White Students Understanding Racism:

A Study of Race Dialogues at the University of Michigan

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Abstract

Racism is still a relevant and pressing problem in the United States today. Although white students are the subjects of racial privilege, they often enter the University with only a very basic understanding of race and systemic racism, privilege, and oppression. Research has shown that change does occur in whites' understandings of racism and racial systems. This study uses preliminary and post-dialogue data from 67 white students in six semester-long Race and Ethnicity Dialogues as well as three White Racial Identity Dialogues offered through the University of Michigan Program on Intergroup Relations. The dialogues were offered in the semesters of Winter 2010, Fall 2010 and Winter 2011. Each participant completed a preliminary paper, a final paper, and a final interview as part of the course. Papers and interviews were coded for participants' views and understandings of racism, privilege, and oppression. Change in views and understandings of racism over the semester was then measured and analyzed for each participant. The study indicates that students, overall, did experience a change in understanding of racial systems from the beginning to the end of the semester. Additionally, facilitator performance and particular dialogue conditions appear to be either more or less conducive to change from the beginning to the end of the semester dialogue program. These findings may apply more broadly to white people learning about race in their own lives, as well as dismantling systems of oppression in the future.

Introduction

The dominant narrative among whites in the United States is that racism is in the past (Bonilla-Silva 2010; McKinney 2005). Overt discrimination against black people in the Jim Crow South and legal segregation ended, and as a result many white people claim that racism is no longer a problem (Bonilla-Silva 2010). The reality, however, does not support this narrative. People of color are ignored in retail stores while white people receive adequate service; white people are shown preference in job searches and are quoted lower prices when buying cars (Siegelman 1999); blacks and Latinos have a higher rate of incarceration than their white counterparts (Pettigrew 2008). Additionally, there are racial disparities in employment (Pager and Shepherd 2008): people of color earn roughly 40 percent less than their white counterparts, are more likely to live in poverty, and have less wealth than whites. These disparities have larger implications, such as less access to healthcare and higher mortality (Oliver and Shapiro 1995; Shapiro 2004).

Disproportionate wealth and access to life opportunities and resources are products of a history many ignore. Long after slavery liberal policies such as the New Deal and the Fair Deal allowed white United States citizens to accumulate wealth while excluding people of color, primarily black people (Katznelson 2006:145). Loans distributed through the G.I. Bill went almost exclusively to white veterans, providing veterans of color with few resources to resume their lives out of combat (Katznelson 2006:145). The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), complying with white homeowners' complaints, almost exclusively placed public housing in all-black areas, perpetuating segregation in neighborhoods. These decisions were made despite limited employment opportunities in these areas (Quadagno 1994). With

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these and other policies, whites created a solid middle class, leaving many people of color behind in poverty.

Despite economic and social privileges, whites also experience many costs of systemic racism, privilege, and oppression. In *White Racism*, Feagin and Vera (1995) discuss three different types of costs: Material costs, Moral costs, and Costs to the White Psyche (168). According to Feagin and Vera, racism is detrimental economically, alienating potential employers and consumers of color. Systemic racism is similarly detrimental as the government spends money to perpetuate unequal systems that could be used for public good (Pettigrew 2008), as in the disproportionate incarceration of black and Latino people. Systemic racism upsets the moral foundation on which the United States is built. Government actions, such as placing public housing almost exclusively in all-black areas and private acts of discrimination run counter to the constitutional doctrine of equal treatment. Many individuals operating within the system of racism who see these actions as acceptable are acting inconsistently with their personal moral frameworks (Feagin and Vera 1995:170). Additionally, white people who participate in racist actions or live within a system of racism avoid experiencing a very important human emotion, empathy, towards people of color. Whites often experience fear and paranoia in unfamiliar interactions with people of other races. They live in a society that perpetuates inequality based on skin color, something they cannot continue to witness without detrimental effects to their psychological health (Feagin and Vera 1995:174).

White people begin to accrue racial biases and beliefs at a young age from family and friends. This may happen without the child realizing the beliefs are racist (Jones and Carter et al. 1996; Feagin 2010); they seem normal and go unchallenged. White children develop categories of people like "us" and people like "them," attaching negative stereotypes and assumptions to

people of color (Bonilla-Silva 2010). These beliefs about race endure into adulthood, often creating strongly held views that support white racial privilege (Feagin and Vera 1995).

Whites living in all-white environments often do not recognize they have a race (Bonilla-Silva 2010). Never critically thinking about race, whites may instead say that they would like to judge each person as an individual, ignoring skin color (Bonilla-Silva 2010). This often manifests as whites claiming "colorblindness," that they value individuals, and that race is no longer relevant in the United States (Bonilla-Silva 2010). In turn, whites generally do not recognize the privilege that comes along with their race. Similarly, at the undergraduate level, white students portray this colorblind mindset claiming that racial policies such as affirmative action are reverse discrimination (McKinney 2005). When talking about people of color, white people may use disclaimers such as "I'm not racist but…" following the phrase with a negative racial view. These phrases and mindsets are often learned implicitly and used unconsciously (Myers 2003). These mechanisms allow white people to continue expressing negative views and opinions of people of color without labeling themselves as "racist."

The history of systematic racial oppression, current racism, and whites' socialization about race in the United States creates a culture in which whites are often unable to constructively discuss race and racism (Bonilla-Silva 2010; McKinney 2005; Myers 2003). As a majority group, white people often lack "fluency" in talking about race, or do not know how to approach the subject. While some use the "racetalk" described above, others avoid the topic of race completely (Djik 1993; Fox 2001). Many white individuals do not want to say something that is considered improper or offensive (Dijk 1993:104). Treating race as a non-issue, they avoid the reality of white privilege, and in turn remain dominant in society (McKinney 2005).

One may believe that university students have or may acquire a more complex understanding of race. Conversely, white students appear extremely concerned with "political correctness," preoccupied with not saying the wrong thing, especially in the presence of a person of color (Fox 2001:52). This cautiousness, which is often unconscious, prevents white students from talking about race in a truthful manner. It is important in learning about racism, however, to create a discourse that values honesty rather than caution (Fox 2001:56). Without this discourse, white students cannot recognize their own prejudiced beliefs or the oppressive systems within which they operate.

Intergroup Dialogue is one educational innovation at the university level aimed at creating open exploration of these issues. Intergroup Dialogues allow a space for students to discuss race and other social identities in a comprehensive and personal manner. Dialogues promote connection and understanding across differences, and allow students to consider and perhaps broaden their beliefs (Zúñiga et al. 2007). At the University of Michigan, Intergroup Dialogues are academically credited, semester-long courses that allow students to discuss systems of privilege and oppression around identity as they concurrently read articles and books on the topic. Two undergraduate students facilitate these courses after completing a semester-long dialogue facilitation-training course.

I investigated whites students' experiences in two types of dialogues: Race and Ethnicity Dialogues, interracial intergroup dialogues, and White Racial Identity Dialogues, all white intragroup dialogues. Both dialogues are designed to build an understanding of racism, privilege, and oppression, as well as to foster relationships across difference. Although race is the core focus in these dialogues, issues of gender and class, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation, as well as the intersections of these identities, are also explored. In addition to developing

awareness of these identities, White Racial Identity Dialogues allow white students to develop an understanding of their own racial identity.

Students enter Intergroup Relations (IGR) courses with different experiences, views and understandings of race and racial systems. Throughout the IGR Dialogue program, students are given a platform to discuss and challenge their own views of racism and to hear other participants' views and stories. I asked whether or not there was a change in white participants' views and understandings of racism, prejudice, privilege, oppression, and social justice during these dialogues. I additionally asked if this change occurred differently for white students in White Racial Identity Dialogues than for white students in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues. Finally, I examined what aspect of participants' views and experiences of a Dialogue may have led to this change in racial understandings and attitudes. To answer these questions I focused on a sample of white students from three semesters of the Race and Ethnicity and White Racial Identity Dialogue courses at the University of Michigan, comparing students' views and understandings at the beginning and end of the dialogue courses.

Literature Review

Learning Race

From a young age, white individuals implicitly and explicitly learn to think in certain ways about race (Jones and Carter et al. 1996; Feagin 2010; Chesler et al. 2003). As children observe parents, teachers, and other members of their social network, they start to see patterns and use these to make sense of who is like them, racially, and who is not. Other beliefs may start to form around race, creating a racial frame that follows the person throughout their life (Feagin 2010:91). Feagin defines a *racial frame* as "a perspectival frame that gets imbedded in

individuals minds (brains), as well as in collective memories and histories, and helps people make sense out of everyday situations" (10).

In *The White Racial Frame*, Feagin describes the importance of outside influences on children. Feagin illustrates this point by retelling a situation witnessed in an ethnographic study of a multiracial daycare center. A young white girl explained to her teacher that she did not want to sleep next to a black classmate, using a racial slur. The toddler further explained that black children smell bad, so she needed to move her mat at naptime. When teachers asked the toddler's father where she acquired this language and perspective, he explained it was most likely heard from a playmate's father (Feagin 2010:92). Although she did not learn the language at home, the young girl picked up a racial slur through her social network. The racial epitaph was part of the child's language and racial beliefs although she was only three years old.

While this is an explicit example of learning racism, white youths' families or social circles also teach them about their race in a covert and seemingly innocent manner. As opposed to overt racial slurs, generally whiteness is displayed as the norm, and white youth internalize this. While young white people learn that everyone is equal, they also see images and notice inconsistencies which create an "other," or people of color (Bonilla-Silva 2010:3).

Chesler et al. (2003) examine factors influencing attitudes of white college students toward race and notes that before coming to college, many white students live in all-white communities. In 2006 the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) reported that 87.3% of white college freshman in the United States came from neighborhoods that were completely or mostly white. Additionally, 74.8% of students attended an all-white or mostly white high school before coming to college (Pryor et al. 2007:6). As students grow up in these segregated areas, they often witness racist language and comments, racial prejudice, ignorance of others, and as a

result assume that whiteness is the standard. This creates the views and understandings of race with which they enter the university. Coming from an all-white environment, learning about and accepting the "norms of whiteness" with implicit racial prejudices and explicit racist ideas, white students may still believe that racism is not a current problem in the United States.

Racial "Stories" and Myths

As white children learn about race in their world from parents and social networks, they often start to adopt understandings, or stories, about their own race as well as other races and cultures. Bonilla-Silva (2010) illustrates this point with data from a 1997 Survey of Social Attitudes of College Students, which consists of survey data from three different universities, information collected from interviews, as well as the 1998 Detroit Area Study (DAS), a survey of white Detroit metropolitan area residents. Bonilla Silva (2010) defines racial stories as "socially shared tales that are fable-like and incorporate common scheme and wording… they are often based on impersonal, generic arguments with little narrative content" (76). Bonilla-Silva gives an example of a story line in which a white student states that a certain racial or ethnic group has "made it" in the United States, or assimilated. The suggestion from the story is that if certain groups can assimilate and become successful in this culture, why are other groups, such as black Americans, unable to do the same (2010:82). Such story lines often blame a racial group for their own status or situation, regardless of the racism and structural oppression this group has experienced. As a result, white people may use these storylines to ignore the effects of modern discrimination and justify the success of their own race or ethnic group (77).

Feagin and Vera (1995) introduce a similar concept in the "racial myth." These are stereotypes and prejudices that are often personified in stories, such as "the dangerous black man, the lazy black person, the black woman's fondness for welfare, and black inferiority and

incompetence" (Feagin and Vera 1995:12). White people learn these stories from others in their life as well as the media, and the myths may become truth for some, despite lack of facts or evidence. They then rely on the myth to form their view of others in the world, and as a basis to ignore or deny structural oppression and privilege.

White Peoples' Understandings of Racism and Colorblindness

Although whites clearly recognize race when it comes to people of color, especially through these racial storylines and myths, they may not consider their own whiteness as a salient identity. White people may recognize some forms of inequality based on race, but at the same time they generally do not recognize the privileges they receive as a result of being white. Melanie Bush, in *Everyday Forms of Whiteness* (2004) writes, "To recognize enhancement would be to acknowledge privilege and suggest responsibility for addressing inequality" (52).

Karyn McKinney further discusses the invisibility of whiteness, stating that whiteness is a "prompted identity" (McKinney 2005:17). White people generally do not talk about whiteness until asked, and even then appear confused in talking about this identity. The unnoticed privilege is further shown in how white students appear to view the situations involving race in the world around them.

As white individuals attempt to express their views on race, it is often in a frame of "colorblindness" or "individualism" (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Ditomaso et al. 2003; McKinney 2005). Many whites claim that they do not see color, or that race should not matter in society. Bonilla-Silva (2010) introduces this under the idea of "abstract liberalism" or the idea that everyone should "have equal opportunity" (28). While this idea is rooted in equality, it does not consider the historical context that inherently allows whites advantages, or the current structural realities of racism (Katznelson 2006; Quadagno 1994). It involves the "minimization of racism,"

implying that racism no longer affects the lives of people of color, that it is something in the past (Bonilla-Silva 2010:29).

Frankenberg (1993) similarly argues that white people tend to romanticize or minimize the racism of the past. This stance not only ignores past racial inequities and their current influence, but also overlooks historic white privilege and serves to "normalize" white privilege, allowing systems of privilege and oppression to continue (235).

McKinney (2005) suggests that many whites believe colorblindness is the only way to a more just and equal society. McKinney writes, "[White people] believe that 'race' is only invoked in the pursuit of inequality, as in the case of the so-called 'reverse discrimination' that results from the utilizations of affirmative action goals and policies" (22). If whites believe that race is irrelevant, they are no longer responsible for creating a more just society, or for giving up some of their privilege. Privilege, in this sense, does not exist for white students employing the theory of abstract liberalism.

