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Mechanisms for Coping With Status-Based Rejection Expectations

Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton
University of California, Berkeley

Elizabeth Page-Gould
University of California, Berkeley

Janina Pietrzak
University of Warsaw

"Ask yourself," Gordon Allport invited readers in his 1954 classic, *The Nature of Prejudice*, to consider, "what would happen to your personality if you heard it said over and over again that you were lazy . . . and had inferior blood" (p. 138). Although the study of prejudice and discrimination has historically been dominated by research from the perspective of the perpetrator (Oyserman & Swim, 2001), the past 15 years in particular have witnessed an explosion of research that yields initial answers to Allport's question. Collectively, this research suggests that the effects of stigma on adjustment and adaptation are varied, and depend on the stigmatized characteristic, the context surrounding the stigma, and the coping mechanisms marshaled in response to stigmatization (Puhl & Brownell, 2003). Consistent with stress and coping frameworks for understanding stigma (see Major, chap. 10, this volume; Swim & Thomas, chap. 6, this volume), the chapters in this volume illustrate well the heterogeneity and contextual specificity of targets' responses to stigma. Given that the experience of stigmatization can vary widely, any one coping mechanism is not a panacea for all groups—or all individuals within groups.

In this chapter, we review a growing body of research documenting the development and consequences of *status-based rejection expectations*. Rejection plays a central role in the experience of stigmatization (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Miller and Kaiser, 2001; Root, 1992) and characterizes an important aspect of threat-related dynamics that include stereotype

threat (Aronson, 2002; Steele, 1997), stigma consciousness (Pinel, 1999; 2002), and race-based rejection sensitivity (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002; Pietrzak, Mendoza-Denton, & Downey, 2004). First, we review the conditions surrounding and consequences that follow from expectations of status-based rejection. Although such expectations can arise from situational pressures alone (see Inzlicht & Good, chap. 7, this volume), evidence also suggests that in certain situations, some people are more likely than others to experience threat or apprehension on the basis of status characteristics (Brown & Pinel, 2003; Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002). Further, not everybody who fears and expects rejection experiences similar outcomes (Ayduk et al., 2000; Freitas & Downey, 1998). We argue here that variability in outcomes related to status-based rejection expectations is dependent on individual cognitions and affects that constitute peoples' coping mechanisms in the face of such rejection.

The latter half of this chapter explores these coping mechanisms at three levels: the intrapersonal, the interpersonal, and the institutional or structural. At the intrapersonal level, we review burgeoning research on personal strengths that individuals can marshal to cope with rejection expectations. These include (among many others) beliefs about the malleability of intelligence (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002), ethnic identity (Pietrzak et al., 2004), and proactive social activism for positive social change (see Deaux & Ethier, 1998). At the interpersonal level, we focus on the effect of cross-race relationships (McLaughlin-Volpe, Mendoza-Denton, & Shelton, in press; see also McLaughlin-Volpe, chap. 11, this volume) and on the quality of mentoring relationships (Cohen, Steele, & Ross, 1999). Finally, we turn to mechanisms at the structural or institutional level; namely, those procedures and steps institutions can take to gain the trust of individuals historically marginalized by the institution.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE COGNITIVE-AFFECTIVE PROCESSING SYSTEM

Although research on the effects of stigma on adjustment and well-being have traditionally focused on between-group differences, more recently researchers have investigated within-group variability in outcomes as well (Major, chap. 10, this volume; Major, Quinton, McCoy, & Schmader, 2000). Consistent with this view, our own analysis is framed within Mischel & Shoda's (1995, 1999) Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) framework. From the CAPS perspective, a person's characteristic responses are mediated by his or her unique network of *cognitive-affective units* (CAUs)—construals, expectations/beliefs, affects, and goals—activated in particular situations. The

organization of these CAUs (the network), which reflects the social-cognitive history of the individual (Shoda & Mischel, 1998), guides and constrains the activation of cognitions, affects, and potential behaviors while an individual processes situational features. Our analysis of coping mechanisms is framed within this broad framework, such that a person's behavioral responses are influenced not only by the activation of race-based rejection expectations, but also by a host of other mechanisms in the network. These mechanisms can reflect individual differences (e.g., ethnic identity) as well as environmental influences (e.g., outgroup friendships).

