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Introduction
Racial conflict at universities across the nation has become the focus of academic concern and media attention (Hartocollis & Bidgood, 2015). Students, student organizations, staff, and faculty are, in large numbers, complaining of widespread racism and that officials have often not responded or not responded quickly enough. One website tracked demands from students at eighty different universities who are calling for quantifiable changes in the status quo to improve the academic climate for racial minorities (The Demands, 2016). In the face of this outcry, universities would be hard pressed to ignore the common themes imbedded in these complaints, which include calls for more diverse faculty, racial sensitivity training for students and faculty, and more accountability in response to racist events (Berner, 2015). Many psychologists who work on college campuses, either in academic, clinical, or mixed settings, are faced with not wanting to ignore the situation, on the one hand, but not knowing what to do, and, as a result, they lapse into passivity that supports the status quo. This chapter presents an overview of these prominent concerns for psychologists on college campuses and concludes with action steps and ways to participate as agents of change.
CHAPTER 13

Eliminating Race-Based Mental Health Disparities

Why Do Students Complain?

Research resoundingly concludes that a climate marred by racism and discrimination leads to physical and mental unwellness in ethnic and racial minorities (Berger & Sarnai, 2015; Chou, Asnaani, & Hofmann, 2012). On campus, a negative racial environment can also be costly, resulting in disproportionate dropouts among students of color (Piotrowski & Perdue, 1998), burnout and poor retention of minority faculty (Cropsey et al., 2008), discrimination lawsuits, and even the forced resignation of officials held responsible for the unfavorable situation (e.g., Svrluga, 2015a). Victims of racially hostile environments can be left with diagnosable psychiatric symptoms that may include traumatization, anxiety, depression, and extended periods of disability (Pieterse, Carter, Evans, & Walter, 2010; Williams, Kanter, & Ching, 2018; Williams et al., 2014).

We have seen these issues play out in clinical settings and on campuses, our own included. It is discouraging to note that conditions have not substantially improved for underrepresented minorities over the last several decades and, in some respects, have worsened. For example, since the passage of the Civil Rights and Higher Education Acts of the 1960s, which led to large increases in college attendance for students of color, gaps in college attendance and success between Blacks and Whites have remained unchanged and have widened for Hispanics (Rothwell, 2015). Representation of Black males in medical schools has been declining and is now at lows not seen since 1978 (Association of American Medical Colleges, 2015). Furthermore, large disparities in school quality are observed for enrolled students (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). The vast majority of students of color are enrolled in two-year and four-year open-access schools, which are documented to produce much less successful career trajectories for graduates.

Why Do Racial Problems Persist?

Racism in America today is harder to see than in previous eras because overt and legally codified forms of racial discrimination have been reduced or eliminated. Nonetheless, policies and practices that maintain the racial hierarchy persist and permeate nearly all sociocultural structures and institutions in America in ways that benefit and promote the well-being of Whites at the expense of people of color. These systems maintain racial inequities even though they may adapt to changing times or accommodate new ethnoracial groups. This specific manifestation of racism in America is termed “institutional racism” or “structural racism” (Lawrence, Surton, Kuhisch, Susi, & Fulbright-Anderson, 2004).

In higher education, disparities in access and outcomes are well documented, and—because of the importance in our society of higher education and the access to resources gained from a high-quality education—not only are higher educational disparities distressing, but they also create unfair labor-market advantages and perpetuate intergenerational advantages for Whites throughout the lifespan (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). College campuses also produce repeated experiences of racism and discrimination for students of color, which are major determinants of quality of life and psychological distress for them (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) and may even result in increased suicide risk (O’Keefe, Wingate, Cole, Hollingsworth, & Tucker, 2015). Thus, addressing institutional racism in higher education is a crucial goal with immediate and long-term benefits for students of color from both a social justice and public health perspective. Furthermore, these problems have trickle-down effects, contributing to mental health disparities by reducing the number of people of color in the mental health workforce as clinicians, educators, and researchers.

To combat institutional and structural racism on campuses, we must first understand both societal and individual obstacles to progress. Mainstream socialization processes, which protect White people from racist experiences and racial stress, render invisible and make it difficult for many White people to see or acknowledge racist processes and systems (Neville, Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001). At the individual level, White people tend to underestimate and minimize the degree and severity of racism in our systems and communities as a result (Carter & Murphy, 2015; Jones, Cox, & Navarro-Rivera, 2014). Thus, when people of color or victims of racism attempt to discuss or advocate for changes to reduce systemic racial discrimination, bias, and inequities, such attempts are often socially punished by being dismissed, ridiculed, or met with defensive and avoidant reactions (Sue, Rivera, Capodilupo, Lin, & Torino, 2010). This serves to perpetuate rather than solve the problem.

Additional individual factors make it likely White people on campus will perpetuate rather than solve institutional problems. People may attempt to preserve and increase their self-esteem by embracing the belief that the group to which they belong is better than others, and to believe in oneself as better typically requires also believing that the other group (the out-group) possesses inferior or negative attributes (Tajfel, 1982). In the case of stigmatized minorities, these negative attributes become pathological stereotypes that function to explain group differences at the expense of the oppressed. These are termed “pathological stereotypes” because they do not represent true characteristics of the stigmatized group and thereby perpetuate oppression (Williams, Goode, & Davis, 2012). It is important to understand that social status or group position determines the stereotype content, not the actual personal characteristics of group members (Jost & Banaji, 1994). Groups that enjoy fewer social and economic advantages will be pathologically stereotyped in a way that helps explain inequities, for example, “laziness” or “lack of intelligence” will be advanced to explain lower college graduation rates, rather than in-group favoritism or structural racism.

Gaertner and Dovidio (2005) describe aversive racism, a type of racism seen in individuals who support racial equality but have conflicted, often unconscious, negative biases and feelings toward minorities. These attitudes result in biased (racist) behaviors in ambiguous situations, when expectations are unclear or when stigmatized minorities hold positions that violate social expectations based the traditional racial hierarchy (e.g., an African American male provost). As noted in chapter 6, it is well known that much bias operates implicitly, without awareness (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006) and, fueled by
pathological stereotypes and in-group favoritism, leads to intentional and unintentional discriminatory behaviors (Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014). One may hope that, due to advanced education, faculty members of institutions of higher education would hold less implicit bias, but summary data from the Implicit Association Test suggest only trivial differences in bias due to educational level (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006).