Colorblindness often influences students' views on racial policies, such as affirmative action. Affirmative action supports representation of people of color at the university level, allowing racial diversity to be considered in admissions (Gurin et al. 2007). If, as those claiming colorblindness suggest, racism is no longer an issue, then race should not be considered when looking at applicants for jobs or school admissions (Ditomaso et al. 2003:197). As Bush (2005) whites, using colorblindness as a framework whites are able to mask the racism that would encourage people to support policies such as affirmative action. For example, McKinney (2005) discovers that one student's objection to affirmative action is "based on the assumption of a meritocratic society that offers equal opportunities for everyone" (152). Under this assumption,

affirmative action would appear to be unfair to white individuals. Additionally, some may see this as a violation of the United States Constitution, which states that all men are created equal.

Since the ban on affirmative action in the state of Michigan in 2006, minority enrollment at the University of Michigan has sharply declined. In 2006 68.6% of the entering class was white, 7.3% of the class was black, 5.6% of the class was Latino, 1.1% of the class Native American, 10.7% of the class was Asian, and the remainder of the class' race was unknown. In 2009, three years after the affirmative action ban, the entering class consisted of 74% white students, 5% black students, 3.8% Latino students, 0.4% Native American 14.2% Asian students, and the rest unknown (Student Affairs and Research, University of Michigan 2009). The assumption of colorblindness, as well as the prescription of the Constitution for these policies, does not take into account the advantage white people already have in applying to universities resulting from past special treatment, or white "affirmative action" when laws, policies, and other practices favored whites (Katznelson 2005).

Stemming from the same belief that racism is not a current problem and that the egalitarian policies people of color advocate for are actually "special treatment", white students may accuse people of color of playing the "race card" to receive this special treatment (McKinney 2005:163). In this framework, some white people believe that the world is "us against them" (163) and that people of color have an advantage when using these "cards." With this understanding, white people may view themselves at a disadvantage.

How Do Whites Talk about Race?

While it is impossible to know exactly how white students feel about racism, privilege, and oppression, researchers observed how white people talk about race, hoping to gain insight. Myers (2003) uses Toni Morrison's (1993) definition of racetalk, the "explicit insertion into

everyday life of racial signs and symbols that have no meaning other than pressing African Americans to the lowest level of the racial hierarchy" (Morrison 1993:57). From this definition, Myers explains that racetalk can be used in a way that avoids using racial words specifically, for example "welfare mother" (Myers 2003:130) or can be some type of racial disclaimer such as "I am not racist but…" (131). This phrase suggests that the following comment or opinion has nothing to do with race, while it in fact it holds information on the speaker's implicit prejudices.

In his 2010 edition of *Racism Without Racists* Bonilla-Silva applies a similar idea, explaining how white students are careful when talking about race and the racial structures they experience. While the students Bonilla-Silva interviewed generally did not make openly racist remarks, students often stated prejudiced opinions, but talked about them in a very specific way. If students said something controversial, or somewhat racist, they often qualified this by saying, "I don't know" or "I don't believe that but…" (Bonilla Silva 2010:57). Additionally, some students added disclaimers before stating their opinions such as the aforementioned "I am not a racist but," or "Some of my best friends are black" (2010:57). It is as if these phrases gave students immunity from "racism" in whatever they were about to say. While the student comments were oppressive or stereotypical, this racetalk attempted to mask the meaning of the words. Although white individuals may say racially charged things, they are exhibited in a non-racial context. Moreover, structural privilege and oppression are invisible in this colorblind "racetalk." As Bush (2004) states, these whites "conceal the structuring of institutionalized racism that provides daily advantages…" (60), operating under the assumption of a post-racial society that does not actually exist. Many whites no longer speak as openly about racial prejudice, but racetalk is expressed racist and prejudiced beliefs. Colorblind racetalk is racism in the rhetorical guise of equality.

Attitudes about Race Over Time

Attitudes on race in America continuously evolve and change, while many behaviors regarding race remain consistent. In the book *Racial Attitudes in America* (Schuman et al. 1997) the authors observe change in white attitudes about race from 1942 to 1997. The authors use information from surveys done by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, and the Gallup organization (59). They compile this information to illustrate white individuals' racial beliefs over fifty-five years. In their study of attitudes, the authors note, "…attitudes frequently provide useful clues to behavior, even though they are not always direct and powerful determinants of behavior" (5). The study shows that while respondents appear to support equality, their behavior is contrary to this attitude, as they often oppose policy that supports and promotes integration or equal treatment (271).

Schuman et al. (1997) observe and categorize responses to six different types of questions. The authors look at questions in which the answers could be classified as "positive" or "liberal," which for these purposes mean views favorable to integration, to equal treatment, or to blacks as a group (58). The other extreme to which participants' answers could be assigned is "negative" or "illiberal," which for this purpose is defined as "Views supporting segregation or discrimination or unfavorable to blacks" (58). The first questions are "Principles of equal treatment," which ask respondents about values and beliefs on equality in everyday life (99). The second type of questions, implementation of equal treatment, focuses on government intervention in the name of racial equality (99). Social distance questions ask respondents about reactions to specific situations that they may encounter about race, while belief about inequality

questions specifically focus on racial disparities, and opinions on how these disparities emerged (100). Finally, researchers examine opinions on affirmative action and other racial policies (102).

The authors found that there was a positive trend over time in opinion, as people became more open to diversity and looked at people of color more positively (109). The authors also found more liberal views among more educated individuals (232). Other areas of the study showed that black individuals saw discrimination as the cause of economic disparities of black people in the United States, while whites generally did not agree that economic disadvantage stems from racism and discrimination (263). Despite whites' changing racial outlooks, attitudes toward racial policies that would create positive racial change, such as affirmative action and busing, remained negative. Attitudes on affirmative action have not significantly improved over time (271).

Many of the same patterns persist today. White people tend to claim that racism is irrelevant, a thing of the past (Bonilla-Silva 2010;McKinney 2005). At the same time, many individuals discuss their opposition to affirmative action and other policies that they label as "reverse racism" (Bonilla-Silva 2010).

Although Schuman et al. extensively examined white attitudes on race as well as racial policy, they did not look at longitudinal change of the same cohort. The survey does not track a specific person's change over time, but instead examines public trends in attitude. There is no information on what might cause attitude change in an individual, or what events occurred on a small scale in these peoples' lives. Additionally, this study does not look more deeply at how and why people hold their opinions and attitudes toward race and racism.

Changes in Understandings of Race and Racism

Although white attitudes on racial policies that would create positive change often remain negative, and many students continue to use racetalk and practice colorblind racism, not all students remain ignorant of racism. Some students, after a certain experience or set of experiences, come to acknowledge systemic racism, and even attempt to move past it (Hardiman 2001, McKinney 2005). In Hardiman's White Identity Model (2001), the author discusses four stages of identity development for white people; *Non-Consciousness of Race or Naïveté, Acceptance, Resistance,* and *Redefinition* (111). Although this was presented as an identity development model, Hardiman notes that "the model ignored or underemphasized the question of how Whites identified culturally with their Whiteness, thus making the model less about 'identity' in the typically understood sense of the term and more about confronting one's personal racism" (112). The first two stages in the model include an ignorance of race and then an internalization of whiteness and racism (112). The *Resistance* stage occurs when the white person confronts their racist beliefs. This stage often includes guilt over one's privileges and a move toward anti-racism. When an individual reaches *Redefinition*, that person more fully understands their white identity and accepts responsibility for their white privilege (112).

In their study of white students at the University of Michigan, Chesler et al. (2003) also observe that white students could move away from the idea of colorblindness. They note that this may be as a result of "educational experiences and informal contacts" (226). With this new recognition of structural racism, students may experience guilt about their newly realized privilege, as in the *Resistance* stage of the Hardiman model (2001:112).

McKinney (2005) further explores this topic with the idea of "racial conversion" (24) where a person has an epiphany of his or her own racial privilege. McKinney writes, "The social

sins for which the person must be redeemed are not only that person's, but those of her or his racial group" (24). In this sense, the individual recognizes and feels responsibility for systematic privilege and oppression. McKinney explains that this transformation is not about the "correct" understandings about race, but instead "different or new" understandings. This includes a personal identity with an understanding of oneself as both an individual and a member of a group with shared social identities (24).

In interviews with college students through the 1997 Social Attitudes of College Students Survey, Bonilla-Silva and Forman label five of the forty-one students as "racial progressives" (71). These students, according to the authors, "did not subscribe to the we-them dichotomy, were more likely to find problems in the way Whites see Blacks, and were more understanding of the significance of discrimination in society" (71). Additionally, these students realized their own inherent prejudices and tendencies towards racist thoughts. While Bonilla-Silva and Forman did not discuss the point at which these views changed, or whether they were held since childhood, it showed that there can be some level of more sophisticated understanding about racism among white students. Not all white students subscribed to colorblind racism and ignorance of white privilege.

To explore students' acceptance of diversity and recognition of structural racism, Gurin et al. (2007) conducted a study at the University of Michigan. Gurin et al. found that if students were allowed interactional diversity, where students experienced sustained engagement with others of a different race or ethnicity (116), they gained a deeper appreciation and understanding of difference (143). Additionally, students experiencing interactional diversity learned to identify structural racism and oppression more effectively (167). This suggests that sustained contact with diverse peers may promote this understanding of racism, privilege, and oppression.

In order for this change in attitude to happen, though, there must be an opportunity for interaction with diverse peers. Intergroup dialogues often introduce white participants to concepts of racism and white privilege as well as the life experiences of people of other races. This introduction may serve as the agent of change in whites attitudes on racial systems in the United States.

Intergroup Dialogues

Intergroup dialogues are in-person, direct group encounters in a diverse group of people with the purpose of gaining understanding of a certain identity (i.e. race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation) (Zúñiga et al. 2007). Intergroup dialogues foster relationship building, communication, and understanding across differences (Zúñiga et al 2007). At the University of Michigan, semester-long, academically credited intergroup dialogues consist of a diverse group of twelve to eighteen participants and are facilitated by two undergraduate students previously trained as facilitators. Senior members of the Division of Student Affairs and faculty members supervise the facilitators. Each dialogue meets once a week over the course of a semester. During the dialogue students confront historical and systemic oppression and privilege, as well as express their own views and behaviors by sharing personal experiences and testimonials, participating in structured activities, and promoting mutual respect and understanding among students. (Zúñiga et al. 2007).

Intergroup Dialogues follow a four-stage model (Nagda et al. 1999). In the first stage, participants and facilitators introduce themselves, learn about each other, and establish ground rules to clarify group expectations and promote trust. In stage two, participants learn about commonalities and differences through sharing experiences and stories (Nagda et al. 1999: 433). Stage three allows participants to dialogue about specific intergroup issues such as interracial

dating, or affirmative action (433). In the fourth stage, students talk about allyhood and how to personally work towards social change (433). Throughout the semester, students are given an equal chance to talk, as the facilitator attempts to create a non-hierarchical environment. Members of the dialogue, including facilitators, may consider themselves both teachers and learners (Schoem 2003).

To enroll in the class, students must fill out a form that states their own identities, such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, and religion. Students additionally provide information on their interest in the dialogue and their preferences of which dialogue to be placed in (Thompson et al. 2001:104). The Program on Intergroup Relations offers dialogues on Race and Ethnicity, White Racial Identity, Gender, Socioeconomic Status, Religion, and Sexuality.

Race dialogues introduce language such as racial identity, white privilege, and systematic oppression. Additionally, in dialogues, the term "target" or "target identity" is used to describe an individual or identity that is oppressed within a system, while "agent" refers to those who hold power in society or receive privileges because of an identity. In these dialogues "agent" refers to whites and "target" refers to people of color. Two students facilitate these intergroup dialogues: one white student and one student of color.

In a study of intergroup dialogues at the University of Michigan, Nagda and Zúñiga (2003) examined the effectiveness of the dialogue program according to surveys administered both before and after the dialogue (116). The authors found that the only significant difference appeared in "raised awareness of racial identity" (123). Additionally, it appears that students who gave more value to the dialogue process showed increased benefits. These students left the dialogue with an understanding of communicating across race, as well as "strengthen[ing] a desire for inter-racial bridging" (123).

In a second study, Nagda (2006) examined what types of approaches are most effective in the dialogue setting. The author found that the quality of communication within a dialogue is important to the outcome for each participant. Both silence and avoidance isolated participants, not allowing them to achieve the same understanding of fellow participants' experiences (556).

My research focuses on white students in Intergroup Race and Ethnicity Dialogues as well as in Intragroup White Racial Identity Dialogues. White Racial Identity Dialogues consist only of white students, with two white facilitators. Built on a similar dialogue model, participants in the White Racial Identity Dialogue learn about white privilege and racism through understanding their own white racial identity. In the absence of students of color, white students learn from each other's experiences with their own race as well as from selected readings assigned between dialogue sessions over the course of the semester.

Question

Is there a change in white participants' views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice during a Program on Intergroup Relations dialogue at the University of Michigan? If it occurs, does this change occur differently for white participants in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues compared with White Racial Identity Dialogues? Finally, what aspect of participants' views and experiences of a Dialogue might lead to this racial understanding and attitude change?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

I expected there would be a change in white participants' views and understandings of racism privilege, oppression, and social justice from the time the dialogue started to the time it

completed. I expected that white students would gain a deeper awareness of the dynamics between races throughout the semester.

Hypothesis 2

I suspected that these changes would occur differently for participants in the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues versus the participants in White Racial Identity Dialogues.

Hypothesis 2a

In the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues, I expected that hearing testimonials and stories of participants of color in the dialogue would be primarily responsible for changes in individuals' views and knowledge concerning race and ethnicity.

Hypothesis 2b

I anticipated there would be more honest and candid conversation for white students in White Racial Identity Dialogues compared to Race and Ethnicity Dialogues. In White Racial Identity Dialogues, I suspected hearing these experiences and candid opinions from co-participants in an all-white group would influence the greatest change in participants' views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice.