As the individual grows, learns, and gains life experience, an increasingly rich and complex network of CAUs develops. Some CAUs are acquired through the unique experience of the individual, whereas others are shared among members of cultural groups (Mendoza-Denton, Shoda, Ayduk, & Mischel, 1999). Other CAUs can come to be shared as a result of having similar experiences specific to one's cultural group—as when, for example, a shared group characteristic (e.g., skin color) makes a group significantly more likely to experience negative treatment, discrimination, or stigmatization.

A central emphasis of CAPS theory is that the effect of context and situations is mediated by the individual's cognitions and affects, activated in specific situations. As such, we emphasize that people are not the passive recipients of contexts and situations, but are active participants in the construction and management of their environment (Kelly, 1955). In sum, we frame our analysis of the effect of stigma on the individual within a constructivist, Person X situation framework, rather than viewing the phenomenon as being caused by either situational causes or dispositional causes alone. In this view, the question posed at the beginning of this chapter is not an invitation to an analysis of immutable dispositions or characteristics, but rather to an understanding of the psychological process that represents a person's coping repertoire in response to a particular challenge—the challenge of being a target of stereotypes and prejudice.

EXPERIENCING STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICE: A COPING CHALLENGE

Returning to the question Allport posed half a century ago: what happens to a person when one is told over and over that one is lazy and is of inferior blood? Historically, psychologists have understandably been reluctant to answer this question in characterological terms, preferring instead to analyze outcomes related to stigma in terms of situational pressures (Major et al., 2000). Research on stereotype threat (Aronson, 2002; Steele, 1997) is one

such example. In the classic demonstration of the stereotype-threat phenomenon, Steele and Aronson (1995) presented African American students with questions similar to those found in standardized achievement tests. A simple yet powerful experimental manipulation was introduced: in one condition, students were told that the researchers were interested in measuring their verbal ability, and were thus being tested with items diagnostic of their ability. In the other condition, the students were told that the (same) questions were being used to understand the psychological processes associated with problem solving, but that the researchers would not be evaluating the participants' ability. The former condition framed the experimental test questions similarly to the achievement tests widely used in America's educational system. The latter condition framed the test questions with the intention of lifting the students' concerns that their ability was under suspicion or scrutiny as members of a negatively stereotyped group. As hypothesized, the White students performed comparably regardless of experimental condition. The African American students, however, underperformed relative to White students in the "ability diagnostic" condition but performed just as well as the White students in the "nondiagnostic" condition. In other words, African American participants' performance on the same set of questions was significantly affected by a small—but psychologically critical—framing of the test. Other studies have shown that stereotype-relevant intrusive ideation and concerns about fulfilling the stereotype (Steele & Aronson, 1995), and the cognitive busyness that results (Croizet & Després, 2003), help explain this underperformance effect. To the degree that schooling in general, and standardized testing in particular, emphasize the diagnosis of ability as a gateway for tracking, college admissions, and other future opportunities, the implications of stereotype threat in relation to minority student achievement are profound.

Research on stereotype threat provides compelling evidence that even small changes in the framing of a testing situation can have significant effects on the performance of minority students in the classroom (see also Inzlicht & Good, chap. 7, this volume). This research has had wide impact, in part, because it provides a testable psychological account of the contextual and societal forces that can account for the Black-White academic achievement gap (College Board, 1999), and provides a powerful, experimentally validated alternative to biological explanations for achievement differences between groups (e.g., Herrnstein & Murray, 1994).

Race-Based Rejection Expectations

Within social psychology, a distinction has been made between *stereotypes*, the cognitively based belief systems associated with particular groups, and *prejudice*, the affectively based attitudes that people hold toward other

groups (e.g., Franzoi, 1996). Independent of negative stereotypes and their influence on their targets, another critical dimension of the experience of being stigmatized is the affectively charged, general dislike held and expressed toward members of one's group by outgroup members—in other words, the problem of prejudice.

But if not through stereotype threat, how can one quantify and psychologically assess the impact of prejudice on its targets? Recent research on African American students' apprehensive anticipation of prejudice (Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002) yields some insight into this issue. According to Mendoza-Denton and colleagues, direct or vicarious experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and prejudice can lead people to anxiously anticipate that they will be similarly treated in new contexts where the possibility of such treatment exists. These expectations are activated in intergroup situations where race-based rejection is possible, leading people to perceive discrimination more readily and to react to such race-based rejection more intensely. Mendoza-Denton and colleagues refer to this processing dynamic (expectations, perceptions, intense reactions) as *race-based rejection sensitivity* (RS-race). This process has also been referred to as *prejudice apprehension* to reflect the notion that individuals can develop expectations about others' prejudice and discrimination unmediated by their fears about confirming stereotypes (Mendoza-Denton & Aronson, in press).

