcripts and audio recordings will be stored in a locked file cabinet at my place of employment. Your identity will be known to me, but concealed in the research documents. You will be assigned a pseudonym. A key linking your identity with the pseudonym will be recorded in writing (by hand) and kept separately from the transcriptions in a locked file cabinet in my office. All audio recordings from the interviews will be destroyed upon transcription. All transcriptions and other research documents relating to the project will be password protected on my laptop computer and will not be accessible to anyone other than me. You will have the opportunity to review your complete written interview transcript and make any changes you wish to make.

Incentives to Participate:

You will not be paid to participate in this study. There are no costs to you for participating in this study.

Voluntary Nature of Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with University of California or San Diego or San Diego State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to stop your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are allowed.

Questions about the Study:

If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact me, Wendy Craig at 619.594.9276. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the Division of Research Affairs San Diego State University (telephone: 619.594.6622; email: jrh@mail.sdsu.edu).

Consent to Participate:

The San Diego State University Institutional Review Board has approved this consent form, as signified by the Board's stamp. The consent...
form must be reviewed annually and expires on the date indicated on the stamp. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this consent form.

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<th>Name of Participant (please print)</th>
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<td>Signature of Participant</td>
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<td>Signature of Investigator</td>
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