Research Methods

Data Source

I used a pre-existing data set from research ongoing through the University of Michigan Program on Intergroup Relations supervised by Mark Chesler, Johanna Masse, and Kelly Maxwell. This Race and Ethnicity and White Racial Identity Dialogue research project includes data collected from participants in nine dialogues completed over three semesters at the University. The data includes two papers written by participants as part of the general curriculum for the Dialogue, one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end of the semester

(Appendices B, C, D and E). The data also includes a participant interview (Appendix F) conducted at the end of the semester in which the dialogue is taken. Research assistants combined the interview with the two papers to create a complete set for each participant, although some students did not complete all components. I used data from white students who participated in the nine dialogue courses during Winter 2010, Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 semesters.

Researchers collected data as follows: at the beginning of each semester, starting in Winter 2010, students participating in selected Race and Ethnicity Dialogues, as well as students participating in White Racial Identity Dialogues were presented with information on the research project. Faculty involved in the project provided consent forms to each participant before students wrote their first paper. This consent form explained the project, what would be involved, and how the data would then be used (Appendix G). Even though the three assignments were mandatory for the course, consent was solicited to include these materials for research purposes. Students were able to opt into or out of the research; facilitators explained that involvement in the research would not affect a participant's grade. Participants were also assured that their facilitators would not hear anything said in the interview. This project previously received Human Subject Approval through the Institutional Review Board.

The Preliminary and Final Papers asked identical questions; participants first indicated gender, ethnicity or national origin, socioeconomic class, and religion. Both assignments asked students if their racial or ethnic identity had brought them any privileges or benefits. The papers asked further questions about the race of each participant's friends, experiences with discrimination, privilege, and any demographic changes the student noticed. The Final Paper asked additional questions about the student's participation in class, projects, and the impact of

the semester's dialogue on their knowledge of race and racism. The last question of the Final Paper asked what goals the student had, if any, related to the topic of racism and oppression in the United States.

Audio taped interviews conducted with all students at the end of the semester were also added to the data file for students who consented to participate. During the Winter 2010, Fall 2011 and Winter 2011 semesters, student research assistants conducted and transcribed some of the interviews. Faculty on the research project sent the remaining interview recordings for professional transcription. Students involved in conducting the research project interviews and transcriptions could not be involved in these dialogues simultaneously, either as a participant or facilitator.

Whenever possible, students of the same race as the interviewee conducted each interview. Interviewers were instructed not to say "right," or "yes" during the interview, as this might insinuate that there was a right answer to the question. Before beginning, interviewers reminded participants that their facilitator would not hear the interviews. The interviewer asked the participant questions regarding their race, largely in relation to the dialogue. Much of the interview focused on experiences specific to the dialogue, stories told in the dialogue, and relationships with members of the dialogue. The interview inquired about same race versus different race experiences in dialogue, and if this made a difference in the understanding of a story on the participant. At the end of the interview students were asked about the impact of the dialogue on their feelings toward people of their own race and people of different races. The next step involved transcribing every interviewee word, including pauses and "umms," which may convey hesitance about answering a question.

Each student was assigned a number to correspond with his or her respective Preliminary Paper (A), Final Paper (B) and Interview (C) to maintain confidentiality (i.e. W10WRIDS01A=Winter 2010, White Racial Identity Dialogue, Student 01, Preliminary Paper). The data were then stripped of all identifying details and put into a file on the Institutional File System space through the University of Michigan.

Sample

For the individual change section of this thesis I only used participants with complete data (two papers and an interview). This included 12 white students during the Winter 2010 Dialogues, 7 white students during the Fall 2010 Dialogues, and 14 white students during the Winter 2011 Dialogues (Appendix A). To assess group-level change I included students with a preliminary paper and either a final paper or final interview, 14 from Winter 2010, 12 from Fall 2010 and 17 from Winter 2011. I used any participants with a final paper or final interview to recognize themes in specific dialogues. Of the whole data set 32 students participated in the White Racial Identity Dialogues, and 31 in the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues, 41 participants identified as female while 22 identified as male.

Codes

In the data analysis, I used two separate broad codes to classify the change in participants' views and the experiences of participants in each Dialogue. I developed the first code, "views and understandings of racism, privilege, prejudice, oppression, and social justice," which encompassed a participant's own views and understandings of race, as well as thoughts and actions related to this racial attitude. It also covered any costs and benefits participants mentioned in relation to this concept, and any new perspectives the participants gained.

While coding the data, I received assistance from a co-coder who checked my coding for reliability. Both a person of color and I coded the same data. We then collaborated to note any differences in coding, and reconciled these differences. For "views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice," my co-coder and I worked together to create a more detailed scheme for this code. For example, we only coded when the participant mentioned an explicit view or understanding of structural privilege, oppression, or social justice.

Student colleagues on this project created a second code, "views and experiences of dialogue" which included any mention of positive or negative experiences in the dialogue, the participant's opinion of the quality of the dialogue, mention of specific relationships formed over the semester, activities participants mention, events attended, and challenges faced within the dialogue by the participant. I worked with a white woman and a woman of color in coding these data. We developed specific guidelines for this code. One guideline was that we only coded for views and experiences of dialogue when a participant mentioned an experience that took place in the dialogue space, not in other settings.

I used NVIVO software to code data points directly on the computer. First I coded for views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice in the primary and final papers, as well as in the interview. Looking at participants' coded papers I created a scale to categorize participants by their changes in views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice from the beginning to the end of the dialogue.

For further analysis, I looked at self-reported changes by participants in the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues and White Racial Identity Dialogues pre-dialogue and post-dialogue. I observed participants' reports of things that happened in the dialogue to which any change could be attributed.

Categories of Views and Understandings of Racism, Privilege, Oppression, and Social Justice

After reading the data from all students I intuitively created an 8-category scale to assess each participant's understanding of racial systems, and social justice at the beginning and end of the dialogue. I used the scale to place participants in a category at the beginning of the dialogue, their "Preliminary Category," using information provided in the preliminary paper. I then placed participants in a category after dialogue participation, the "Final Category," using information provided in both the final paper and interview. I used information from both end of semester sources whenever possible because there is a potential bias in the final paper, an assignment turned in for a grade, that is not present in the interview, a confidential research tool.

Looking at differences from the beginning of the dialogue to the end of the dialogue, I created a measure of change, "Degree of Change" to represent the number of categories a participant moves from the Preliminary Category to the Final Category.

Table 16. Category of Views and Understandings of Racism, Privilege, Oppression, and Social Justice

Category	Name
1	Omission or Denial of Systemic Racism
2	Some Recognition of Discriminatory Acts
3	Reluctant Recognition of Some Systemic Racism
4	Abstract Recognition and Acceptance of Structural Racism
5	Basic Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism
6	Intermediate Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism
7	Intricate Understanding of Structural Racism and Social Change
8	Understanding of Structural Racism and Responsibility for Social Change

In the first category, *Omission or Denial of Systemic Racism (1)*, a participant does not mention racism, privilege, oppression, or social justice work, unless the person brings these concepts up to deny them. For instance, some students said they have never witnessed racism or racial privilege. One student displayed this understanding claiming "Also, being white has never

[led] to any privileges or benefits for me… It is wrong to base benefits off of skin color or race" (F10RE2S05A).

In the second grouping, *Some Recognition of Discriminatory Acts (2)*, students may mention one or two forms of prejudice or discrimination but still deny the existence of racism, privilege, and oppression. In addition, many students in this category mentioned reverse discrimination when asked about racism. In the preliminary paper, a student in a Race and Ethnicity Dialogue stated, "There has always been discussion about how people of the white race receive more benefits than other minority groups. I personally haven't felt this way" (W11RE1S04A). This student said there is "discussion" of benefits, insinuating privilege, but denies its existence.

The third category in which I placed participants is *Reluctant Recognition of Some Systemic Racism (3)*. Students placed in this category might recognize that there are some systems of discrimination in the world. If these individuals brought up privileges, they often mentioned that it is by chance that people receive them. Participants in the third category were often reluctant to learn more about racism, privilege, and oppression. Many seemed content to maintain their own beliefs. For example, one student wrote, "I don't believe that I enjoy certain privileges because of my race. I do consider myself to be very fortunate to be where and who I am" (W10WRIDS11A). While the participant recognized privilege, she framed it as "fortune" and denied that it relates to her skin color.

The fourth category, *Abstract Recognition and Acceptance of Structural Racism (4)* includes participants who may mention abstractly that they hold privileges because of their whiteness. Some participants mentioned privilege, though they did not specify in what concrete way they are privileged. The students I placed in the fourth category often showed a slight

willingness to learn more about racism, privilege, and oppression, but did not initially have the tools to do so. One woman in a White Racial Identity Dialogue mentioned awareness of a component of her white privilege in her preliminary paper. She wrote, "I hope to become aware of my own social identity group, and how my identity impacts society" (F10RE1S04A), showing her willingness to learn more about her own privilege and how she is part of the system of racism and oppression.

Basic Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism (5), the fifth category, includes students who name specific white privileges that may or may not relate to their personal experiences. These students all talked about privilege and understood the concept, but related to privilege in the abstract, much like those in the fourth category. Some participants in category 5 used technical language, such as target and agent identities. Many individuals in this category also expressed an abstract desire for change, but did not give specific examples or plans for changing systems. A student in the Fall 2010 White Racial Identity Dialogue asserted, "I now understand that even though I may believe skin color is irrelevant, I automatically receive benefits because of the fact I am white" (F10WRIDS06B). The student acknowledged privilege, but did not elaborate on how this privilege materialized in his life.

Participants in the sixth category, *Intermediate Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism (6)*, always included examples of privilege in their own lives. More specifically, these participants started to realize small, everyday privilege such as the color of band-aids available at drug stores and the portrayals of people of color in the media. Individuals in this *Intermediate Concrete* category began to recognize the need for social change and how to make this change on an individual level, but these students did not desire or expect to make change on a large community or structural level. A student in the Winter 2010 White Racial Identity Dialogue

mentioned the privileges of not being stopped in the hallways in high schools, being looked at as an individual rather than a representative of a certain race, and not being pulled over in traffic for no reason (W10WRIDS10A). This student saw smaller, everyday privileges previously overlooked.

In the following category, *Intricate Understanding of Structural Racism and Social Change (7)* participants also mentioned concrete examples of privilege, oppression, and systematic racism. The participants personalized their own racism, explaining privileges in the world in this context. Students discussed a desire to make change, and at least some plan of how to make this change on a community or structural level. A participant in a Race and Ethnicity Dialogue wrote about the pervasive nature of white privilege and how he benefitted from white privilege. He went on to say, "I can, however, at least acknowledge the racisms I have inside of me and work to avoid knee-jerk reactions to different situations, which is a racist thought in itself" (W11RE1S02B).

The Final Category, *Intricate Understanding of Structural Racism and Responsibility for Social Change (8)*, contains students who see structuralism clearly and state how they have experienced white privilege firsthand. The students went on to use their own experiences to explain other privileges in the world. Individuals expressed a desire to make change and had a plan for how to do it. Each person in this category had an obvious passion for social justice work and a broad vision for social change on a structural level. For instance, a student in a Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue wrote in her final paper that she would like to make a career in social justice work. Her understanding of systematic privilege proved deeper as she wrote "More significantly, however, by thinking of it as work, I forget that others don't have such a

privilege to be able to stop thinking about issues like racism when they don't want to think about it anymore" (W11RE1S06B).

Individual and Group Analysis Plan

I treated these different classifications discretely in categorizing each individual at one point (1-8). I compared the Preliminary Category and Final Category in which each person was placed. I then looked for patterns among participants that exhibited a Degree of Change of 1 category (i.e. Preliminary Category=3, Final Category= 4, Degree of Change=1) or less compared with students who exhibited a Degree of Change of 4 or more.

In my analysis I also created a mean measure of Preliminary Category, Final Category, and Degree of Change for each of the dialogues to gain an understanding of the group dynamics and how change occurred in each different situation. I compared the White Racial Identity Dialogue with the most amount of change to the WRID with the least amount of change. I then did the same for Race and Ethnicity Dialogues.

Potential Bias

I have completed an Intergroup Relations facilitator-training course, and also have facilitated a White Racial Identity Dialogue. As a participant in the Intergroup Relations program prior to the research, my views are inevitably biased. Going into the project, I am passionate about the work of the Program on Intergroup Relations. I wanted to see positive cognitive change about racism and privilege. Additionally, as a former White Racial Identity Dialogue facilitator, I was biased to expect more change from these dialogues than from the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues. I remained cognizant of these desires and biases throughout my research. I wrote memos to ensure that I remained as objective as possible, and discussed my coding and writing

experiences with fellow research assistants and with advisors. It is important to recognize my relationship with the data before reading the results of my thesis.

Additionally, when discussing race, my identity as a white woman also influenced my coding and writing. As a white woman, I come from a place of privilege. I have researched systemic racism, white privilege, oppression, and white students' attitudes about whiteness. I have trained as a facilitator, participated in dialogues and heard stories and testimonials from peers and professors of color. Despite this knowledge of systemic racism, as a white woman I have never experienced racism and systemic oppression directed at me because of my own race. Aware of this fact, during my data analysis and writing my thesis, I worked with two people of color, a man and a woman both involved in IGR research. Although these two students checked my analysis for reliability, my race will shape how this research was conducted and how it is presented in this thesis.

Results

Tables 1-9 each show participant Degree of Change in views and understandings of racism, privilege, and oppression from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester in each dialogue. Participants with the highest Degrees of Change from all dialogues, those expressing a Degree of Change 3 or greater, are compiled in Table 10. Similarly, participants with the lowest Degrees of Change are shown in Table 11. It is important to note that participants exhibiting the highest Degree of Change often started out at a lower category than those with the lowest Degree of Change. This beginning level of awareness may have influenced the Degree of Change a participant could obtain on this scale during a dialogue. The nature of the scale, as it is only eight points, lends itself to this limitation. Further analysis of low scores versus high scores may be needed to more fully understand the data. In particular, the assessment of the degree of group-

level of personal change may be masked for individuals, and the groups they are a part of, who began with a Preliminary Category of 6, 7, or 8 on this category system, since there is little room for them to gain positive change on an 8-category system.