Evidence from other lines of research is consistent with the notion that anxious expectations of status-based rejection can have a detrimental effect on academic outcomes. Independent of psychiatric symptoms, expectations of status-based rejection among those labeled mentally ill have been found to undermine well-being and social functioning (Link, Cullen, Frank & Wozniak, 1987). Similarly, individual differences in stigma consciousness have been related to women's avoidance of situations where gender stigmatization is possible (Pinel, 1999), and to disruptive social interactions with outgroup members (Pinel, 2002). Broader constructs such as intergroup anxiety (W. G. Stephan & C. W. Stephan, 2000) and cultural mistrust (F. Terrell & S. Terrell, 1981), which are also characterized by anticipatory anxiety in relation to intergroup contact, have been related to wariness in anticipation of interaction and avoidance of intergroup contexts.

Testing the Links of the RS-Race Dynamic

To operationalize the construct for African Americans, Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002) first developed and validated the RS-race Questionnaire, a measure that assesses anxious expectations of rejection in situations where race-based rejection is both applicable and personally salient (Higgins, 1996) for African Americans (e.g., a roadblock where police are randomly pulling people over). African Americans scored higher overall on the meas-

ure than Asian Americans or Whites, although, as expected, there was substantial within-group variability among African Americans. Consistent with the model, individual differences in anxious expectations of race-based rejection were related to a higher frequency of perceiving racial discrimination and prejudice in a series of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Also consistent with the model, students high in RS-race reported greater levels of rejection and alienation following a negative race-related experience than those who were low in RS-race. Together, these results lend empirical support to the conceptualization of RS-race as a cognitive-affective processing dynamic (Mischel & Shoda, 1995) to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to race-based rejection.

RS-Race and the Transition to College

Having established a valid and reliable measure of RS-race, the researchers then addressed the questions of central concern to their research program: Do individual differences in RS-race help explain why some African American students view their college experience as alienating and undermining whereas others do not? In particular, does RS-race influence African American students' initial college experiences in ways that have long-lasting implications? The researchers reasoned that preexisting fears about race-based rejection might play a formative role in students' overall college experience by influencing the quality of the relationships they form with professors and peers and the sense of belonging they feel during the first weeks of college.

To examine these questions, RS-race was assessed prior to the beginning of classes in two cohorts of incoming African American students at the university. Participants then completed a structured daily diary for the first 3 weeks of classes. Controlling for interpersonal rejection sensitivity, African American students preidentified as anxiously expectant of race-based rejection experienced a heightened sense of alienation on the typical day of the diary period. They also felt less welcome at their new university, had greater difficulties with their roommates, and formed a less positive view of their professors than their low RS-race counterparts.

Consistent with the model's predictions, students high in RS-race felt less trust and obligation toward the university at the end of their first year in college. As sophomores and juniors, they also reported decreased attendance at academic review sessions, as well as increased anxiety about approaching professors and TAs with academic problems. RS-race was predictive of participants' change in grade-point average (GPA) over the first five semesters of college, such that students high in RS-race were particularly likely to experience a decrease in their grades over time.

Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002) also tracked the development of participants' social relationships during the transition to college in relation to RS-race. At the end of their first year of college, participants were asked to report on the number, age, and race of new friends they made in college. Students high on RS-race reported having fewer White friends at the end of their first year in college than their counterparts low in RS-race. These results also held when controlling for number of Black friends and sensitivity to rejection based on personal characteristics (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Demonstrating the specificity of the construct as a dynamic that motivates people to avoid those who are more likely to reject them on the basis of race, but not necessarily to approach other ethnic minority ingroup members, RS-race was unrelated to the number of ingroup friends that participants reported. This is important because it distinguishes RS-race from a more generalized social anxiety or tendency to avoid social contact (see also Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002).

MECHANISMS FOR COPING

As previously noted, not everyone who develops or has anxious expectations is necessarily doomed to negative adjustment or poor intergroup outcomes. As the CAPS model reminds us, anxious expectations are only one aspect of a person's CAPS network, and interact with other CAUs in the system (Ayduk et al., 2000). We refer here to psychological mechanisms that facilitate coping by allowing people to flexibly encode, transform, and interpret stimuli and events as operating at the intrapersonal level.