One of the more common ways in which bias influences interactions with people of color on a regular basis is in a tendency for White people to engage in microaggressions—brief, everyday exchanges in the form of seemingly innocent and innocuous comments, and subtle or dismissive gestures and tones that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a minority group (Pierce, 1970; Sue et al., 2007). Minority college students cite microaggressions as the primary source of racist experiences on a day-to-day, campus-life basis (Solórzano et al., 2000; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009), and microaggressions are also a major source of stress among minority faculty (e.g., Constantine, Smith, Redington, & Owens, 2008; DeLapp & Williams, 2015; Pittman, 2012).

As shown in figure 13.1, all of these problems (individual bias, pathological stereotypes, and microaggressions) intersect within the structures and institutions of higher education to create and maintain adverse environments for people of color. These problems also make it difficult to instigate change, as efforts to address racism on campus often seem unfair to those who have not experienced racial prejudice and have difficulty seeing the full extent of the problems, creating a sense of inequity and corresponding resistance to remediation efforts (Kravitz & Klineberg, 2000). Thus, attempts to address institutional problems must also include education about these obstacles and influences, as well as the benefits to everyone of having a diverse environment (Galinsky et al., 2015). It is important for those in leadership positions to champion this cause, as the proactive management of diversity initiatives requires the commitment of leadership with a clear purpose and vision for the organization (Ng, 2008).

Although we have some understanding of the factors that cause and maintain poor racial environments, we still do not have adequate research to instruct us on how to best remedy the situation. For example, there is no standard for what the essential elements of a “diversity program” should include, no consensus on what the goals of such programs should be, and no clear outcome measures to determine if they reduce racism on campuses (McCauley, Wright, & Harris, 2000; Paluck & Green, 2009). Additionally, interventions need to be tailored to the unique contextual features of the local environments.
What We Do Know

That being said, there is much we do already know, including practical actions that can be taken now in the service of equity and dismantling institutional racism in higher education. In this chapter, we offer a pragmatic list of empirically supported actions that psychologists can take to improve academic racial climates now, using examples from our own universities and others. The first author is writing from her experience as a diversity educator and African American female in a traditional department of psychology made up of mostly White males. At her prior institution, she was the only minority in the clinical division of the department and first minority woman to be tenured in the department’s 108-year history. The second author is writing from his experience as a White male psychology professor and the only researcher in his previous department working in minority communities and with colleagues of color. We provide personal examples of issues experienced in our respective psychology departments to move abstract concepts into a familiar and relatable frame of reference for readers.

In terms of an adverse racial climate, much of what is presented here applies to many academic departments and probably a number of other organizations and venues as well. Although there are many forms of diversity, the interventions presented here are focused on improving racial climate. It is worth noting that many of these points could apply to other forms of diversity as well, such as gender differences, sexual orientation, national origin, and disability. These are all important areas of concern, and rather than weakly address all forms of diversity, we focus on a single yet critical form of diversity that lies squarely within our experience and expertise.

Improving Campus Climate

In the sections that follow, we will discuss how psychologists on college campuses can participate in efforts to improve recruitment and retention of minority faculty and academic advisors, academic diversity course offerings, integration of diversity issues into existing courses, conversations about inequity, diversity trainings for faculty, environmental microaggressions, and use of student course evaluations. Additionally, we will encourage psychologists on campuses to advocate for conducting departmental or unit climate assessments, to respond directly to the experiences of those suffering as a result of an adverse climate, to appreciate the importance of disciplining as needed. We end with additional discussion of what psychology has to offer in addressing these problems on college campuses, broadly defined.

Recruit and Hire More Ethnically and Racially Diverse Faculty

Real commitments to improving the ethnic and racial diversity of the faculty should be the first order of business in addressing institutionalized racism in higher education (Turner, González, & Wood, 2008). At the very least, the faculty composition should reflect the diversity of the local community and the student body. Research suggests that a critical mass of 20 percent to 35 percent minorities is needed to produce beneficial effects in the environment, such as greater tolerance of difference among Whites and increased feelings of inclusion among people of color (Berrett & Giorgi, 2015). Nationally, only 6 percent of higher education faculty are Black and only 5 percent are Latino (Kena et al., 2015). Through conversations with undergraduate research assistants, I (first author) was dismayed to discover that many of my students had never had the experience of being instructed by a person of color (e.g., Bradley, 2005), and I found this to be true at both elite and less-competitive institutions. Thus the students had no schema for academic learning from a person like myself, a member of a stigmatized ethnic group at the bottom of the racial social hierarchy. A lack of minority educators gives the false impression that scholarly knowledge comes from White people alone, which is not the message we want to transmit at an institution of higher learning. Diversity improves the learning experience of all concerned, as it introduces new perspectives, disrupts stereotypes, and facilitates appreciation of differences (Galinsky et al., 2015). Additionally, the presence of greater numbers of faculty of color improves academic performance among students of color (Hagedorn, Chi, & Cepeda, 2007). However, numerical representation is not enough; diverse faculty must be present in adequate numbers at every level of the university system—as junior faculty, senior faculty, deans, and top officials. Faculty of color are overrepresented in the lower ranks, such as assistant professor, but underrepresented as full professors, which limits their power and influence (Turner et al., 2008; Kena et al., 2015).

Adequate numbers of diverse faculty are important for effectively mentoring students of color. I (the second author), a White male professor, have mentored several students of color. Even though I have done the best I can to be the best mentor possible for them, we have lamented together over the fact that they have not had clear role models of professors who shared their lived experiences and their research interests, who could talk to them about their experiences, understand the nuances that sometimes eluded me, and advise them as a complement to my efforts. Thus, it should be no surprise that many students of color prefer mentors who understand their cultural concerns (Maton et al., 2011), and many experience racism, intentional or unintentional, with their White mentors. McCoy, Winkle-Wagner, and Luedke (2015) documented a pattern in which White mentors of Black students used race-neutral, colorblind language that allowed them to ignore structural racism and avoid accusations of racial bias while describing their Black students as academically inferior, less prepared, and less interested in pursuing research and graduate studies. Graduate students, in particular, require a close relationship with faculty, and research indicates that the mentoring relationship...
and perceptions of diversity within the academic environment are critical for recruitment, retention, and satisfaction among minority graduate students (Rogers & Molina, 2006; Maton et al., 2011).

As a field, psychology is not producing enough psychologists of color to completely meet the need in our universities, and so some might argue that there are simply not enough psychologists of color to hire, or that those who are available are “not good enough” (Gasman, 2016). About 78 percent of faculty in accredited doctoral psychology programs are White (Smith, 2015), which is about the same percentage of White US citizens and permanent residents being awarded doctoral degrees (76.6 percent in 2014; National Science Foundation, 2016), although only 63.7 percent of the US population is White.