Table 12 consists of participants with Degrees of Change that are extreme. Only one participant, W11RE1S04 had a Degree of Change of 5 (Table 12, Line 4). Three participants, F10WRIDS01, W11RE2S01 and W11RE1S04 showed no signs of change in the views and understandings of racism, privilege, and oppression (Table 12, Lines 1-3).

Dialogue type averages (Table 15) show the aggregate change based on whether the dialogue was White Racial Identity or Race and Ethnicity. During the White Racial Identity Dialogues in the Winter 2010, Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 semesters the average white students' change was 1.71 (Table 15, Line 1). The average change for white students in the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues across the three semesters was slightly higher at 2.11 (Table 15, Line 2). The preliminary average in White Racial Identity Dialogues was 4.35, while the final average was 6.06 (Table 15, Line 1). The preliminary average for Race and Ethnicity Dialogues was 3.84, while the average final was 5.95 (Table 15, Line 2). It appears that there is a similar amount of change in both dialogues, but the method of change, as I discuss below, is different.

Table 13 compares the Race and Ethnicity Dialogue with the most change and the Race and Ethnicity Dialogue with least change. The R&E Dialogue with the highest aggregate Degree of Change, Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity 1, exhibited a Preliminary Group Average of 3.75 and a Final Category average of 7, with a group change average of 3.25 (Table 13, Line 2). The Race and Ethnicity Dialogue that showed the lowest aggregate Degree of Change, Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2, started with a Preliminary Category average of 3.8 and a Final Category average of 4.8, with a group change average of 1 (Table 13, Line 1).

White Racial Identity Dialogue average changes did not have a similar notable difference. Winter 2011 WRID revealed the highest average change, 2, while Fall 2010 WRID experienced the lowest amount of change, 1.4. This difference is too small to be trusted, and after being examined, the data from dialogue Final Papers and Interviews are too similar to compare.

In the following section I seek to explain these differences. Through systematic coding for themes in Interviews and Final Papers, I explain what created group level change as well as individual change in these specific dialogues, and how meaningful change was accomplished. I compared the Degree of Change in individual participants, separating students with the "Most Change" and "Least Change" and discussing common themes. I addressed extreme participants in each category as well, observing what may have caused these outliers. Finally, I compared group level change of the Race and Ethnicity Dialogues that resulted in the least change and most change.

Individual Change

Participants, regardless of the type of Dialogue they participated in, most frequently exhibited a category change of 2 between the Preliminary Category and the Final Category. Based on the most frequent category change of 2 as the standard, I categorized participants into "Least Change" and "Most Change" categories. Participants who exhibited the "Least Change," showed a category change of 1 or less between the Preliminary Category and the Final Category. Participants who showed the "Most Change" from beginning to end had a Degree of Change of three or higher.

Highest Degree of Change

Table 10. Participants with Highest Degree of Change

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W10RE4S05	5	8	3
W10WRIDS11	3	6	3
F10RE1S04	4	6	3
W11RE1S06	5	8	3
W11RE1S09	3	6	3
W11WRIDS11	4	7	3
W11WRIDS03	2	6	4
F10RE2S05	1	5	4
W11RE1S04	2	7	5

The data from participants with the most change featured similarities in experiences during inter- or intra-group dialogues. Among these similarities are positive experiences with dialogue facilitators, an emphasis on honesty, and a focus on in-class activities. Of the three White Racial Identity Dialogue (WRID) participants in this category, two participants mentioned that the white-only atmosphere allowed them to speak honestly and positively impacted their participation and experience. Participants in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues (R&E) who showed the most change attributed this to the interracial setting, more specifically to testimonials (Appendix H) and stories shared by participants of color.

Experience with Facilitators

Half of the R&E students as well as many of the WRID participants exhibiting the most change mentioned the environment the facilitators created or the facilitators' positive demeanors. One student discusses the positive impact on her learning.

> [The facilitators] pushed us outside of our comfort zones, in a good way. They kept the classroom environment safe... I looked at them as friends and support systems, rather than teachers (F10RE2S05B).

Participants' positive experience with facilitators almost always encompassed a level of comfort, while still offering challenges to their worldviews. This participant also viewed facilitators not as authorities, but as members of the dialogue. Trust of facilitators seemed extremely important to participants, as they were in very vulnerable positions, possibly disclosing personal information and stories in the dialogue.

> I always trusted that my facilitators would not put me in a bad position and that allowed me to feel comfortable being truthful (W10WRIDS11B).

This participant put responsibility for her personal safety in her facilitators' hands. She felt that the facilitators had her best interest in mind and confirmed her trust. Positive experiences often included facilitators giving the participant affirmations and positive feedback.

> I mean, it made me feel better when I talked to my facilitators and they were like 'We've seen that you are more engaged in the discussion and you're reacting more to other peoples' responses.' I mean to have their reassurance just felt good because I was hesitant in the beginning but towards the end when some people said things that I didn't really agree with I just would say whatever I thought (W11RE1S04C).

This particular participant thrived on her facilitators' verbal praise and support for her participation. It was important for the participant to hear feedback, and she was more likely to share perceptions and feelings in the dialogue after positive feedback from her facilitators. Facilitators, in this situation, were looked to for guidance on acceptable behavior during dialogue, and obviously impacted participants' experiences in "opening up," or more honest and complete participation.

A facilitator's role in a dialogue is to guide the participants to engage in meaningful talks about race and ethnicity. The facilitator does not necessarily speak frequently in the dialogue, but leads activities, poses questions and provides feedback to participants as they interact with each other. A participant in a Winter 2011 R&E Dialogue expressed the style of feedback her facilitators provided.

> [My facilitators] were constantly encouraging us to be more specific, relate it more back to our own personal experiences and try to find examples that would help other people better understand what we were talking about and better relate (W11RE1S06C).

The specificity that this facilitator encouraged participants to use in examining their experiences and communicating to other group members guided people to a deeper and clearer understanding of each other's experiences. This participant was able to appreciate the probing questions facilitators asked.

Trust and Honesty in Dialogue

Trust and honesty were also two important factors participants noted that helped them share and learn in a dialogue setting. Willingness to share with each other was a catalyst for creating an effective dialogue and meaningful relationships.

> When we started sharing more personal experiences rather than just opinions I think that was like, you know, I trust these people. I feel comfortable with them. If they can open up this much with me I should be able to open up as much with them (W11RE1S04C).

The mutual trust this participant experienced allowed her to take a risk, sharing information with those in the dialogue. This was not uncommon in participants' self-reports of their semester experiences. The trust allowed people who were not generally trusting and open to feel more comfortable in the dialogue space as well.

> In the context of this class, it was… a comfortable environment… I'm not a touchy-feely person, so I mean certain things were difficult, but others, I mean it was really just like everyone was being honest… you're not helping anyone by concealing things or altering what you really think, so I realized that within like a week (W10WRIDS11C).

Once this participant acknowledged that her classmates were not holding back, she was able to be more at ease. The trust and honesty she felt from fellow participants allowed a more fulfilling dialogue experience.

Race and Ethnicity Testimonials

Participants in the R&E dialogues identified the testimonials (Appendix H), a story that participants write to share past experiences with race, as building trust and honesty in the dialogue setting. Four of six participants with the most change in R&E Dialogues mentioned, in detail, their experiences of hearing the personal stories from both white participants and participants of color. Testimonials (Appendix H) or other personal experiences caused realizations about a white participant's own life and offered new perspectives on common circumstances. Race and Ethnicity participants in this category elaborated on testimonials and spoke of their specific emotional and dynamic impact.

One participant in a R&E Dialogue challenged his own views about the world after hearing a testimonial from a fellow participant. This white man shared his experience in the dialogue realizing his own prejudices against people of color while in Detroit. A woman listening to the testimonial also reacted with introspection.

> So I really related personally to his story and then just by him sharing it made me realize the way that I really needed to reexamine myself because he was being very honest with himself and I haven't really thought about specific examples like that, of ways that I was racist (W11RE1S06).

Recognizing the truthfulness in this testimonial, the woman who heard the story and identified with it started to be more honest with herself, and ultimately others in her dialogue. The link she formed with this man who shared his story was a common result of the testimonials shared throughout the dialogue. Connection depended not only on identifying with the content of the testimonials. For some, the act of sharing stories alone encouraged deep connections with others in the dialogue.

> …but after we read our testimonials to each other I began opening up more, contributing more and gaining insight to the perspectives of other people in our class (W11RE1S04B).

This participant gained the ability to share personal stories with the group by hearing others share experiences that may have made them feel vulnerable. Testimonials also created an environment that held people accountable for what they do in the world outside of dialogue. Participants of color sharing their stories brought perspective to white students who had not experienced discrimination based on race.

> So I guess just peoples' stories and experiences that they felt as specific targets just made me think I've ever done similar activities to make people feel that way and I should be more conscious sometimes if I do that (F10RE1S04C).

This participant, after hearing a personal experience, began to re-evaluate her own actions in the past. Hearing a student of color share about a time in class when everyone was surprised she had something interesting and smart to say made this white participant seriously think about whether or not she engages with students of color in a similar way outside of dialogue.

Some participants discussed the unique experience of hearing stories that people of color presented. Many white students had not heard direct personal stories about oppression in their lives. One student, in his interview, talked about his surprise at testimonials.

> And it was kind of like, especially the testimonials, that was a really eye-opening experience because a lot of them talked about specific instances that they've been discriminated against and very explicitly discriminated against. And it was just eye opening to me because I've never had experiences where I was explicitly discriminated against because of my race (W11RE1S06C).

White students' inexperience with race may lead them to question the legitimacy of other's stories of discrimination. It is hard to connect on an intellectual level with an experience that one has not had. One student in the Winter 2010 R&E Dialogue 4 explained the change in his own views of racism after hearing direct personal stories in the group.

> I mean you have to hear other people's stories to like have, to be able to like understand certain things because you can always like discredit or make things seem like they weren't really the way that they were or they weren't like actual and that just because you don't do it makes it ok (W10RE4S05C).

It was this participant's experience that white people are generally able to dismiss stories of racism and discrimination when they do not hear personal testimonials from people they trust. Listening to these stories in the dialogue added legitimacy and exposed undeniable truths.

While participants with the most change in both White Racial Identity Dialogues and Race and Ethnicity Dialogues reported the importance of trust and honesty in the dialogue group, only White Racial Identity Dialogue participants mentioned testimonials briefly, and no WRID participant discussed the impact of these testimonials in depth.

Race and Ethnicity Privilege Walk

One experience mentioned by Race and Ethnicity Dialogue students with the highest Degree of Change was the Privilege Walk (Appendix J), a dialogue activity specific to R&E Dialogues. Four of the six R&E participants with the most change mentioned this particular activity that impacted their dialogue experience. Many participants experienced guilt with respect to their whiteness as a result of the privilege walk.

> During the activity called the privilege walk in IGR this became evident… I felt guilty and uncomfortable, but in dialogue we learned that the privileges that come with being white are uncontrollable (F10RE2S05B).

The experience of the action, as well as debriefing it, made this participant understand white privilege as a more tangible concept, one that transformed blame and guilt to a desire for social change. Another student specifically mentioned the impact the privilege walk had on her during the dialogue after she realized that all the white participants ended the walk at the front of the room, while the participants of color ended at the back of the room.

> I am sure that those individuals at the back of the room with lesser privileges expected these results, but since I was so ignorant to the advantages of my white identity I was emotionally affected by this exercise. Every time I took a step forward and I heard someone move further from me I was sad and almost didn't want to take that step. It is difficult to understand why I felt culpable for something that I was born into and is out of

my control, but it made me realize that I need to be conscious of this power and make sure I give some of it to others who need assistance (W11RE1S04B).

This participant also noted the guilt that many white people experienced while participating in the privilege walk. At some point after the activity, this woman reconciled this guilt with a change she could make in her own life, one that may help to change the systemic privilege and oppression she recognized.

Student W11RE1S09 experienced similar guilt about the results of the privilege walk. This participant discussed the fact that she had not recognized privilege in her life before the exercise. Although she felt guilt during the activity, it was a mechanism for change in her thinking and for change in other white participants.

White Racial Identity Dialogue Activities

All three White Racial Identity Dialogue participants in the "Most Change" category brought up activities in the dialogue that affected their experience. White Racial Identity Dialogues, only having one race in the dialogue, did not include a privilege walk activity during the semester as their Race and Ethnicity Dialogue counterparts did. Instead, the WRID included other activities, such as Cross the Line (Appendix I) to raise participant's awareness of racism, privilege, and oppression in WRID. One participant stated, "I think I got more out of those passive activities" (W11WRIDS03C). Another participant attributed some of her positive experience to surface level activities that took place early on in dialogue sessions.

But definitely I think the icebreakers and getting to know each other, which at the time doesn't really seem like anything or that you're getting anything done, I think that really helped create this dynamic where people felt comfortable speaking (W11WRIDS11C).

Icebreakers are built in to each dialogue session, and take place before any dialogue or other activity that happens. This participant recognized the importance of bonding with others in her dialogue before they began to talk about racism, privilege, and oppression: dialogue topics that

may make participants feel unsafe before they get to know each other. This same participant also cited the cohesive nature of other in-class activities and how they positively affected the group dynamic.

White Only Dialogue

While participants in White Racial Identity Dialogues did not hear personal experiences from people of color or experience the impact of the privilege walk activity, the unique experience of a white-only environment seemed to provide a safe space to talk about race. One participant noted the comfort an all-white dialogue allowed.