We now review in some detail recent research shedding light on the interactive effects of ethnic identity and race-based rejection sensitivity on institutional identity as one example of coping at the intrapersonal level. We also discuss social activism as an example of a proactive coping mechanism. Although its effects are interpersonal, we place social activism as an intrapersonal coping response to emphasize its cognitive and affective benefits for the individual. Another example of a coping mechanism at this level, reviewed in more detail by Inzlicht and Good (chap. 7, this volume), is holding a belief in the malleability of intelligence in the face of stereotype threat (Aronson et al., 2002; Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003).

Given the inherently interactive nature of the CAPS system, whereby a person's stable CAUs are not only activated by specific situations but also developed and maintained by one's social cognitive learning past and current history, mechanisms at two other levels (at least) are also possible, and explored here—the interpersonal and the institutional. At the interpersonal level, we describe how positive intergroup contact can have a signifi-

cant impact on the outcomes associated with race-based rejection expectations (see also Tropp, chap. 9, this volume, and McLaughlin-Volpe, chap. 11, this volume). We describe an ongoing research program suggesting that cross-race friendships may foster positive academic outcomes, particularly among those who expect rejection the most. At the structural or institutional level, certain practices or structures set up by the institution are also reviewed.

Intrapersonal Level

Ethnic Identity. In recent work, Pietrzak et al. (2004) examined the interactive effects of ethnic identity and RS-race for institutional affiliation and well-being within the college setting. Our interest in ethnic identity stemmed in part from our observation that research on the effects of ethnic identity on adjustment outcomes has yielded somewhat contradictory results, sometimes associated with positive outcomes and sometimes with negative outcomes. As such, we proposed that status-based rejection expectations might help account for some of the variation in these findings.

Several researchers (e.g., Ogbu, 1991, 1994; Parham, 1989) argued that ethnic and institutional identities are associated with conflicting values for minority students. Whereas identifying with one's ethnic group involves taking pride in and having respect for the customs and history of one's ethnic group, identifying with the university may mean implicitly turning a blind eye towards a history of discrimination and exclusion of one's ethnic group by the university and its representatives. Accordingly, ethnic identity within the context of a predominantly White institution has been linked to reduced identification with the institution (Ogbu, 1994; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001), as well as with greater perceptions of discrimination within the institution (Operario & Fiske, 2001). In a related vein, McCoy and Major (2003) found that individuals highly identified with a particular ingroup were more prone to negative emotions following events perceived as discriminatory. In sum, research from this avenue suggests that ethnic identity stands in opposition to the development of an institutional identity, and as such could contribute to negative intergroup relations and to a greater sense of alienation from the institution (see Sidanius & Petrocik, 2001, for a broader discussion of the negotiation of superordinate and ethnic identities).

At the same time, a number of studies have linked identification with an ethnic or minority group to positive outcomes, including high self-esteem (Phinney, 1992; Roberts et al., 1999; Wright, 1985), academic persistence and efficacy (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Jo, 1999; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001), and general well-being (Contrada et al., 2001; Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Roberts et al., 1999). This research, though not related to institutional

identification specifically, nevertheless suggests that ethnic identity may not always be in conflict with institutional values and identity.

Pietrzak and colleagues (2004) hypothesized that the effects of ethnic identity on institutional belonging should be different depending on whether a person expects to be rejected on the basis of their race. In other words, one's ethnic identity should be in conflict with one's institutional identity only when one expects that the institution and its members are likely to reject and devalue one's ethnicity. In the absence of anxious rejection expectations, however, the researchers hypothesized that ethnic and institutional identity should be orthogonal; given that the outgroup is less likely to be seen as a devaluator, a person may be able feel a sense of pride and belonging both as a member of the institution and as a member of one's ethnic group without experiencing dissonance.

Three studies were conducted to test these hypotheses—one correlational, one longitudinal, and one experimental (in which participants' ethnic identity was experimentally manipulated). Across all three studies, the hypothesized pattern emerged. Among individuals low on RS-race, no relationship (and in one study, even a positive relationship) was found between the two identities. Among participants high in RS-race, however, the greater one's ethnic identity, the lower one's institutional identity (Pietrzak et al., 2004). This pattern of results suggests that when a person is concerned about being devalued on the basis of their race, identity may indeed become a salient feature of social interaction (Ethier & Deaux, 1994), and ethnic identity may be developed in oppositional terms to the university as a protective identity (Parham, 1989).