Faculty of color should not simply be hired as “token” or so-called diversity hires. Although 58 percent support affirmative action for minorities, that leaves 37 percent who do not (and 6 percent with no opinion; Gallup, 2015), which makes this quite a divisive issue, with potential repercussions for new hires of color. “Diversity hires” may evoke negative reactions and (mis)perceptions of unfairness among others, resulting in backlash (social punishment) directed toward the new faculty member (Kravitz & Klineberg, 2000), marginalization (Niemann, 2003), and even stereotype threat, which can cause decreased performance (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2014). Furthermore, when faculty of color are underrepresented, they may feel isolated, and they are more likely to face “cultural taxation,” which includes doing a disproportionate amount of unrecognized diversity-related work and more mentoring of students of color compared to their White peers (Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011).

For these reasons, “diversity hires” should be avoided except under the most desperate circumstances. Rather than hiring a token or even a quota of minority faculty or being resigned to the notion that minority faculty cannot be found (which are actual sentiments expressed by faculty at department meetings), the best solution is a campus-wide effort at reform. That means working harder to find solutions (see Cross & Slater, 2002; McMurtrie, 2016). One noteworthy example of this is provided by the University of Michigan’s ADVANCE program, which comprehensively addresses diversity recruitment, retention, campus climate, and leadership (Linderman, 2015).

At the department level, one approach could be to create a subdivision within the department dedicated to cultural diversity science that includes a critical number of faculty numerically on par with other psychology departmental divisions. This would likely result in a number of ethnically diverse faculty but not be exclusive to people of color, as qualification would be based on area of expertise rather than dependent on the race of the applicant. Departments also may consider creating joint appointments with diverse faculty from other departments or bringing in new faculty as joint hires between race of the applicant. Departments also may consider creating joint appointments with diverse faculty from other departments or bringing in new faculty as joint hires between.

High-quality academic advising, free from bias and stereotypes, is crucial for students of color, especially for first-generation students without a familial history of higher educational achievement from which to learn (Strayhorn, 2013). Extant research supports the importance of an “intrusive” advising style, which involves a more proactive and involved role of the advisor in the personal and academic affairs of the student (Earl, 1987). Intrusive advising has been shown to improve retention rates, GPA, and graduation rates among at-risk students, including students of color (Glennen, Baxley, & Farren, 1985; Molina & Abelman, 2000).

Our experiences talking with students and advisors at our institutions, however, is that White advisors overwhelmingly favor a colorblind, more detached, and more formal approach to advising. This is supported by the publication record of the advising field’s major journal, which published only one article on Black student advising issues (Guiffrida, 2004) and no articles on Latinx student issues over a fifteen-year period (Shaffer, 2010). More publications in this journal discuss issues of “at-risk” students, which is often coded language to describe students of color. Our experience is that this publishing trend of minimizing race and racism while emphasizing other variables is consistent with mainstream advising practices, which fails to account for cultural differences.

Adding a person of color as a departmental academic advisor was a suggestion from one of our students, and we think it is an important idea, because we have noticed that our Black undergraduates are not getting the messages they need about how to best prepare to further their education. They often come to us during their final year of college for advice about how to get into a clinical psychology doctoral program, and at that point it is too late for them to get the GPA or undergraduate experiences they need to be competitive for graduate school. Although there is not yet much research to confirm our observations, it seems that these students are not getting the same quality of advising, mentorship, and research opportunities as afforded to White students, that advisors are not able to adapt their advising practices to the needs of students of color, and that advisors may perpetuate bias and stereotypes in their advising practices (e.g., Crosby & Monin, 2007). Consistent with the need to raise the level of multicultural competence across all points of interaction with students of color (administration, staff, faculty, and students), we suggest that an important resource is access to advisors of color who understand and share their lived experiences.

Underrepresented students of color often struggle due to generations of disadvantage that place them in college while simultaneously caring for families and holding full-time jobs. Campaigns focused on increasing the graduation rate push students to take fifteen or more credits per semester, which is not beneficial for those with demanding work schedules (Attewell & Monaghan, 2016) or who have children or other family responsibilities, and can conceivably result in lower grades. We know of one faculty member who
CHAPTER 13

Providing Adequate and Impactful Undergraduate and Graduate Diversity Courses

Institutional racism manifests not only as who is teaching and advising students but also as what courses are offered to students. Research indicates that diversity courses reduce bias and that taking more than one diversity course improves student well-being and orientations toward diversity (Bowman, 2010; Denson, 2009). Although some sort of cultural diversity requirement is becoming the norm for colleges and universities, a national survey of one hundred institutions found that required diversity courses were less effective at teaching diversity and inclusivity than elective diversity courses that students are not required to take (Laird & Engberg, 2011). The survey also documented that 37 percent of the institutions in the sample had no diversity requirement at all.

When we evaluated the course offerings in our own psychology departments, we found diversity courses sorely lacking. Most other departments in our respective colleges of arts and sciences offered more diversity classes than we did, whereas each of our departments offered one or fewer courses per year. Additionally, both of us had been faculty in psychology departments that encouraged graduate students to take courses from other departments to meet diversity requirements—which communicates to students that these courses are not important enough to be taught in our own departments. Our experiences in departmental and committee meetings is that some faculty react with resistance to suggestions to increase diversity offerings, expressing a lack of understanding of the importance of offering more classes and a reluctance to put in the work needed to make this happen, while other faculty express a willingness to teach the courses if asked. It is a divisive issue that often results in a lack of consensus and inaction—which maintains the status quo. One way to address concerns about the importance of such courses and stimulate action is to conduct student surveys or engage in self-assessment. Research in the first author’s former department showed that White and minority students alike believe these courses are important and want to see more being offered (DeLapp, DeLapp, & Williams, 2016).

There is no question that making changes to any program will require more work and effort, and diversity courses can be hard to teach and often result in lower student course evaluations if the content includes topics like racism and White privilege (Boatright-Horowitz & Soeung, 2009). Deliberate efforts will be needed to meet the important goal of fostering diversity, and it is incumbent on the department leadership to transmit this important message to the rest of the faculty (Kear & Eckel, 2008; Ng, 2008). Departments should acknowledge the challenges of doing this work well and consider offering faculty incentives to teach these kinds of courses (i.e., higher pay, extra merit points, separate quality point cut-offs).

The content of diversity coursework matters. It has become increasingly evident that we need to shift away from teaching facts about different racial and cultural groups and instead include material from modern psychological science on racism, implicit bias, stereotypes, White privilege, intersectionality, microaggressions, and other topics that require more self-reflection and critical appraisal of one’s self and one’s role in a structurally racist society (Case, 2007). This imperative comes from both the accumulation of science and personal experience. After teaching multicultural psychology a few times, it became evident that lectures and readings were often not sufficient to bring about a multicultural shift in perspective, as we are often combatting a lifetime of learned prejudice in students, many of whom were from all-White communities in the rural South. Teaching racism to White students is tricky. In addition to expecting lower course evaluations (Boatright-Horowitz & Soeung, 2009), teachers should expect that attempts to raise awareness of bias and discuss these topics can actually increase interracial anxiety, helplessness, guilt, and fear of being misunderstood, leading to increased avoidance and defensiveness (Case, 2007; Perry, Dovidio, Murphy, & van Ryn, 2015; Sue et al., 2010).