> I felt pretty comfortable in the dialogue. The fact that it was an intragroup dialogue, I think, really made me feel like I could say what I felt and not really have to go to toying around different subjects because we did have our race in common (W11WRIDS11C).

Another participant (W11WRIDS03C) shared the same view. When white students are with students of color, it may add the pressure to say the "right" thing or to try to not sound racist. Another participant realized that he would not have felt the same comfort in an intergroup dialogue.

> And I think that if we were talking about those things in front of someone of a racial minority we would feel uncomfortable because it's kind of talking about these issues that we're having the privilege to talk about (W11WRIDS11C).

The privilege white participants begin, or continue, to recognize throughout the dialogue can cause discomfort among the group. As participants start to acquire awareness of, and often guilt about privilege, some may refrain from talking about this experience as openly in the presence of students of color.

Lowest Degree of Change

Table 11. Participants with Lowest Degree of Change

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10WRIDS01	3	3	0
W11RE2S01	2	2	0
W11RE2S11	5	5	0
W11RE2S03	5	6	1
F10WRIDS02	5	6	1
W10RE1S04	4	5	1
W10WRIDS07	5	6	1
W10WRIDS09	5	6	1
W10WRIDS10	6	7	1
F10RE1S09	6	7	1

There were several striking themes presented in the reports of participants' experiences in dialogue among those with the lowest Degree of Change. Many of the students who changed least reported being outspoken and among the most talkative in their own dialogue groups. Some participants related their frequent participation to being among the oldest in the dialogue. Participants who displayed the least amount of change in the group also consistently showed frustration with the dialogue process and the other participants operating in this context. Connection with others in the dialogue, or lack thereof was another, but less prevalent, theme among these participants compared to those who changed the most.

Frequent Participation

Five students of the seven with the least amount of reported change in their views and understandings of racism and systematic privilege reported being very outgoing and among the most talkative in their dialogue group. Some participants, such as one in the Winter 2010 White Racial Identity Dialogue, attributed their participation solely to their own personality (W11WRIDS09B). Another participant recognized how her identity within the class dynamics may have facilitated her comfortable participation.

I was definitely one of the more outspoken ones in class. That primarily just comes from my own personality, but later in the semester we talked about gender dynamic and how the majority of the class was females. After that discussion, I came to the realization that if it was the opposite and the majority of the class was male, I probably would not be as outspoken (W11WRIDS01B).

While she did not solely ascribe her participation to her gender identity, she became aware over time that the dynamic in the dialogue, where she was in the majority with respect to gender, could have led to her increased participation. Intersectionality, or the ways a person's different identities interact, is a topic that is often introduced in Intergroup Relations Dialogue. This participant did not explicitly describe this phenomenon as intersectionality, but did begin to show an understanding of the concept.

Two of the four participants who reported being among the highest contributors to the dialogue also mentioned that they were among the oldest in the dialogue group, and that this may have created their comfort in talking.

I feel that I was uh, perhaps a bit more outspoken than some of the other people in our group… especially when we were like in small group activities and then came back into the large group. It tended to… I tended to be the one to speak and say things cause I felt… as I mentioned they were a younger group… and like the white, quote-unquote White group was all freshmen except for me. So I felt like some people were a little more uncomfortable bringing certain topics back to the large group cause we were discussing, as we've mentioned a couple of times, the white identity, and how you know we feel kind of almost left out of having an ethnicity (W10RE1S04C).

While she was not the only participant who noted age as a factor in participation, this woman displayed the detachment she felt from the rest of the group. As opposed to referring to the white participants in the dialogue as "us," as might be expected, she explicitly stated that "*they*" were a younger group, not only detaching herself as someone who participates more, but also putting herself on a different level from the other white dialogue members.

These participants who were more frequent speakers may have spent more time talking than listening and therefore did not gain as much insight into the ideas and thoughts of others in

their group. This alone could account for some of the limited change that they underwent from the beginning of the first dialogue until the end of the semester.

Frustration in Dialogue

Being among those who participated the most may have led to frustrations for those who felt that they offered more than they received. One participant said that he was very talkative in a "very quiet and withdrawn class" (W11RE2S03B). He believed that, as a frequent speaker, he was making a contribution, but he did not talk about the knowledge he gained from others.

> I found myself frustrated that others were not engaging with me or each other, and this frustration has led me to realize that I want to talk with people about their experiences with ethnicity and that I need to be clear about it and in the language I use (W11RE2S03B).

The frustration this Race and Ethnicity Dialogue participant experienced as a result of the subdued nature of the dialogue developed his desire to seek out conversations about race elsewhere. He displayed a frustration with not getting what he wanted out of the dialogue, something he attributed to others not contributing on the same level.

Frustration continued to surface in the final papers and interviews of students with the least change. Frustration primarily surfaced when students felt that the dialogue was not as in-depth as they had hoped. One participant noted that facilitators and other participants displayed "unnecessary avoidance of conflict" (W10RE1S04B). Students in this least change group were often frustrated with their fellow participants' understandings of the subject matter.

> At times, I became very frustrated with others not understanding with concepts that I thought were important, such as the issue of systematic racism. I even felt that at times, I didn't want to voice my views for fear of losing my 'dialogue state' (W11WRIDS01B).

The annoyance this particular participant experienced was directed toward other dialogue members, and the speed at which they began to understand certain concepts relating to social justice. At the beginning of the semester one woman, in the Preliminary Category 6, already had

a strong grasp of the concepts of racism and privilege, something that may have put her ahead of others in her class. This also gave her little room for positive change on the scale.

Another student displayed frustration with the dialogue class itself, critiquing that it was too basic for a dialogue setting.

> I felt that our discussions were treated as an introduction to the concepts of race, ethnicity and discrimination. There were certainly a few people in our class who needed the introduction, but as a whole, I think the class would have benefitted from a deeper conversation about the issues surrounding race (W10RE1S04).

While this may have been a direct result of the circumstances surrounding this specific dialogue, the participant did not resonate with the level at which the class began and how the facilitators approached race. This particular woman was placed in a Preliminary Category of 4, unlike the above participant frustrated with dialogue members, and did not initially possess a deep understanding of racism. Her criticisms of the dialogue class may have been a form of resistance to learning about her privilege and systematic oppression.

Communication in Dialogue

Another factor that may have inhibited change in students was interaction with others in dialogue, and communication troubles that may have arisen for individuals. One student remembered that if others in her dialogue did not understand the concepts, she would "…get really frustrated and kind of shut down" (W11RE1S04C). Another student remembered that when she was triggered, or upset by a specific instance in dialogue, she would also become more withdrawn from the group, not sharing what she was thinking (W11WRIDS01C). The inability of students to communicate can negatively impact the amount they learn from others in the group. If a student "shuts down" or becomes less attentive to the group, this failure to work out the reasons why they became withdrawn can deter the development of their own personal dialogue state and, as a result, their awareness of racism, privilege, and oppression in the world.

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Extreme Cases

Table 12. Extreme Degrees of Change in Participants

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10WRIDS01	3	3	0
W11RE2S01	2	2	0
W11RE2S11	5	5	0
W11RE1S04	2	7	5

Of the students in the three semesters of Race and Ethnicity and White Racial Identity

Dialogues, three students exhibited no change. One of these students came into the dialogue with

very strong opinions, and responded very defensively to certain things presented by facilitators,

readings, and other participants. This participant responded particularly strongly to a reading

presented on current systematic racism.

> Statements such as these [presented in the readings] are so immensely contrary to
> everything I believe in and stand for that it was sometimes hard to come to class in
> dialogue mode. I often felt pressured to spend the first few talking turns countering the
> views expressed in the readings and because the views expressed in readings such as the
> ones above were so strongly presented, I often responded rather forcefully
> (F10WRIDS01B).

This participant recognized that his forceful responses to material presented in the dialogue

might have been detrimental to his growth and to his experience as a whole. A self-described

Libertarian, this participant labeled University of Michigan classes as "liberal"

(F10WRIDS01B). Approaching the dialogue with the mindset that the views of the dialogue and

Intergroup Relations were too different to reconcile with his own may have blocked this

participant from any change or growth that he may have otherwise experienced during the

semester. Additionally, his forceful nature in the dialogue most likely changed group dynamics,

deterring others from challenging him for fear of unsafe confrontation.

A participant in the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1 showed the most change

from the beginning to the end of the semester. This participant repeatedly mentioned the

emotional impact that each activity, testimonial, and the dialogue experience as a whole had on her. She experienced a unique connection with other participants, most clear in her reaction to a black participant's testimonial about her hair.

> But I also, I obviously can't relate to that personal experience with her hair. But on another level I felt like certain things that bother me I could have the same emotional reaction. And I felt closer to her and when we wrote affirmations to each other on note cards I obviously wrote really nice things to her about how brave she was for telling that story (W11RE1S04C).

While this woman did not, and would never, have the same experience with hair because of her race, she empathized with the woman of color. Seeing the emotion that came with the story really impacted the white participant and helped her gain a different perspective on an issue she had not previously confronted. This participant, as shown in the "Most Change" section of the paper, also displayed positive experiences with her facilitator, a strong positive reaction to the privilege walk, and valued honesty and trust within her dialogue group.

While strong resistance was the most prominent factor in the students with no change, it seems that a combination of factors led to the positive outcome for the woman with the highest Degree of Change. She exhibited very strong examples of all themes presented by participants categorized as experiencing the "Most Change" from beginning to end of dialogue. She also presented a deep, emotional connection with activities, testimonials and participants. This personalization could have led to the dramatic change over the semester.

Group Change

Aggregate Change in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues

Table 13. Race and Ethnicity Dialogues with Lowest and Highest Degree of Change

Dialogue	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11RE2	3.8	4.8	1
W11RE1	3.75	7	3.25

Race and Ethnicity Dialogues demonstrated the largest spread from group to group. The Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1 (W11RE1) showed the largest amount of change, with 3.25 as the average change. In the same semester, Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2 (W11RE2) resulted in the least amount of change, with an average of 1. Comparing these two dialogues, they exhibited differences in participants' experiences and reactions to testimonials, the general dynamic within the dialogue, experiences with facilitators, and views of trust and honesty in the dialogue setting.

As mentioned above there was not a notable difference between the changes reported by students in the different White Racial Identity Dialogues, so I did not compare these groups.

Experience Hearing Testimonials

In the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1, the R&E Dialogue that exhibited the most change, the participants emphasized that the testimonials moved them on a very personal level. Every participant in this group with data mentioned testimonials on an emotional level. Students often identified directly with another's story, or talk about their surprise or shock in hearing a story. One participant compared the impact of hearing a story to the depictions of racism in the media.

> And she gets pulled over by the police who accuses her mom of being a prostitute or something like that. It was something along those lines and it was very, very, powerful to me. It kind of had the same effect as the movie *Crash* did but on a more personal level because *Crash* is very impersonal even though they try to make it seem personal (W11RE1S02C).

While this man had seen racism in a movie, *Crash*, he understood it more clearly when he heard someone describe a personal experience with racism. The participant considered the consequences of racism on a different level when he heard a real-life story from a person who was obviously impacted by racism. He was readily able to emotionally connect with the woman

who shared the story with the group. This participant continued to analyze his own testimonial and how it may have played into the norms this woman experienced. His testimonial focused on prejudices he held towards black people, especially when visiting Detroit. Another student in this same dialogue discussed the power that hearing personal testimonials had on him.

> And then when people, obviously got really passioned about whatever they were talking about, especially like, some of our facilitators got really into their stories I started having a lot of feelings toward their experiences as if I was in it at the time" (W11RE1S04C).

The reality the stories conveyed also helped people connect, to feel that they were actually part of the situation when it happened. The rawness the participants witnessed in testimonials enabled them to share more personal details about their own lives. Students in the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1 also showed a tendency to participate more effectively after testimonials. The student mentioned above said that after telling his testimonial it became easier to share with the group. Another student expressed a similar perspective.

> In this dialogue, I was first a bit shy to speak because I was scared of saying something wrong or stupid, but after we read our testimonials to each other I began opening up more, contributing more and gaining insight to the perspectives of other people in our class (W11RE1S04B).

The comfort and closeness testimonials bring to the group often fosters the beginning of strong relationships within the dialogue. It seems that these relationships are extremely important to the changes in outlook and growth one experiences during their dialogue experience.

The lack of connection to testimonials and the effect of not having relationships appeared to correlate to less change in participants' attitudes toward race. While there were some positive experiences in dialogue during the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2, only one student focused on a testimonial exhibiting racism. Two students showed strong resistance to the testimonial experience during the dialogue. One student stated he found the emotional testimonials to be unnecessary and that they made other stories lose significance

(W11RE2S02C). When he mentioned similarities in his own testimonial to a fellow white

participant's testimonial, he qualified the comment and stated that ultimately they were also quite

different.

> But even the part that was similar even if that was the case for me I wouldn't have… I
> don't think I would go into something kind of stating that I don't have problems with
> people of other races because it sounds weird. And even though he doesn't I just think
> that that's not necessary to say those kinds of things. So initially I thought we were on the
> same track but… (W11RE2S02C).

His preliminary feeling of connection with the other participant was undercut by his insistence

that the way the participant's story was told was very unlike how he would tell it. While he first

thought that they were similar, he later denied this similarity and changed his mind and did not

mention any other connections during testimonials in any reports of his dialogue.

A second participant in the W11RE2 also began to connect with another participant in his

own dialogue, but at the end sounded hesitant. When asked if he connected with a testimonial of

another white individual, he briefly told of a connection.

> I mean there was one moment when someone talked about, it was a white girl talking
> about walking down the street late at night and there's a black man and she's more… I
> don't know the right word. She's going to be more afraid than if it was not, if it was some
> other type of race because black men are seen in the media and in the news as being
> criminals all the time. So I agree with that. Like, you're more scared of a random black
> guy than a random white guy just because of what we see in the news. So I connected
> with that, but… (W11RE2S07C).