Of note is the finding that among those individuals high in RS-race, there was also a negative relationship between ethnic identity and reports of somatic symptoms (headaches, stomachaches) following negative racial incidents. In other words, ethnic identity seemed to serve as a source of strength for individuals high in RS-race, taking some of the sting out of negative race-related incidents. Individuals high in RS-race but low in ethnic identity, on the other hand, reported greater institutional identity, but also greater vulnerability to somatic symptoms in the face of discrimination. In the face of RS-race, people who do not feel close to their ethnic group may in fact embrace their institutional identity even more, leaving them vulnerable to the pain of rejection. These findings illustrate well the notion that coping mechanisms often function as a system of tradeoffs, rather than as purely beneficial (see also Miller, chap. 2, this volume).

Participation in Social Activism. Another way of coping with RS-race in particular, and expectations of status-based rejection more generally, may be to engage in collective social action to combat discrimination. Numerous researchers have posited a link between stigmatized social status and

participation in social movements (Duncan, 1999; Gamson, 1992; Luhtanen, 1996; Puhl & Brownell, 2003; Zurcher & Snow, 1981), particularly in the face of immutable stigmas (Deaux & Ethier, 1998). Participation in social action or movements provides a proactive coping mechanism for counteracting discriminatory attitudes (Siegal, Lune, & Meyer, 1998), increasing one's social connections (Puhl & Brownell, 2003), validating one's experiences of stigmatization (Gamson, 1992), and enhancing group consciousness (Duncan, 1999).

There is some suggestive data to support the notion of a link between status-based rejection expectations and social action. Bowen and Bok (1998) found that African American students who attended historically White universities were much more likely to participate in social activism and be involved in their community years later than their White counterparts. Looking only at African Americans, advanced degree holders tended to be more involved in the community. This suggests that people exposed to decreasingly diverse institutions in the journey through higher education were increasingly motivated to take social action. In the words of one participant:

What we found when we got there—when we got all the way up the ladder—is that there isn't a lot of difference. People still see you first of all as Black. Because you get that rude awakening, I think you end up feeling that you better hold on to those things that you knew before. And some part of that is what leads us back, to make sure that we keep roots in the community and keep this thing going. Like the people who helped us. (quoted in Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 172)

In another study, Kaplan and Liu (2001) followed a group of over 4,000 adolescents through 30 years, and found that those adolescents who reported feeling stigmatized or rejected were most likely to be involved in social movements in their thirties. Kaplan and Liu found this relationship to be moderated by both self-efficacy with regard to social change and by the presence of others also engaged in social action. Although the authors did not differentiate between rejection based on personal versus status characteristics, it nevertheless suggests a relationship between social action and the broader construct of rejection.

In sum, expectations of race-based rejection may spur people toward social action by making the pervasiveness of discrimination—and thus the need for action—more salient. A promising avenue for new research is to draw a more explicit link between prior experiences of stigmatization, future expectations of stigma-based rejection, and social action. Coping through social action provides one example of how people are active participants in the construction and management of their social environment

in the face of stigma (Kelly, 1955; see also Deaux & Ethier, 1998)—and how their coping strategies can have important positive ramifications.

Interpersonal Level

One of the basic premises of the RS-race model, and of CAPS theory more generally, is that expectations of race-based rejection develop out of prior experiences of discrimination (either direct or vicarious) with outgroup members. Therefore, it makes sense that positive intergroup contact may have a beneficial effect on race-based rejection expectations by providing disconfirming evidence with regard to such expectations. Positive intergroup contact may help prevent the generalization of rejection expectations to all outgroup members. In recent research, our lab has been focusing specifically on the impact of cross-race friendships on minority students' academic adjustment and intergroup relations. Although even relatively superficial intergroup contact has been found to be generally beneficial for reducing prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000), the effects of this type of contact are substantially weaker for low-status relative to high-status groups (Tropp, chap. 9, this volume). We propose that clear, unambiguous signs of relational positivity may be necessary to witness the positive effects of intergroup contact for stigmatized group members, and in particular for those who have anxious expectations of rejection. Because ambiguous cues are more likely to confirm a person's rejection schema, repeated gestures of closeness—such as those expressed in burgeoning friendships—may help to attenuate expectations of stigma-based rejection.