Strategies that effectively engage White students in these topics and produce more positive outcomes are an active source of research inquiry. Denson’s (2009) meta-analytic review of twenty-seven curricular interventions found that tested interventions do produce benefits. Furthermore, a significant increase in intervention effectiveness was observed when interventions included a contact component in which students engaged in interracial interactions as part of the intervention. Contact has long been heralded as an effective anti-racism interaction and appears to work through reduced anxiety and increased empathy towards the out-group (Petitigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011).

Research also supports the importance of active learning, experiential strategies that put participants in contact with counter-stereotypical examples, and teaching concrete strategies for overriding bias rather than a sole emphasis on didactics (Lai et al., 2014). Consistent with these recommendations, in our diversity courses, we have found that sensitive experiential exercises that facilitate intergroup contact while allowing students to explore their biases and reactions personally and directly are powerful learning tools.

As behavioral scientists, we explain to students that these experiential assignments can be thought of as “exposures” to address interracial anxieties through disconfirmation of cognitive distortions (e.g., pathological stereotypes) and habituation to feared stimuli (e.g., talking about race).

As an undergraduate psychology student, I (first author) remember participating in an exercise at the University of California at Los Angeles in which students wore a pink triangle button for forty-eight hours, then journaled about the experience of being associated with a sexual minority group (Rubow, Stein, & Conley, 1999); this exercise gave me a profound new perspective on what it meant to be stigmatized—beyond my race and gender—and so, to this day, I have a keen appreciation of the impact of experiential learning. In my graduate classes, exercises focused on race may include having a
Better Integrate Diversity Issues into the Curriculum for All Courses

In addition to adding new courses to the curriculum that directly teach diversity and inclusiveness, existing courses across disciplines must be vetted to eradicate bias and more accurately represent our multicultural world and history. Historically, racial bias has existed in textbooks in terms of errors of omission (minimal treatment of minorities); stereotypical representations of minorities; selective interpretations of minority issues that omit minority perspectives; glossing over, simplifying, or distorting unpleasant facts to make them more palatable for White readers; isolating minority issues to special inserts, boxes, or peripheral chapters; linguistic practices; and cosmetic treatment of minorities that provide the illusion of equity (Zittleman & Sadker, 2002).

The above forms of bias exist across existing course content in current university curricula. For example, people of color are substantially underrepresented in major government and politics textbooks (Monforti & McGlynn, 2010) and general chemistry textbooks (King & Domin, 2007), negative stereotypes about Blacks and other minorities are widespread in popular nursing textbooks (Byrne, 2001), and White geologists are seventeen times more abundant than non-Whites as examples and role models in geology textbooks (Mattox et al., 2008). Psychology does not fare much better, with one recent review indicating that no brief introductory psychology textbooks include a chapter on diversity at all (Griggs & Jackson, 2013). Furthermore, I (first author) was disturbed to discover that a cross-cultural textbook that my department had been using cited racist diversity at all (Griggs & Jackson, 2013). Furthermore, I (first author) was disturbed to discover that a cross-cultural textbook that my department had been using cited racist.

Students of color report that the day-to-day experience of campus life is fraught with insults, racist events, and experiences of exclusion and marginalization (e.g., Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007; Smith, Mustaffa, Jones, Curry, & Allen, 2016). Some of these experiences may be seen as structural—being the only Black student in a class, having no Black instructors or advisors, or finding no examples incorporating realistic portrayals of Blacks in textbooks—and are addressed in our points above. Much of the problem, however, is interpersonal and involves direct interactions between students of color and others on campus. Qualitative studies of the campus-life experiences of Black students, including a recent study of our own, document that Black students experience interpersonal microaggressions and other racist interpersonal interactions on a regular basis, not just from other students, but from faculty and others on campus as well (Debreau et al., 2015; Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000; Smith et al., 2016; Solórzano et al., 2000). These microaggressions range from insults that students receive so often they have habituated to them (e.g., “Can I touch your hair?” or being ignored by the barista in the line at the café) to insults that shock and upset them for prolonged periods (e.g., a professor stating in a lecture that Blacks are genetically less intelligent). Research indicates that the accumulation of these experiences has deleterious effects on mental health (Carter, 2007; O’Keefe et al., 2015).

Today, many higher education institutions across the nation have hired a chief diversity officer, created a diversity office, or started a campus diversity initiative charged with improving the racial climate (Wilson, 2013). One typical product of such efforts is the provision of stand-alone or a series of workshops or dialogues for the larger campus community (faculty, staff, and students) that are intended to address the racist interpersonal interactions that students of color experience with regularity. Local diversity trainers may be hired to lead forums or dialogues, or in-house facilitators are used. Some research indicates that these dialogues are fraught with peril, as many White people have been socialized to squelch and minimize the painful realities of inequality that are shared by non-Whites in these forums (Sue, Torino, Capodilupo, Rivera, & Lin, 2009). This process
may generate, during the forum, the very microaggressions the forums intend to reduce (Sue et al., 2007). Overall, however, meta-analyses of the effects of diversity trainings suggests that they produce small-to-moderate effects on measures of White attitudes and bias, and these effects can be strengthened if the dialogue lasts longer or occurs in a series rather than a stand-alone workshop (Kalinoski et al., 2013).

Our experience is that it is important to provide these forums, as they serve several important functions. In pilot research on dialogues that we have been developing using a contextual behavioral science model, White students have reported to us that they have benefited from hearing about the negative experiences of their non-White peers; this can be an important means of raising awareness, promoting empathy, and exploring what it means to be White in a social racial hierarchy (Thurston-Rattue et al., 2015). The fact that a majority of White Americans (52 percent) believe that discrimination against their group has become as big a problem as discrimination against people of color indicates widespread and massive misunderstandings regarding racial realities of our society (Jones et al., 2014), so raising awareness of the extent of the problem is an important outcome in its own right.