Although the "but" at the end of the sentence did not lead to denial of the connection, it

suggested a hesitation. The participant did not feel a full connection with the girl although he

saw some of his own prejudices in the girl's story. He felt he needed to qualify the relationship

with a "but" at the end. When asked if he specifically remembered a story told by person of color

that had an impact on him, he displayed his disconnect with the group and answered, "Honestly,

we didn't have that many great personal experiences about racial encounters" (W11RE2S07C).

The connection through testimonials and its impact on group bonding proved much more effective in the W11RE1 dialogue than the W11RE2 dialogue. This may have been due to the obvious hesitation exhibited by some participants in their recollection of testimonials in the W11RE2 dialogue. Students in W11RE1 by contrast, consistently recounted vivid and important memories from testimonials, often in detail, and they also described the emotional impact of the testimonial.

Dialogue Dynamics

The discomfort and disconnect in the W11RE2 testimonials spilled over into the dialogue dynamics as a whole. While every W11RE1 participant reported healthy and constructive class dynamics, W11RE2 participants discussed the lack of engagement in dialogue, frustration with this lack of dialogue, or unsafe dialogue conditions. In the W11RE1 dialogue, one participant remembered watching the disposition of another participant change over time in the group.

> And I know that there was one girl, one of the white girls. She really never talked. So I never really could tell how she felt about certain things. And towards the middle to the end she started opening up more. And I could see that she just didn't… there's a lot she just didn't know and she just had a lot of questions. And she started asking people questions and she started opening up more about what she was thinking even though she was a little scared to offend people. But… and certain issues I was very unaware. But, yeah. It was interesting to see that transformation" (W11RE1S04C).

As the dialogue progressed this student, who was among the most quiet in the group, started to become more comfortable. The dialogue was a safe space for each person to contribute and to ask questions. Although the student initially was very timid, she progressed to a different place by the end of the dialogue. Participant W11RE1S04 mentioned that although there were many identities in the dialogue, "…we had a lot of similarities that just looking at someone I wouldn't think that I had a connection with, mostly based on race" (W11RE1S04C). Finding these similarities may have allowed for people to feel more connected and able to open up over time.

Contrasted with the student experience in the W11RE1 dialogue, four of the five students in W11RE2 expressed frustration or disappointment with the way participants interacted in their dialogue. One student noted that she did not feel an instant connection, and over time did not connect with any specific individuals or groups (W11RE2S10). Another student, as mentioned in the first section of the results, was extremely frustrated with how quiet and complacent students in this dialogue were over the semester. When there was conflict between participants in the dialogue, he showed resistance to the issues being raised. He reported that in several situations, black students in the dialogue were upset by the word "they," used to identify people of color. This student displayed strong resistance to the black students' concerns.

> And to me, like, we're all old enough to know that, I mean I assume that we're not saying 'they' as in like 'them'. Like the people not like us. It really just means like, 'others.' And I just felt that a lot of lot of people take that the wrong way and I felt that that was kind of silly and that it would kind of evolve into something that was just not of the topics that we would try to be discussing (W11RE2S02C).

This participant saw the anxiety of students around him as unnecessary conflict. He was unwilling to challenge his use of the term "they" and accept conflict as a natural phenomena of dialogue. He instead thought it was "silly" and believed he did not need to become involved in the discussion. The dialogue space generally allows participants to connect on issues, such as events that upset them, in ways that they would not otherwise do. The disconnect this participant experienced with students of color in his group exemplified a rift in the group dynamics and a lack of connection among dialogue members.

Perception of Trust and Honesty

Cohesion of a dialogue group appeared directly related to honesty and trust. In the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1, participants often discussed the honesty they valued in others

during the dialogue. One participant discussed how others' honesty in dialogue encouraged her own.

> To not be timid about talking because sometimes I would have thoughts and then I would try to really work them in my head so that they wouldn't sound offensive or they wouldn't come across as making myself seem racist or something like that when really I knew that I just needed to say them to be honest with everybody and with myself. So that was really hard. Yeah, I think that would probably be the biggest thing is just like always checking myself to make sure that I was being honest. And because I felt like everybody else in the room was being honest, so it wouldn't be fair to them and it wouldn't be fair to myself to not be. So that was difficult (W11RE1S06C).

This participant's reluctance to share experiences that may offend others was counterbalanced by her desire to maintain the honest environment of the dialogue. The precedent set by others encouraged someone who was unsure of how to talk about race to take chances in the dialogue and talk honesty and openly.

In Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2, there was much less cohesion. Students in this dialogue showed skepticism about the truthfulness of others stories and statements. One student in the W11RE2 dialogue projected his own tendency towards dishonesty on others in the dialogue. The student generally portrayed the dialogue as a negative experience. He initially connected with a participant's story about whiteness and prejudice, and then later expressed hesitation. He showed the same ambivalent participation in his own disclosure in the dialogue.

> I was almost entirely honest and candid during every exercise and discussion, but the key word there is *almost*. If I were to participate again, I would have been *completely* honest even though that may have offended some people, which is why I held back at times this semester (W11RE2S07B).

This student did not participate fully in the dialogue setting. He also seemed to assume others acted the same way, as he stated, "We don't necessarily talk about the truth [being in an interracial dialogue]" (W11RE2S07C). This particular participant did not open up and take risks. In his final paper, he stated that he would most likely never feel fully comfortable talking about

race for fear of offending others (W11RE2S07C). While all participants in W11RE2 dialogue did

not demonstrate the same resistance to sharing experiences with the group, no participant in this

dialogue discussed the presence of honesty or trust in this group.

Experience with Facilitators

The reports of participants in Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1 suggest positive

experiences with the facilitators. One participant specifically mentioned how helpful her

facilitators were in her dialogue experience.

> We had really great facilitators who were very encouraging, very affirming after we
> would say something, especially if they could tell that it was difficult for us to say. They
> were both very honest, which was like, they were good examples for us to be honest with
> ourselves…. When [one of our facilitators] would say things and when she would be
> really honest about people in her family who are racists or racial thoughts that she had
> had that encouraged me to realize that it's okay to say those things too and to be honest
> and that's what makes the dialogue better (W11RE1S06C).

The importance of honesty related not only to experiences with other dialogue participants, but

also to experiences with facilitators. A participant talked about how the facilitators' positive

feedback was extremely helpful in encouraging her to participate in this dialogue as well

(W11RE1S04C). The W11RE1 participant praised the questions asked as the semester

progressed and the honest responses that the facilitators' questions evoked.

> I think the facilitators helped push that sometimes when they thought we were just talking
> too general. And they would ask like, "Well, speaking of this, does anyone have a
> personal experience?" Or we'd do certain exercises that would trigger us to make it
> personal. And I think that's when it became a lot more of a meaningful dialogue
> (W11RE1S04C).

This participant in W11RE1 felt that the facilitators' questions particularly helped to challenge

the class in a new way. It appears that this challenge by the facilitator ultimately assisted students

in speaking honestly about their personal experiences and feelings in dialogue.

In contrast with Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1, Winter 2011 Race and

Ethnicity Dialogue 2 participants expressed mixed feelings about the facilitators. One student

praised the facilitators for keeping the mood light and the conversation continuing.

> No, I never felt uncomfortable. And the facilitators were really nice about just keeping us
> laughing at some points or just keeping everything going so we didn't feel awkward or
> uncomfortable or there weren't any awkward silences or anything, so (W11RE2S10C).

Her experience with the facilitators was one that made her feel that the dialogue setting was a

safe place for her. She appreciated the movement the facilitators allowed and the comfort they

provided. This was the only, and not very specific, positive mention of facilitators for this

dialogue.

Two students, who had experienced other aspects of dialogue that were negative, were

uncomfortable with how the facilitators conducted dialogue. One student discussed how the

facilitators did not present the most productive questions and topics.

> The facilitators were fine. I think they weren't like, I had an issue because I thought we
> were willing to talk about almost anything but we weren't asked the right questions… I
> mean, it's hard because what could they have asked? I don't know. I don't have an
> answer. But they were asking questions where we're like we'd give an answer, like we'd
> answer the question but then nothing would happen after that because it wasn't that
> stimulating of a question. But what *is* a stimulating question (W11RE2S07C)?

In contrast with the praise for questions in W11RE1, the lack of inspiring questions or guidance,

in this participant's experience, led to less stimulating conversation. The participant however,

noted that he did not necessarily know what questions would have replaced the ones asked. Yet

another participant in W11RE2 appeared to be off put by the reactions of a facilitator.

> Yeah, I think something that it was interesting that… I thought our facilitators; one of
> them was really opinionated. And while I think it's great that they're not just in the
> background and watching all of it happen I think sometimes it would make you kind of
> nervous about what you would say in terms of the facilitator, which I don't think should
> be happening (W11RE2S02C).

While one facilitator seemed to stay in their role, this participant was made to feel insecure by the other. He went on, in his interview, to talk about how the facilitators' strong belief in white privilege polarized the discussion throughout the dialogue. The facilitator appeared to strongly insert his opinion. This was not seconded by other dialogue participants, but may have been a reason for the distrust and discomfort discussed by the group.

Conclusion

This study examines the experiences of white students in nine semester-long inter- and intragroup dialogues. I have found several factors that are associated with change in participants' views and understandings of racism, privilege, and oppression from the beginning to the end of the dialogue. Facilitator training for future dialogues, as well as for current IGR dialogue facilitators at the University may benefit from these findings. The results of my research may also inform educators more broadly about the conditions under which white students can learn about racism and white privilege.

Key Findings: Individual Change

As predicted in Hypothesis 1, white participants overall showed change in views and understandings of racism, privilege, oppression, and social justice from the beginning to the end of the semester. White participants who exhibited the most change from the beginning to the end of a dialogue discussed similar experiences in the Final Paper and the interview. Positive experiences with facilitators were generally associated with participants experiencing a significant amount of change from the Preliminary Category to the Final Category. Participants who exhibited more change reported trust and respect for their facilitators. Maxwell et al.'s (2011) research on facilitation argues that facilitators must create a safe space before participants feel comfortable to share personal experiences and opinions (29). Additionally, participants with

the highest Degree of Change frequently experienced feelings of <u>trust and honesty among dialogue members</u>, suggesting that the climate of the dialogue and relationships of dialogue participants' are important in challenging previously held views and understandings around race.

Predicted in Hypothesis 2, in some situations, students in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues acquired attitude changes differently from students in White Racial Identity Dialogues. White students in Race and Ethnicity Dialogues who experienced the highest Degree of Change were often <u>emotionally and cognitively engaged with testimonials given by students of color</u> during the dialogue. Listening to testimonials of people of color firsthand provided white students with cognitive and emotional stimuli that enabled some to break away from the illusion of a colorblind society. Along with testimonials, these students often discussed the impact of the <u>Privilege Walk activity</u> during dialogue. The privilege walk may accentuate the visibility of white participants' personal privileges, and may also call to attention the oppression that their classmates of color experience. These experiences suggest that understanding of a person of color's oppression and their own white privilege is important for whites in learning about privilege and oppression.

White Racial Identity Dialogue participants with the most change, in the absence of a privilege walk, expressed appreciation <u>for activities such as "Cross the Line"</u> brought into the dialogue. Additionally, WRID participants experiencing the most change mentioned the <u>comfort of an all-white environment</u>. White students, feeling the need to be politically correct in an interracial space (Fox 2001, 52), felt that the white only setting provided an environment in which they were able to speak more honestly and more candidly about race.

My project also exposed experiences in dialogue that may inhibit the ability of participants to more fully understand the extent of racism, privilege, and oppression in society.

Students who reported that they <u>talked constantly</u> did not undergo the same amount of change as their counterparts, who may have gained a better understanding of racism through allowing others to speak. In addition, many students <u>expressed frustration with the dialogue content, facilitators, or the process</u>. Some felt the dialogue material was too basic, while others felt that group members were too slow to understand, or were not being completely honest. Generally, participants with the least change <u>did not experience connection</u> with others in the group. For various reasons mentioned above, these participants felt alienated or estranged.

Key Findings: Group Change

There was no meaningful difference between the White Racial Identity Dialogue with the most change and the WRID exhibiting the least change on average. Examining differences between the Race and Ethnicity Dialogue with the most change (W11RE1) and the R&E Dialogue with the least change on average (W11RE2), I observed several obvious distinctions. In the dialogue with the highest aggregate Degree of Change, W11RE1, participants <u>were generally more emotional and connected with all aspects of the dialogue</u>. They empathized with testimonials, felt connected with other members and facilitators, and were personally affected by the privilege walk. The emotional connection appears to be one of the most important factors influencing change while in the dialogue environment. When students felt that they were engaging on a personal level, they were more able to reach new understandings about race and racism.

Students in the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2 were <u>detached in their descriptions</u>. Some mentioned testimonials, but disengaged from the person telling the story. The group, as a whole, reported that the dialogue was disjointed and uncomfortable. Some did not feel they could share as much with the group, while others felt members of the dialogue were withholding honest expressions. This disconnect did not encourage participants to share personal

experiences that may have made them feel vulnerable, but that also might have helped them challenge their current attitude towards racism, privilege, and oppression. Additionally, without a strong connection with others in the dialogue, testimonials and opinions of others did not carry as much meaning and did not impact the participants.

Linking emotion and detached descriptions of dialogue, the Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1 showed positive experiences with facilitators, while Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity 2 did not. This suggests that a well-trained and responsive facilitator is crucial in participants' change views and understandings of racism from the beginning to the end of the semester.

Limitations

Since students self-select Intergroup Relations courses, I must be cautious when generalizing the data I found in this sample, as it is not representative of the entire student body at the University of Michigan. All of the data I used in this project comes from students who chose to enroll in Intergroup Relations Dialogues, which limits the scope of the data. Additionally, students in a dialogue must give permission for their materials to be collected and used in research. Though most students chose to participate in the research, this self-selection may bias the data set since the students who chose to opt-in to the research may share certain traits.