Cross-Group Friendships. Although establishing a cross-group friendship may be difficult and needs to overcome substantial barriers of anxiety and suspicion (Fable, Blackstone, & Scherbaum, 1990; Ickes, 1984; W. G. Stephan & C. W. Stephan, 2000), research suggests that its benefits may be substantial. Notably, in Pettigrew and Tropp's (2000) meta-analysis of intergroup contact, the inverse relationship between contact and prejudice was clearly strongest in studies examining intergroup friendship. Similarly, a recent study by McLaughlin-Volpe (chap. 11, this volume) concludes that the effect of intergroup contact on prejudice is not contingent on amount of interaction per se, but rather on how much those interactions lead to closeness between members of different groups, or inclusion of the outgroup other in the self (also see A. Aron, E. N. Aron, & Smollan, 1992). In a powerful demonstration of the strength of the effects of contact on prejudice, Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, and Ropp (1997) found that the mere knowledge of an ingroup member's cross-race friendship fostered positive intergroup affect—termed the *extended contact effect*.

As Mary McPherson, president of Bryn Mawr College, noted in *The Shape of the River* (Bowen & Bok, 1998): "Since students have only a limited amount of time and emotional energy, those able to concentrate on their academic tasks, without constant concern about their place on the campus and their relationships to others, are most likely to do well academically" (p. 82). Although ingroup friends provide "safe havens" where low-status group members do not have to be "on guard" (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998), outgroup friendships may actively help change beliefs about one's acceptance by the majority group and one's belonging within the institution. Through repeated exposure to a nondiscriminatory outgroup member, students high in RS-race may begin to see more heterogeneous possibilities for treatment by outgroup members, including professors and institutional policymakers.

To test the aforementioned ideas, Mendoza-Denton and Page-Gould (2002) examined the moderating effect of White friends on the relationship between RS-race and adjustment outcomes among the participants of the same longitudinal study described in Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002). To increase our confidence in the causal nature of the effects being investigated, we took advantage of three different stages of data collection. Specifically, a number of longitudinal outcomes collected 3 to 4 years after the beginning of the study were analyzed as functions of RS-race and cross-race friendships, both measured at least 1 year earlier. The analyses controlled for participants' scores on the outcome measures at the end of their freshman year of college, thus allowing us to look at the predictive power of our independent variables (RS-race, cross-race friends) on change in our dependent variables. The dependent measures examined were anxiety about speaking with peers about academic problems and satisfaction with the university. The overall pattern of results suggests that having outgroup friends serves a positive, beneficial function for students high in RS-race. Controlling for interpersonal rejection sensitivity, self-esteem, and ethnic identity, we found that students high in RS-race who had few outgroup friends reported the highest anxiety about sharing academic problems, and the greatest dissatisfaction with the university. Given the longitudinal nature of the design, and the fact that we controlled for students' initial scores on the dependent variables, these findings are supportive of the idea that there may be a causal effect of number of outgroup friends on the relationship between RS-race and subsequent feelings of satisfaction within the institution. In current research, we are attempting to replicate these findings by manipulating friendship (see A. Aron, Melinat, E. N. Aron, & Vallone, 1997), responding in part to a call for experimental research to establish a causal link between cross-race friendship and positive outcomes (Levin, van Laar, & Sidanius, 2003; Pettigrew, 1997).

Mentoring Relationships. In addition to cross-race friendships, a second type of interpersonal relationship that can help one cope with status-based rejection expectations on the college campus is the mentoring relationship. For example, Cohen, Steele, and Ross (1999) showed the influence of different types of mentoring feedback on minority students' motivation and impressions of bias. Although there is often a premium placed on emotion-free critical analysis in our culture (Cosmides, Tooby, & Barkow, 1992), Cohen and colleagues' research suggests that when it comes to mentoring across the racial divide, minority students' discomfort and apprehension must be actively addressed.

In their study, Cohen and colleagues (1999) invited African American and White university students to write an essay for possible publication in a university magazine. All students were given feedback on their essay 1 week later, and were led to believe that a White university professor (the purported editor of the magazine) was the one who provided the feedback. Unbeknown to the students, the experimenters manipulated the way in which the feedback was given. Participants received one of three different feedback types: (a) "criticism only"—students received critical feedback on their essay in the form of red markings along the margins (e.g., "unclear," "awkward"), two checkmarks for good points, plus specific suggestions; (b) "criticism plus high standards"—students received critical feedback, but the professor also wrote "Remember, I wouldn't go through the trouble of giving you this feedback if I weren't committed to the quality of this journal—I want to uphold the highest standards for what I consider a suitable entry"; and, (c) "criticism plus high standards plus assurance"—the professor provided similarly critical feedback but additionally wrote: "Remember, I wouldn't go through the trouble of giving you this feedback if I didn't think, based on what I've read in your letter, that you are capable of meeting the higher standard I mentioned."