A second important function of these dialogues is that they may facilitate cross-group friendships and connections. Consistent with both intergroup contact theory and intergroup process theory (MacInnis & Page-Gould, 2015), research suggests that when cross-racial participants exchange personally vulnerable details of their lives with each other, inter racial anxiety decreases, and intimacy and friendship increases (Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008). Thus, in our dialogues, White participants are encouraged to listen with empathy to the narratives of Black participants and also to reciprocally disclose vulnerable details from their own lives. Multiple participants from our dialogues have reported to us that cross-racial friendships have developed from this experience that have lasted beyond the workshop session (Thurston-Rattue et al., 2015). One established example of how this work can be done well is intergroup dialogue studied extensively at the University of Michigan and picked up by many universities across the country (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Gurin, Sorensen, Lopez, & Nagda, 2015).

Provide Diversity Training for All Faculty

At the first author's former institution, they were greatly embarrassed by a photo that emerged from a campus Mexican-themed Halloween party featuring the university president dressed in a sombrero and colorful poncho along with the whole executive staff, several sporting bushy moustaches or strange veils (Svrluga, 2015b). This picture was featured in many major media outlets, including the Associated Press, Fox News, the Washington Post, USA Today, and the Huffington Post. Although ethnically or racially themed parties have fallen out of fashion at universities all over the nation, no one in the executive office was knowledgeable enough or empowered enough to speak up to prevent this catastrophe from happening. After the event, many departments and divisions sent frantic emails to students, staff, and faculty, apologizing for what happened and attempting to make amends. I (first author) also apologized to my students on behalf of the university and subsequently utilized the event as a teaching tool, where I met with the leaders of the university and provided a training on microaggressions to the president's office. Fortunately, psychology has answers to many of these problems, and when racist events occur, faculty can use them as an opportunity for learning and growth.

The aforementioned embarrassing and hurtful incident illustrates what can happen when universities decide that isolated racial dialogues are enough and neglect to develop a comprehensive plan that includes basic diversity training to their faculty and leaders. It is critical that all faculty are able to properly interact with students of color (Delano-Oriaran & Meidl, 2012), yet one of the most consistent concerns cited by campus protesters is the need for sensitivity training for faculty to reduce racism (Berner, 2015; The Demands, 2016). Students deserve an environment free of racism, which is difficult to accomplish if faculty themselves are unwitting perpetrators (e.g., Hartocollis & Bidgood, 2015). Yet research shows that many faculty members continue to commit microaggressions and engage with minority students from a colorblind perspective (McCoy et al., 2015; Sue et al., 2007; Terwilliger, Bach, Bryan & Williams, 2013), indicating a need for increased training and growth. Our experiences are that insensitive and unaware faculty members are not uncommon and can have the effect of a bull in a China shop, leaving a trail of trampled students in their wake (Harper & Hurtado, 2007).

It is particularly difficult for students to know how to respond to racism inflicted by faculty due to traditional hierarchies that may create fear of retaliation, perceived lack of accountability, and hopelessness about change. Students may be reluctant to complain to a department chair or ombudsman, who likely also is White. If a student of color approaches the offending faculty member or a colleague about racial issues, they may find themselves misunderstood or even attacked by defensive faculty. For example, I (the second author) have had several conversations with my students of color, during which they revealed offensive comments or discriminatory behavior directed toward them from other faculty members. But when I suggested that I confront these faculty members directly, such was their legitimate fear of repercussions that they panicked at the thought and made me promise that I would not do anything. The structural bind was too strong for us to overcome ourselves.

Although it will be challenging, faculty must be encouraged to face their own privilege, explore their own biases, stereotypes, and behaviors, and learn how to have hard conversations in a productive way. As we discuss below, they also need to learn how to listen non-defensively and with empathy. Although some faculty may exhibit resistance toward the idea of mandatory trainings (perhaps those most in need of such trainings), consider that many departments require trainings for sexual harassment, HIPAA regulations, and IRB research ethics. Diversity issues are no less important. Mandatory trainings send the message that the organization is strongly committed to diversity, which has been hypothesized to increase the motivation to learn, and although faculty prefer and are more favorable toward voluntary training, mandatory diversity trainings are, in fact, more effective (Bezrukova, Spell, Perry, & Jehn, 2016). One solution implemented by the
first author’s department that circumvented this potentially thorny issue was to invite a diversity trainer to facilitate the annual department retreat, an event that all faculty already attend. We believe that mandatory trainings would have provided a safe, leadership-supported forum for a discussion of the problems raised by the second author’s students above, which could not be resolved without better structures in place.

It is important that trainings be provided by individuals that faculty will respect, which in our departments would mean other academic psychologists who understand both diversity issues and the scientific literature. Research indicates that minorities who conduct diversity trainings are more respected than White trainers, who may be perceived to have less life experience in managing racial events (Liberman, Block, & Koch, 2011). However, White professors are perceived as more competent, at least by students, so a White trainer may be more effective in that regard (Ho, Thomsen, & Sidanius, 2009). Furthermore, it is valuable for White trainers to discuss their own emotions, struggles, and growth surrounding issues like stereotypes and White privilege to illustrate the relevance of the material to others like themselves (Sue et al., 2009). Thus, trainings may be offered by a diverse team (e.g., minority female and a White male), as this may best facilitate engagement from all faculty concerned. We conduct trainings as a diverse team whenever possible, and this seems to help engage the more resistant participants, as they see that the material is relevant to people like themselves. This also helps prevent White people and minorities alike from feeling like they are on the defensive or shamed and paralyzed. See chapter 7 for one successful approach we have used for diversity workshops.

Remove Environmental Microaggressions

Racism can be environmental in nature, such as when an academic setting assails a person’s racial identity. According to Sue et al. (2007) someone’s racial identity can be unintentionally minimized or made insignificant through the exclusion of decorations or literature that represent their racial group, which is referred to as an environmental microaggression. For example, in the hallways of the first author’s former department are proudly displayed huge framed photos of the winners of the Grawemeyer Award in the field of psychology. These awards are annual prizes of $100,000 given in the fields of music, political science, psychology, education, and religion, founded by H. Charles Grawemeyer, to help make the world a better place. The pictures of the psychology winners transmit a major unfortunate environmental microaggression. All award-winners are White—every last one (see figure 13.2a). The message communicated to our students is that “no one of color did anything worth recognizing”—and to students of color, “and neither will you.” Of course, there are many worthy psychologists of color who could have been awardees, but the system in place to elect psychology winners is heavily biased toward identifying White psychologists (e.g., Grawemeyer committee members are White, and none study diversity issues; ads soliciting nominees are placed in journals with primarily White readerships; and past winners help identify subsequent winners) In other words, the award process is biased due to structural and institutional racism, but our students do not know that; they may simply be left thinking that White people are smarter, and psychology proves it.

Figure 13.2a.