Another limitation was the lack of complete data sets (n=33, with 33 complete data sets and 30 incomplete sets). Although there were many white students who chose to turn in both a Preliminary and Final Papers and participated in an interview, there were still many incomplete sets. As part of my study compares students' Preliminary Papers with the Final Papers and interviews, for individual change measures I excluded students who did not have at least the

Preliminary Paper and either the Final Paper or interview. Ideally I would have a complete data set for every participant, but I was cautious to keep in mind the papers and interviews that I did not have access to, recognizing the restrictions this places on generalization of the findings.

Additionally, the category system I used to measure Degree of Change could not control for different start points of individual participants. Looking at the results, it is important to keep in mind that participants starting in a higher category for their Preliminary Score did not have the same potential for a large Degree of Change as those starting with a low Preliminary Score.

Implications

While studies have looked at what makes dialogues effective, my research specifically focused on race dialogues at the University of Michigan. Combining the information presented, I hope to help facilitators better understand what is effective in creating change in whites' views and understandings of racism, privilege, and oppression. Facilitators should focus on trust and honesty, creating a safe space, use testimonials, and emphasize the personal nature of activities. This also suggests that experienced facilitators with positive dialogue experiences should continue in their role, assisting other facilitators in learning about successful practices in dialogue. Race and Ethnicity dialogues should emphasize strengths, helping students tell and hear testimonials, and stressing the importance of the privilege walk activity. White Racial Identity Dialogues should call attention to the safety that an all-white environment provides.

Racism is still prevalent in the United States (Dijk 1993; Siegelmann 1999; Oliver and Shapiro 1995; Shapiro 2004), and many white people support systems of privilege and oppression, often unknowingly. When white students are provided a structured and facilitated environment in which to dialogue about race and racial identity, they may begin to recognize the systematic nature of racial privilege and oppression. Some students may even begin to make

changes in their own life due to their newfound awareness. To create this understanding of racism and white privilege in white students, it is important to understand what factors support this change in dialogue and how to emphasize these particular aspects of the dialogue.

My findings mirror those of Gordon Allport's *Contact Hypothesis,* discussed in Walter Stephan's *Reducing Prejudice and Stereotyping in Schools* (1999)*.* This hypothesis suggests that in order to reduce prejudice, individuals must experience *Cooperative Interaction, Equal Status Among Participants, Individualized Contact*, and *Institutional Support. Cooperative Interaction*, in which students work together with mixed race groups, was shown in my findings about trust, honesty and sharing experiences. This was additionally fostered in the intergroup dialogue policy of creating ground rules and allowing everyone space to share. I reflect *Equal Status Among Participants* in discussing the importance of facilitation and guidance, creating a non-hierarchical state during the dialogue. *Individualized Contact* was provided in the dialogue setting, further pronounced in my findings of increased Degrees of Change with emotional and cognitive connection during dialogue. Further, *Institutional Support* is provided through the Program on Intergroup Relations, facilitators, and the faculty supporting facilitators. Although Allport's research can be applied to Intergroup Dialogue settings, it is applicable more widely in dismantling prejudice.

Allport's *Contact Hypothesis* is not specific to academic or dialogue settings. Similarly, my research is applicable outside of the dialogue setting in anti-racist education. Few people receive the opportunity to participate in a dialogue due to lack of resources, limited intergroup dialogue programs, and general inability to participate. These findings may be generalized, cautiously, in a way that the factors contributing to attitude change may be used outside of a dialogue.

If people are allowed a safe space with sustained contact, one where they trust others while learning about race, and feel that everyone is being honest, they may effectively learn about racism, privilege, and oppression. This can be done in classroom settings or even in conversations among friends. In introductory seminars, teachers may employ some of the same methods of dialogue such as setting ground rules, establishing a precedent of honesty, and creating challenging and probing questions. In peer groups or casual meetings, individuals may work as facilitators for friends, establishing the groundwork needed to effectively talk and learn about racism, privilege, and oppression.

Additionally, as shown through more dramatic change with emotional attachment, if people engage on a more personal level, they may start to learn about these systems of privilege and oppression outside of a dialogue setting. Personal stories from diverse peers can be shared outside of a dialogue. If individuals are encouraged to listen and learn about diverse experiences, this could create effective change in many settings.

"Racetalk" (Bonilla-Silva 2010) and racist beliefs may be dismantled through these forms of communication outside of dialogue. One alternative, though, would be more effective socialization about race at an early age. Individuals learn nearly all beliefs about race from families, friends, and in school. If schools initiated programs that honestly discussed race at a younger age, they may allow young people to avoid many racist beliefs, or dismantle ones that they already hold. On a smaller scale, if children are simply told that race is acceptable to discuss, and not a taboo topic, they may learn about race in a different way, one in which racist beliefs are apparent and they can openly confront their own.

While this will take much more education, as well as persuasion to implement any programming, it is important to recognize what aids in teaching about systemic racism in the

United States. If discussing race and racism becomes more acceptable, there may be hope of

acknowledging current racially oppressive systems and working to end these systems.

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Tables

Table 1. Winter 2010 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W10RE1S04	4	5	1
W10RE1S06	5	7	2
W10RE1S11	3	5	2
Group Average	4	5.67	1.67

Table 2. Winter 2010 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 4

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W10RE4S07	3	5	2
W10RE4S11	5	7	2
W10RE4S05	5	8	3
Group Average	4.33	6.67	2.33

Table 3. Winter 2010 White Racial Identity Dialogue

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W10WRIDS07	5	6	1
W10WRIDS09	5	6	1
W10WRIDS10	6	7	1
W10WRIDS02	5	7	2
W10WRIDS04	3	5	2
W10WRIDS06	5	7	2
W10WRIDS11	3	6	3
Group Average	4.57	6.29	1.71

Table 4. Fall 2010 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10RE1S09	6	7	1
F10RE1S01	3	5	2
F10RE1S04	4	7	3
Group Average	4.33	6.33	2

Table 5. Fall 2010 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2

Participants	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10RE2S05	1	5	4
Group Average	1	5	4

Table 6. Fall 2010 White Racial Identity Dialogue

Participants	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10WRIDS01	3	3	0
F10WRIDS02	5	6	1
F10WRIDS05	5	7	2
F10WRIDS06	3	5	2
F10WRIDS07	4	6	2
Group Average	4	5.4	1.4

Table 7. Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 1

Participants	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11RE1S02	5	7	2
W11RE1S06	5	8	3
W11RE1S09	3	6	3
W11RE1S04	2	7	5
Group Average	3.75	7	3.25

Table 8. Winter 2011 Race and Ethnicity Dialogue 2

Participants	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11RE2S01	2	2	0
W11RE2S11	5	5	0
W11RE2S03	5	6	1
W11RE2S07	2	4	2
W11RE2S10	5	7	2
Group Average	3.8	4.8	1

Table 9. Winter 2011 White Racial Identity Dialogue

Participants	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11WRIDS01	6	7	1
W11WRIDS05	6	7	1
W11WRIDS06	4	5	1
W11WRIDS11	4	7	3
W11WRIDS03	2	6	4
Group Average	4.4	6.4	2

Table 10. Participants with Highest Degree of Change

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W10RE4S05	5	8	3
W10WRIDS11	3	6	3
F10RE1S04	4	6	3
W11RE1S06	5	8	3
W11RE1S09	3	6	3
W11WRIDS11	4	7	3
W11WRIDS03	2	6	4
F10RE2S05	1	5	4
W11RE1S04	2	7	5

Table 11. Participants with Lowest Degree of Change

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10WRIDS01	3	3	0
W11RE2S01	2	2	0
W11RE2S11	5	5	0
W11RE2S03	5	6	1
F10WRIDS02	5	6	1
W10RE1S04	4	5	1
W10WRIDS07	5	6	1
W10WRIDS09	5	6	1
W10WRIDS10	6	7	1
F10RE1S09	6	7	1

Table 12. Extreme Degrees of Change in Participants

Participant	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
F10WRIDS01	3	3	0
W11RE2S01	2	2	0
W11RE2S11	5	5	0
W11RE1S04	2	7	5

Table 13. Race and Ethnicity Dialogues with Lowest and Highest Degree of Change

Dialogue	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11RE2	3.8	4.8	1
W11RE1	3.75	7	3.25

Table 14. Group Averages

Dialogue	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
W11RE2	3.8	4.8	1
F10WRID	4	5.4	1.4
W10RE1S	4	5.67	1.67
W10WRID	4.57	6.29	1.71
F10RE1	4.33	6.33	2
W11WRID	4.4	6.4	2
W10RE4	4.33	6.67	2.33
W11RE1	3.75	7	3.25
F10RE2	1	5	4

Table 15. White Racial Identity and Race and Ethnicity Dialogue Aggregate Change

Dialogue Type	Preliminary Category	Final Category	Change
WRID	4.35	6.06	1.71
R&E	3.84	5.95	2.11

Table 16. Category of Views and Understandings of Racism, Privilege, Oppression, and Social Justice

Category	Name
1	Omission or Denial of Systemic Racism
2	Some Recognition of Discriminatory Acts
3	Reluctant Recognition of Some Systemic Racism
4	Abstract Recognition and Acceptance of Structural Racism
5	Basic Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism
6	Intermediate Concrete Understanding of Structural Racism
7	Intricate Understanding of Structural Racism and Social Change
8	Understanding of Structural Racism and Responsibility for Social Change

Appendices

A. Participant Demographics and Data Points

B. Preliminary Paper Prompt for Participants in a Race and Ethnicity Dialogue

C. Preliminary Paper Prompt for Participants in a White Racial Identity Dialogue

D. Final Paper Prompt for Participants in a Race and Ethnicity Dialogue

E. Final Paper Prompt for Participants in a White Racial Identity Dialogue

F. Interview Protocol

G. Consent Form for Participants

H. Testimonial Assignment

I. Cross the Line Activity

J. Race and Ethnicity Privilege Walk

Appendix A: Participant Demographic Information and Included Data Points

Winter 2010

Participant	Race	Sex	A	B	C
W10RE1S04	White	Female	x	x	x
W10RE1S05	White	Female		x	
W10RE1S06	White	Female	x	x	x
W10RE1S08	White	Male	x	x	
W10RE1S11	White	Female	x	x	x
W10RE4S04	White	Male		x	x
W10RE4S05	White	Male	x	x	x
W10RE4S07	White	Female	x	x	
W10RE4S08	White	Female		x	x
W10RE4S09	Arab, White	Male		x	x
W10RE4S11	White	Female	x	x	x
W10RE4S12	White	Female		x	x
W10WRIDS01	White	Female		x	x
W10WRIDS02	White	Female	x	x	x
W10WRIDS03	White	Male		x	x
W10WRIDS04	White	Female	x	x	x
W10WRIDS05	White	Male	x	x	x
W10WRIDS06	White	Male	x	x	x
W10WRIDS07	White	Male	x	x	x
W10WRIDS08	White, Native American	Female		x	x
W10WRIDS09	White	Female	x	x	x
W10WRIDS11	White	Female	x	x	x

Fall 2010

Participant	Race	Sex	A	B	C
F10RE1S01	White	Male	x	x	x
F10RE1S04	White	Female	x	x	x
F10RE1S07	White	Male		x	x
F10RE1S09	White	Female	x	x	x
F10RE2S01	White	Female	x	x	
F10RE2S02	White/Maltese	Male	x		x
F10RE2S05	White	Female	x	x	
F10RE2S09	White	Female		x	x
F10WRIDS01	White	Male	x	x	

F10WRIDS02	White	Male	x	x	x
F10WRIDS03	White	Female	x		x
F10WRIDS04	White	Male		x	x
F10WRIDS05	White	Male	x	x	x
F10WRIDS06	White	Female	x	x	x
F10WRIDS07	White	Female	x	x	x
F10WRIDS08	White	Female		x	x
F10WRIDS09	White	Male		x	x

Winter 2011

Participant	Race	Sex	A	B	C
W11RE1S02	White	Male	x	x	x
W11RE1S04	White	Female	x	x	x
W11RE1S06	White	Female	x	x	x
W11RE1S07	White	Female	x	x	
W11RE1S09	White	Female	x	x	x
W11RE1S11	White	Female		x	x
W11RE2S02	White	Female		x	x
W11RE2S03	White	Female	x	x	x
W11RE2S05	White	Female	x		x
W11RE2S07	White	Male	x	x	x
W11RE2S10	White	Female		x	x
W11WRIDS01	White	Female	x	x	x
W11WRIDS02	White	Female		x	x
W11WRIDS03	White	Male	x	x	x
W11WRIDS04	White	Male		x	x
W11WRIDS05	White	Female	x	x	x
W11WRIDS06	White	Female	x	x	x
W11WRIDS07	White	Male			x
W11WRIDS08	White	Female	x	x	x
W11WRIDS09	White	Female		x	x
W11WRIDS10	White	Female	x	x	x
W11WRIDS11	White	Female	x		x
W11WRIDS12	White	Male	x	x	x
W11WRIDS13	White	Female	x	x	x

Appendix B: Preliminary Paper Prompt (Race and Ethnicity Dialogues)

PRELIMINARY PAPER FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE RACE/ETHNICITY DIALOGUE

The purpose of this paper is to help you prepare for your conversations and readings in this Race/Ethnicity dialogue. This initial paper assignment is a 6 page (double-spaced) semi-biographical and self-reflection paper. You should write about your experiences, your thoughts and reflections. The paper should address the specific questions below but should not be written in a "question-answer" format; try to integrate your ideas in each section into a coherent reflection and finally into a single paper that reads smoothly across a series of sections and questions.
To the extent that you can, write about your own experience with race.
Please indicate:
Your gender_____.
Your ethnicity or national origin_____.
Your socioeconomic class_____
Your religion_____

With regard to social identity
1.   What and how were you taught (explicitly or implicitly) about what it means to be your race, in terms of attitudes, behaviors, your future, the nature of the society, etc.?
2.   Is your racial/ethnic identity as a person of color or a white person one of the most important aspects of your life? For example, when you describe yourself to others (i.e. over the phone or internet), is it one of the first things you would think of to say?
3.   What do you know about your ethnic/cultural heritage (i.e., the culture, country or region of the world from which your ancestors came)? And how might this affect your feelings about being considered part of your racial group?
4.   What are some experiences that have made your race/ethnicity visible to you?