The results from this study clearly showed that African American students' motivation to revise the essay, based on the professor's feedback, was the greatest in the "wise" criticism condition—that is, criticism + high standards + assurance. By contrast, the "criticism only" condition led to the lowest task motivation, and identification with the writing task, and the greatest ratings of perceived bias (for most of these dependent variables, "criticism plus high standards" fell between the two other conditions). These results suggest that there may be negative motivational consequences, particularly for African American students, in the face of pointed, unmitigated criticism. Such negative effects were not observed among the White students, who were less sensitive to the experimental manipulations. Consistent with the arguments presented here, those students most likely to have doubts about their professors' attitudes toward them benefited the

most from the "wise" feedback, implying that professors may be able to motivate students who are concerned about being treated negatively on the basis of race by framing critical feedback in a constructive and supportive manner.

Institutional Level

Mechanisms at the institutional level can also have a significant impact on the outcomes associated with race-based rejection expectations. Academic abilities are nurtured and developed through pedagogical, social, and institutional supports—a type of developmental "scaffolding" around and within which students can grow and find support (Gordon & Bridgall, 2003). The research mentioned suggests that beyond the achievement of numerical diversity, educators—and the institutions that they represent—must work toward the achievement of relational diversity (Fine, Weis, & Powell, 1997). By *relational diversity*, we mean a type of diversity where institutions are not merely filling numerical quotas, but are instead actively working to secure the trust and confidence of all students. As research on RS-race shows, concerns about one's belonging can directly impact one's achievement by leading people to avoid various resources that the institution may offer, such as a professor's office hours and academic counseling. Although this self-protective strategy minimizes the possibility of rejection and future prejudice, it also reduces the number of resources and support systems one can count on when faced with the same difficulties that all students face.

How do institutions build bridges allowing all of their members to succeed and to achieve the goals they arrived at the institution to realize? One suggestive finding comes from Mendoza-Denton et al. (2002), who found that students who anxiously expected rejection at the university felt an increased sense of belonging at the university following days in which they had had a positive race-related experience. Examples of positive race-related experiences included speaking with another student about the experience of being Black at the university, as well as having attended a meeting of the Black Student Organization at the university. This finding provides initial evidence for the beneficial effect of having institutionally sanctioned events and organizations that foster positive race-related experiences. When universities explicitly value and support such organizations and events, they may disconfirm negative expectations about the institution's lack of support, and foster a sense that the institution is attentive to the needs of all its members. Thus, in contrast to the perception that student groups organized around ethnicity lead to balkanization, these findings suggest that such organizations may lead to greater institutional belonging. These findings await replication and expansion; however, a task for

future research remains to identify institutional arrangements that can aid—or hinder—the realization of true relational diversity (Fine et al., 1997).

SUMMARY

Despite the removal of legal and institutional barriers to achieving diversity, clear disparities remain in educational achievement outcomes between minority and White students (Bowen & Bok, 1998). In this chapter, we argued that expectations of race-based rejection are an important factor in understanding these disparities, noting that status-based rejection describes well the phenomenology captured by the constructs of stereotype threat, stigma consciousness, cultural mistrust, and RS-race. Although expectations of race-based rejection can arise solely out of situational pressures, not everyone responds similarly to such rejection. The CAPS framework emphasizes that expectations of rejection interact with other dynamics to determine behavior, which is consistent with a stress and coping framework. We have reviewed examples of coping mechanisms at three levels—intrapersonal, interpersonal, and institutional—to illustrate the within-group diversity that characterizes stigmatized groups. This view adds one layer of complexity to analyses of stigma focused on between-group differences, and allows us to emphasize the cognitive and affective processes involved in answering Allport's (1954) observation that "one's reputation, whether true or false, cannot be hammered, hammered into one's head without doing something to one's character" (pp. 138–139). We have reviewed recent research relevant to this question to better understand the experience of being stigmatized. With such an understanding, we are better prepared to develop effective interventions at various levels.

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