There are also gigantic Caucasian heads placed at various places throughout the department as an ongoing art project, which amounts to an environmental microaggression of mammoth proportions (see figure 13.2b). Heads symbolize intelligence, agency, and the mind, yet gigantic East Asian or African heads are nowhere to be found. Departments should take stock of the unspoken messages transmitted by representations in the environment, as lack of diverse images can communicate prejudice and threat to people of color (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Ditlmann, & Crosby, 2008).

The issue of environmental microaggressions recently played out at Yale University, when, after much debate over racist imagery and building names, Corey Menafee, an African American service worker, broke a stained glass window depicting smiling slaves carrying baskets of cotton. In explanation of his actions, Menafee said, “as you look at it, it just hurts. You feel it in your heart, like, oh, man—like here in the twenty-first century, you know, we’re in a modern era where we shouldn’t have to be subjected to those primitive and degrading images” (Gonzalez & Goodman, 2016). University officials struggled with how to respond to the situation. Menafee was fired and charged with felony mischief, but then subsequently rehired, after some extended controversy, under the condition that he would not speak out about the case. Although the event was framed as vandalism by some and activism by others, we believe it is more accurate to conceptualize Menafee’s actions as a traumatic reaction to being forced to work in a racially hostile environment (Carter, 2007; Williams, Kanter, & Ching, 2018).
It is possible to find peaceful and appropriate solutions for these types of problems. At my (first author’s) former university, there was a similar situation in which a Confederate monument stood in the center of a busy public intersection adjacent to the campus (figure 13.3). Each day during my trek from the parking lot to my university office, I was visually assaulted by the seventy-foot-tall granite obelisk with Confederate soldiers made of bronze and dressed in war gear—the largest Civil War monument in the state. Owned by the city, the monument commemorates the “sacrifice” of Confederate veterans—soldiers who perished in a failed armed rebellion against our nation that resulted in 750,000 deaths. The monument was erected to celebrate people who were willing to die for the right to keep a whole race of people like me permanently enslaved. Many solutions had been advanced to address concerns raised by those who found the monument inappropriate and offensive, but no actions had been taken. During my aforementioned diversity training to the university’s executive office, I explained how this monument affected me personally as an African American. I wondered aloud how tolerant the academic community would be if this were a monument in celebration of Nazi World War II veterans, if Jewish faculty had to walk past it each day, and how Germans were rightly ashamed of their Nazi history. After the training, the university president said to me that perhaps it was time for change in regards to the monument. Shortly thereafter, the president, in partnership with the mayor, made a plan to move the monument to a more appropriate location, which was upheld, despite a lawsuit advanced by supporters of the monument to keep it at its original site (Associated Press, 2016). We believe a key factor in this positive outcome was for the president to hear first-hand about how this affected a real person at a very human level, underscoring the importance of empathy and mutual understanding in these processes (Shelton, Trail, West, & Bergsieker, 2010).
Stop Using Student Course Evaluation Scores for Raises, Promotion, and Tenure

We have known for some time that student course evaluations are sexist, racist, and a poor indicator of learning (Boring, Ottoboni, & Stark, 2016; Nast, 1999). In fact, students rate faculty significantly lower simply for being “unattractive” or having a foreign accent (Hamermesh & Parker, 2005). Students show less respect for faculty of color, and this is also manifest in lower course evaluation scores or even abusive comments rooted in negative stereotypes (Bradley, 2005; Ho et al., 2009). Despite these well-known failings, student course evaluations are retained as part of the academic tradition, with raises and promotion tied to scores as “evidence” of teaching quality. When I (first author) mentioned this to my former chair, she pointed out that my evaluations are numerically fine. However, I have to work harder when I teach multicultural psychology than when I teach other classes, like abnormal psychology, in order to keep my ratings up; and I have to work harder to overcome student biases against me as a Black female, which means I am expending much more time and energy than my White male colleagues. This is unfair, exhausting, and puts me and others in my situation at risk for burnout. This discriminatory means of evaluation will potentially decrease the number of qualified faculty of color retained by departments, contributing to a negative climate. Additionally, if we adhere to our own science, we should be assessing real learning rather than rewarding faculty for winning a rigged popularity contest that is biased against faculty who are already facing extra hurdles. Boring, Ottoboni, and Stark (2016) did an excellent study that highlighted these issues in an investigation of bias in course evaluations. They found that scores were better predictors of gender bias and grade expectations than teaching effectiveness.

There are many fairer methods that could be used to evaluate teaching effectiveness than student evaluations. For example, pre- and posttests of student knowledge would be a more objective and accurate way of determining how well professors are able to impart knowledge (Stark-Wroblewski, Ahlering, & Brill, 2007). Another technique employed in many departments is peer evaluation of teaching, which is not completely free of racial bias and may trigger stereotype threat in minority faculty (Steele & Aronson, 1995) but could be more objective, considering that observing peers have experience teaching themselves are not being graded in the course.

Conduct a Departmental Climate Assessment

It has been said that it is hard for a fish to perceive the water it swims in. A negative racial climate may not be readily observable when a department or institution is run by people for whom White privilege is largely invisible. Furthermore, for a number of reasons having to do with power, prestige, and authority, simply asking minority faculty (who are usually lower ranked; Kena et al., 2015) and students of color what things are really like may not generate complete or honest answers (Stangor, Swim, Van Allen, & Sechrist, 2002). And sadly, when minorities speak up about the realities of discrimination, they are often dismissed as complainers (e.g., DeLapp & Williams, 2015; Garcia, Reser, Amo, Redersdorff, & Branscombe, 2005). Thus, an outside climate assessment of racial and ethnic diversity issues is often the only and best way to get accurate feedback on what the environment is truly like for people of color. Such an assessment, ideally conducted by psychologists who are knowledgeable in diversity and organizational issues, might include anonymous surveys, individual interviews, and focus groups to get a full picture of department strengths and weaknesses (e.g., Harper & Hurtado, 2007).

Listen

Faculty must realize that when they are approached by students, staff, or other faculty of color who describe a negative racial situation to them in confidence or who ask for support, a very important moment for healing and growth is at hand. This is a delicate moment for both parties. The person of color has chosen to engage the (typically) White person in a vulnerable interpersonal interaction and undoubtedly enters it with fears of being misunderstood (Shelton, Richeson, & Salvatore, 2005) and becoming the target of even further prejudice (Shelton, Douglass, Garcia, Yip, & Trail, 2014). Yet that person has chosen to engage nonetheless.

In this interaction, the White person may fear being seen as prejudiced and demonstrate a heightened physiological threat response, both of which make it harder for the interaction to succeed (Shelton, West, & Trail, 2010). It is crucial that the White person is able to overcome these biases and respond well in this moment. Positive intergroup interactions predict physiological recovery from stressful intergroup interactions for people of color, and the success of the interaction depends to a significant degree of the ability of the White person to listen well and demonstrate accurate empathy and understanding (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011; Shelton, Trail, et al., 2010).

For example, on the first author’s campus, when students initially arranged a meeting with the university president to discuss their feelings about what became known as Sombrerogate, they reported that he did not seem to listen and left after only a short time because he had another appointment. This made students feel as if their concerns were unimportant, which only worsened the situation and turned what could have been a small problem into a much larger one, fueling distrust of the institution. One student said, “[the president] did not want to listen to us, and he was not interested in the context of what was going on. I feel very let down by the leader of this university” (Moody, 2015).

As clinical psychologists, we are trained to attune to issues of vulnerability and trust in our interactions, and the importance of responding with empathy and caring is key to our work, especially when a client of color is discussing racially sensitive material (Miller, Williams, Wetterneck, Kanter, & Tsai, 2015; Williams et al., 2014). However, we recognize that an administrator or faculty member outside of mental health may not naturally attune to the importance of these responses in this moment. It may be useful to note that a fundamental requirement for trust and closeness to develop is perceived responsiveness:

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When one person engages in a vulnerable disclosure to another, the discloser must perceive the listener to respond with understanding, validation, and caring (Reis, 2007). This applies to cross-racial relationships as well (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011; Page-Gould et al., 2008).

Therefore, when approached by a person who is claiming to be the victim of a racially discriminatory slight, microaggression, aggressive action, or assault, the first, best, and most important thing we can do in this moment is to listen. Even if the urge is to do otherwise, and as difficult as it may sometimes be, it is imperative to resist any impulse to get defensive or make excuses for the perpetrator—especially if you are the perpetrator. Interrogating the victim through aggressive questioning about the accuracy of the event will undoubtedly lead to ruptures in the relationship and be experienced as invalidating by the person who experienced the event. The person who experienced the event is in the best position to understand the harm that it produced. It is important to empathize with the person and tell the person that you feel sorry that the event happened, even if it was not about you. It is important to explicitly recognize the larger social context of racial injustice in this moment and not be colorblind (McCoy et al., 2015). People who have suffered as a result of a poor racial climate need to feel heard, validated, and believed (DeLapp & Williams, 2015). They themselves may offer some solutions to the problem, but it is best not to require them to do so. The victim is not the cause of the problem and should not be required to fix it.

**Discipline as Needed**

Although most experiences of racism may be small and unintentional, sometimes they are overt and intentional. White people with a history of blindness to privilege and lack of awareness of racial issues are more likely to see events of racial harassment and discrimination as minor problems or mistakes that do not require a formal response, but Black people tend to see them as severe, want a response, and feel a stronger sense of organizational justice and safety that they will not be harassed in the future if action is taken (Chrobot-Mason & Hepworth, 2005). Furthermore, many institutional obstacles exist that make it hard for victims to report problems, including fear that reporting will make things worse, not better, or result in retaliation (Chakraborti, & Garland, 2003). Thus, when such events occur, in addition to conveying empathy to victims, swift and clear responses by administration are essential to overcome institutional racism. It must be made widely known that behaviors that threaten the safety and well-being of any group will not be tolerated, that effective resources are available so people know how to report problems, that the right people are trained and in place to handle situations fully, that victims will be protected, and that disciplinary action will be implemented fully (Larsen, Nye, Ormerod, Ziebro, & Siebert, 2013; Martin, Goodboy, & Johnson, 2015).

For example, on the first author’s campus, it came to light that in one of the residence halls, some students were writing derogatory messages, including racial slurs and swastikas, on a common-area whiteboard. This made many students of color upset and afraid. There was a residence hall meeting at which some suggested that upset students should just take the acts as a joke or ignore them, and still others considered it a free-speech issue. A residence hall exercise was subsequently implemented to educate students about stereotypes, and residence hall advisors were given trainings on diversity issues, but this was unsuccessful in relieving racial tensions. Concerned students were offered the opportunity to file a report or move to another residence hall, or both (Krauth, 2016).

Responses such as this one have large effects on victims, decreasing students’ interest in school, reducing feelings of competence, and increasing the likelihood of dropout (Martin et al., 2015). The problem with these responses is that rather than disciplinary actions, the perpetrators were instead given a platform to continue their hurtful behaviors via group discussions. Additionally, an undue burden was placed on the victims to file reports that students worried could result in retaliation; the administration was already aware of the problems and should have investigated and disciplined those responsible when they first learned of it. Additionally, moving minority students out of the dorm should never have been advanced as a solution, as that unfairly burdens the victims and reinforces the perpetrators. Forty faculty members signed a letter to the upper administration expressing their disappointment with the way the event had been managed, and noted that “staff, faculty, and administrators have a grave responsibility to create a racially healthy climate, one where each and every student has an equitable and meaningful opportunity to flourish.” Deliberate racism should never be tolerated.

**What Psychologists Can Do**

Psychology has already contributed a great deal to understanding and addressing the problem of racism on campuses. Excellent work has been done by social psychologists to help us understand issues like group behaviors, racism, and implicit bias. Clinical psychology has explicated the mental health consequences of a poor racial environment on people of color. Psychologists can conduct workplace assessments and give recommendations for effective changes to improve the climate, such as the interventions described in this article. Psychology has well-developed tools and research methods that allow us to design and test interventions for reducing racism, which we have been actively employing to study and ameliorate these problems. We also partner with organizational psychologists, who also have much to contribute by way of designing and implementing workplace interventions.

All of those contributions lie within our traditional spheres of influence. However, psychologists also have much to offer when we step out of our comfort zones and get directly involved as catalysts for change on campus. We can participate in campus social-justice activities, advocate for change ourselves, and solve campus problems that exist today. Much anti-racism activity is happening on campuses across our country right now, and psychologists’ voices are important to these efforts. The second author’s campus, for
example, has established a strong campus anti-racism initiative, made up of dedicated administrative leaders and relevant staff. However, I, (second author) am the only psychologist or scientist of any type on my committee, even though my department has several psychologists who study issues pertinent to the committee’s mission.

Leaders within schools, departments, and divisions are needed to inspire and motivate resistant faculty and keep sympathetic faculty motivated to keep working for change, and psychologists have much to say about resistance and motivation. For example, research indicates that the inclusive ideology of multiculturalism is often not perceived as such by Whites, which may be one reason for resistance, thus it is important to convey that diversity is not about including people of color and excluding White people, but that everyone is valued, needed, and important. Psychologists can help department chairs, deans, and presidents craft these important messages and articulate the vision for an environment that embodies a diverse and harmonious academic community.

Psychologists can volunteer for roles and provide leadership on intervening when crises occur and facilitate forums for community healing. Psychologists can provide training when needed and be agents for change, as occurred in the aftermath of the Mexican Halloween party at first author’s university. Academic psychologists are often both respected by people in the community and misunderstood, and psychologists can attend community rallies, events, and protests as a way to build connections and send a message of support and understanding. I (second author) was often one of the few White people at rallies or protests about police violence in the Black community in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As one of the only White men at these events, and a professor, I was occasionally asked to lend my voice to the rally, and I did so nervously but willingly. I received many appreciations and remarks that my presence was welcome and desired at these events, and it communicated the message that White people do, in fact, care about what happens to people of color.

Yet, as illustrated by our examples, the field of psychology and psychology departments also suffer from the many of the same institutional and structural problems that plague other departments and our campuses. This creates barriers to advancement for some of the very people who are uniquely poised to understand these difficulties and find answers (e.g., ethnic minority psychologists). We must prioritize change as a discipline if we intend to remain relevant and credible in the ongoing dialogue about our society’s racial problems. This involves stepping out of our comfort zones and being willing to challenge the status quo. For example, recently a medical student at a workshop we conducted expressed reservations about telling a supervisor about a report of racist behavior perpetrated by a colleague, because, the student said, “I don’t want to throw our clinic under the bus.” After some brief discussion that reminded the attendee that racism is a tremendous problem in our society, which affects medical clinics across the country, the attendee was able to see that change will never occur if we prioritize the image of our workplaces over institutional change. We urge all psychologists reading this to consider how they have contributed to these dysfunctional systems and ask themselves what they can do to help bring about change. We urge deans, chairs, division heads, and directors of clinical training programs to do a fearless inventory of their divisions’ strengths and weaknesses, and ask themselves what steps they can take now to improve the situation for people of color, even if only by a little, with the ultimate goal of full minority participation in every facet of department life.

Conclusion

The actions proposed here will not completely eliminate racism and discrimination, but they can be important steps in making people of color feel welcome and valued, resulting in an improved learning environment for everyone. People may believe that because structural racism has evolved over decades, as policies became institutionalized, it will take decades to realize changes. However, the interventions offered here are concrete and relatively simple steps that can be taken right now, led by individuals, that can have a large impact at departmental and university levels. Many of these are top-down suggestions, but with the right level of faculty and administrative support, they are implementable.

For example, I (first author) recently witnessed a real change with respect to the removal of a significant structural barrier in a short period of time. A simple fifteen-minute discussion of the above-mentioned research, followed by a quick vote at a departmental meeting, resulted in permanent removal of course evaluation letters from merit decisions. This illustrates that some changes, including important changes, can occur quickly, if the right people with the right motivation set about the task; hopefully believing that all structural problems are too ingrained in the system to change is simply inaccurate. While it may take years to build a wall, it can be destroyed quickly if you have the right tools. Although we have good evidence to suggest that each of these strategies can result in significant and immediate improvements to the racial climate, what remains to be seen is if there is a multiplicative benefit in implementing all of these changes at once, where needed.

One of the points we did not make, which has also been a concern at many campuses, is increasing the diversity of the student body. It is worth considering the possibility that enrolling more students of color, independent of efforts to improve the existing campus racial climate, may be problematic and unfair to those students. Much evidence, reviewed in this article, documents that students of color become disillusioned, distressed, and dissatisfied in such an environment, and that many will drop out (Cropsey et al., 2008; Piotrowski & Perdue, 1998). Indeed, the literature on recruitment of minority students and debates over affirmative action should better emphasize the need for the minority students to be received into a supportive academic environment. Although increasing the number of students of color may help with some issues (e.g., isolation), it will not help with most structural issues reviewed herein. Of course, the dynamic is transactional, in that an increased minority presence may put additional pressure on administration to create structural changes that meet their needs (Hurtado, Milem,
Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998), but certainly it is unfair to place this burden on the initial cohorts of minority students.

If the needs we review above are properly addressed, we believe more students of color will be the natural results of these efforts. For example, we have paid careful attention to these issues, and as a result, we have a diverse group of graduate and undergraduates in our own labs, which includes African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, international students, and religious and sexual minorities. In turn, their research efforts and diverse perspectives constitute invaluable contributions to our respective departments and the field of psychology as a whole. We have not made any special efforts to recruit these students, but they apply to work with us because they perceive it to be a welcoming environment. This does not mean that recruitment efforts are not important, but if the other essential elements are in place, recruitment efforts will certainly be more successful.

Change is never easy, but these problems will not go away on their own. There is room for all of us to work harder to create nurturing and diverse academic spaces for the benefit of everyone.

KEY POINTS FOR CLINICIANS

- Students of color experience many forms of racism on campus, which contributes to poor mental health. Staff and faculty of color are also impacted.
- Much of this racism is structural in nature and self-perpetuating, requiring deliberate efforts at identifying and dismantling it.
- Attempts to bring about positive change to reduce racism and create a more inclusive environment are typically met with resistance.
- Psychology departments are not immune to these problems and also perpetuate a negative racial climate.
- Psychologists can play a key role in facilitating change due to their understanding of human behavior and the related research base.

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Eliminating Race-Based Mental Health Disparities


CHAPTER 14

Barriers to Outpatient Psychotherapy Treatment

Camelia Harb,
*Georgetown University Medical Center*

Jessica Jackson,
*VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center*

Alfiee M. Breland-Noble,
*Georgetown University Medical Center*

Introduction

In the area of mental health, clinical care and psychotherapy specifically, people of color have lower rates of outpatient treatment engagement, unequal access to care, lower quality of care, and they experience more negative treatment outcomes. This chapter seeks to delineate the barriers to outpatient care and includes discussion related to practical and systemic barriers, provider bias, and cultural stigma. We suggest that health disparities in outpatient care are significant and important, and we offer suggestions for providers on how to reduce and, in some cases, overcome these barriers in their own work. In this chapter, outpatient therapy refers to services provided in primary care, community mental health clinics, solo practice, and large group practices (e.g., federally qualified health centers, community agencies, and HMOs). Further, we focus on the needs of multiple racial and ethnic groups, where possible, including African Americans and Blacks, Hispanics and Latinx, Asians and Asian Americans, and Native Americans and American Indians—whom we refer to throughout as people of color.

Our efforts focus on historical contributors to clinical care disparities (i.e., historical barriers); the role of patient and community culture (i.e., individual barriers) and their impacts on the prevalence of mental illness, manifestations of mental illness, and implications for outpatient care in racially diverse groups. Each of these topics has been described extensively in the literature but we offer a specific focus on the outpatient care setting (Breland-Noble, Al-Mateen, & Singh, 2016).