With regard to social structures
5.   Throughout your life, have most of your friends and other people close to you been of the same racial/ethnic background? If so, why do you think this was the case? If not, what do you think led you to cross racial/ethnic lines in these relationships?
6.   Have you been subject to discrimination based on your race/ethnicity? If so, what type of discrimination (be specific with examples)?
7.   Has your racial/ethnic identity brought you any privileges or benefits? If so, what types of privileges or benefits (be specific with examples)?
8.   How do you think demographic changes that are currently underway in the U.S. and the world will affect your experiences and attitudes relating to race/ethnicity and racism?

With regard to the dialogue
9.   What are some of your hopes, or learning objectives, for this dialogue? What issues do you wish to discuss.
10.   What are some of your fears or concerns about participating in this dialogue?

Appendix C: Preliminary Paper Prompt (White Racial Identity Dialogues)
<u>ID# (last 4 numbers of parent/partner telephone)</u> _____

<u>PRELIMINARY PAPER FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE WHITE RACIAL IDENTITY
DIALOGUE</u>

The purpose of this paper is to help you prepare for your conversations and readings in this Race/Ethnicity dialogue. This initial paper assignment is a 6 page (double-spaced) semi-biographical and self-reflection paper. You should write about your experiences, your thoughts and reflections. The paper should address the specific questions below but should not be written in a "question-answer" format; try to integrate your ideas in each section into a coherent reflection and finally into a single paper that reads smoothly across a series of sections and questions.

To the extent that you can, write about WHITENESS without writing about any other groups that are not WHITE.

Please indicate:

Your gender_____.

Your ethnicity or national origin_____.

Your socioeconomic class_____

Your religion_____

<u>With regard to social identity</u>
1. What and how were you taught (explicitly or implicitly) about what it means to be your race, in terms of attitudes, behaviors, your future, the nature of the society, etc.?
2. Is your racial/ethnic identity as a person of color or a white person one of the most important aspects of your life? For example, when you describe yourself to others (i.e. over the phone or internet), is it one of the first things you would think of to say?
3. What do you know about your ethnic/cultural heritage (i.e., the culture, country or region of the world from which your ancestors came)? And how might this affect your feelings about being considered part of your racial group?
4. What are some experiences that have made your race/ethnicity visible to you?

<u>With regard to social structures</u>
5. Throughout your life, have most of your friends and other people close to you been of the same racial/ethnic background? If so, why do you think this was the case? If not, what do you think led you to cross racial/ethnic lines in these relationships?
6. Have you been subject to discrimination based on your race/ethnicity? If so, what type of discrimination (be specific with examples)?
7. Has your racial/ethnic identity brought you any privileges or benefits? If so, what types of privileges or benefits (be specific with examples)?
8. How do you think demographic changes that are currently underway in the U.S. and the world will affect your experiences and attitudes relating to race/ethnicity and racism?

<u>With regard to the dialogue</u>
9. What are some of your hopes, or learning objectives, for this dialogue? What issues do you wish to discuss.
10. What are some of your fears or concerns about participating in this dialogue?

Appendix D: Final Paper Prompt (Race and Ethnicity Dialogues)

UC/PSYCH/SOC 122 FINAL PAPER
GUIDELINES & GRADING RUBRIC
RACE & ETHNIITY

Due _____
Please turn in one electronic copy to c-tools AND one hard copy to The Program on Intergroup Relations Office, 1214 S. University Ave., 2nd Floor, Room 232.

The purpose of this paper is to help you integrate your learnings in the dialogue. The final paper assignment is an 8-10 page (double-spaced) self-reflection paper. You should write about your experiences, your thoughts and reflections during and outside the dialogue itself (use your journals and your ICP experience as well), as well as discuss how the readings helped you understand issues within a broader context. Articles that you elect to integrate into your paper are your choice, but you must incorporate at least 6-8 of the readings. The paper should address the specific questions below but should not be written in a "question-answer" format; try to integrate your ideas in each section into a coherent reflection and finally into a single paper that reads smoothly across a series of sections and questions. To the extent that you can, write about your own racial experiences.

    Please indicate:
        Your gender_____
        Your ethnicity or national origin_____
        Your socioeconomic class_____
        Your religion_____

<u>With regard to social identity- 27 points- A: 27-26 B: 25-24 C: 23-22</u>
1. What and how were you taught (explicitly or implicitly) about what it means to be a person of color or a white person, in terms of attitudes, behaviors, your future, the nature of society, etc.?
2. Broadly speaking, what does it mean to you to be a white person or a person of color?
3. Is your racial/ethnic identity as a person of color or a white person one of the most important aspects of your life? For example, when you describe yourself to others (i.e. over the phone or internet), is it one of the first things you would think of to say?
4. What do you know about your ethnic/cultural heritage (i.e. the culture, country or region of the world from which your ancestors came)? And how might this affect your feelings about being part of your racial group?
5. What are some experiences that have made your race/ethnicity visible to you?

<u>White regard to social structures- 27 points- A: 27-26 B: 25-24 C: 23-22</u>
1. Throughout your life, have most of your friends and other people close to you been of the same racial/ethnic background? If so, why do you think this was the case? If not, what do you think led you to cross racial/ethnic lines in these relationships?
2. Have you been subject to discrimination based on your race/ethnicity? If so what type of discrimination (be specific with examples)?

3. Has your racial/ethnic identity brought you any privileges or benefits? If so, what types of privileges or benefits (be specific with examples)?
4. How do you think demographic changes that are currently underway in the U.S. and the world will affect your experiences and attitudes relating to race/ethnicity and racism?
5. Do you think racism is becoming more of a problem, less of a problem, or not changing much in the U.S.?

With regard to the dialogue - current and future- 26 points-A: 26-25 B: 24-23 C: 22-21
1. How did your own participation in this class (including the exercises, discussions and ICP) affect the group's dynamics?
2. If you were to participate in this dialogue again, how would you want your participation to be different?
3. What has been the impact of this semester's dialogue on your knowledge and views about being white or a person of color in the U.S. society?
4. What has been the impact of this semester's dialogue on your knowledge and views about race/ethnicity and racism?
5. What, if any, are your goals for personal next steps concerning the topic of this dialogue?

With regard to overall quality of paper-10 points- A: 15-16pts B: 14-13pts C: 11-12pts
1. Are the author's ideas and conclusions expressed clearly and compellingly? When examples are used, are they concrete and specific, and do they deepen the reader's understanding? Are vague generalities avoided?
2. Is the paper very well written and presented, when compared to a high standard of excellence? Are there spelling or grammatical errors, or other problems in presentation? (Of course, allowance should be made for different cultural means of expression—e.g., for the style of presentation of speakers of languages other than English, etc.)

With regard to the meaningful incorporation of 6-8 readings- 10 points- A: 8 or more readings, 10 pts B: 6 readings, 8pts C: 5 readings or less, 7 pts or less
1. Meaningful incorporation means citing a reading and also discussing it in more than one sentence.

Appendix E: Final Paper Prompt (White Racial Identity Dialogues)

UC/PSYCH/SOC 122 FINAL PAPER
GUIDELINES & GRADING RUBRIC
WHITE RACIAL IDENTITY DIALOGUE

Due _____
Please turn in one electronic copy to c-tools <u>AND</u> one hard copy to The Program on Intergroup Relations Office, 1214 S. University Ave., 2nd Floor, Room 232.

The purpose of this paper is to help you integrate your learnings in the dialogue. The final paper assignment is an 8-10 page (double-spaced) self-reflection paper. You should write about your experiences, your thoughts and reflections during and outside the dialogue itself (use your journals and your ICP experience as well), as well as discuss how the readings helped you understand issues within a broader context. Articles that you elect to integrate into your paper are your choice, but you must incorporate at least 6-8 of the readings. The paper should address the specific questions below but should not be written in a "question-answer" format; try to integrate your ideas in each section into a coherent reflection and finally into a single paper that reads smoothly across a series of sections and questions. To the extent that you can, write about WHITENESS without writing about any other groups that are not WHITE.

    Please indicate:
        Your gender_____
        Your ethnicity or national origin_____
        Your socioeconomic class_____
        Your religion_____

<u>With regard to social identity- 27 points- A: 27-26 B: 25-24 C: 23-22</u>
6. What and how were you taught (explicitly or implicitly) about what it means to be a person of color or a white person, in terms of attitudes, behaviors, your future, the nature of society, etc.?
7. Broadly speaking, what does it mean to you to be a white person or a person of color?
8. Is your racial/ethnic identity as a person of color or a white person one of the most important aspects of your life? For example, when you describe yourself to others (i.e. over the phone or internet), is it one of the first things you would think of to say?
9. What do you know about your ethnic/cultural heritage (i.e. the culture, country or region of the world from which your ancestors came)? And how might this affect your feelings about being part of your racial group?
10. What are some experiences that have made your race/ethnicity visible to you?

<u>White regard to social structures- 27 points- A: 27-26 B: 25-24 C: 23-22</u>
6. Throughout your life, have most of your friends and other people close to you been of the same racial/ethnic background? If so, why do you think this was the case? If not, what do you think led you to cross racial/ethnic lines in these relationships?
7. Have you been subject to discrimination based on your race/ethnicity? If so what type of discrimination (be specific with examples)?

8. Has your racial/ethnic identity brought you any privileges or benefits? If so, what types of privileges or benefits (be specific with examples)?
9. How do you think demographic changes that are currently underway in the U.S. and the world will affect your experiences and attitudes relating to race/ethnicity and racism?
10. Do you think racism is becoming more of a problem, less of a problem, or not changing much in the U.S.?

With regard to the dialogue - current and future- 26 points-A: 26-25 B: 24-23 C: 22-21
6. How did your own participation in this class (including the exercises, discussions and ICP) affect the group's dynamics?
7. If you were to participate in this dialogue again, how would you want your participation to be different?
8. What has been the impact of this semester's dialogue on your knowledge and views about being white or a person of color in the U.S. society?
9. What has been the impact of this semester's dialogue on your knowledge and views about race/ethnicity and racism?
10. What, if any, are your goals for personal next steps concerning the topic of this dialogue?

With regard to overall quality of paper-10 points- A: 15-16pts B: 14-13pts C: 11-12pts
3. Are the author's ideas and conclusions expressed clearly and compellingly? When examples are used, are they concrete and specific, and do they deepen the reader's understanding? Are vague generalities avoided?
4. Is the paper very well written and presented, when compared to a high standard of excellence? Are there spelling or grammatical errors, or other problems in presentation? (Of course, allowance should be made for different cultural means of expression—e.g., for the style of presentation of speakers of languages other than English, etc.)

With regard to the meaningful incorporation of 6-8 readings- 10 points- A: 8 or more readings, 10 pts B: 6 readings, 8pts C: 5 readings or less, 7 pts or less
2. Meaningful incorporation means citing a reading and also discussing it in more than one sentence.

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

WRID/IGD Interview   Id No._____
Maxwell/Chesler/For
Fall 2009

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Interview Protocol

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INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND THE PROJECT

General: Background Information and Racial Identity
1. You recently completed an (<u>IGD on R/E or WRID</u>) course with the Intergroup Relations (IGR) program at the University. A good portion of this course focused on social identities. So in terms of race and gender, how did you identify yourself in this class?
   a. What does this mean to you?
   b. How often do you think about your racial identification?

2. How does your racial identification shape your personal beliefs?
   a. What were you taught, explicitly or implicitly, about what it means to be (<u>a White Person or a Person of Color</u>)? [E.g., attitudes, behaviors, your future, the nature of the society, etc.]?

3. What are some experiences that have made your race visible to you?

Dialoging about Race: Experiences with and Learning from IGR
4. As an (race and/or gender identity response), can you tell me what being in the (<u>WRID or R/E</u>) dialogue was like for you?

   PROBE: How did you feel about being a _____ in this dialogue? Tell me more…

5. What primary lessons did you take away from this experience? If possible, please provide concrete examples.

   PROBE: For example, lessons related to working with your own group or other groups, how you engage with conflict, how you might ally with others…

6. Now let's turn to communication and interaction with others in the dialogue group. How easy or difficult was it for you to talk about your reactions or feelings in the group?
   a. What was it about your dialogue group that helped you to be able to share?
   b. What was it about your dialogue group that made it difficult for you to share?

7. During this dialogue you had a chance to hear other people share personal experiences, stories and testimonials. Please give me an example of a time when someone from your own social identity group shared an experience that had an impact on you. What was their story about?

      a. What kinds of feelings came up for you when you heard the story or experience?

      b. (**For R/E only**) Please give me an example of a time when someone from another social identity group shared an experience that had an impact on you. What was their story?

          i. What kinds of feelings came up for you when you heard the story or experience?

8. Did your dialogue experience have an impact on how your now feel about people from your own identity group?

      a. Please describe a particular incident that caused you to feel this way. What happened? What was going on?

      b. Did your dialogue experience have an impact on how you now feel about people from another racial identity group?

          i. Please describe a particular incident that caused you to feel this way. What happened? What was going on?

9. In learning about race/ethnicity, do you think there are any special advantages to being in a (white only or interracial) dialogue?

      a. Are there any special disadvantages to being in a (white only or interracial) dialogue?

10. (**For students in R/E only**) Some people argue that interracial dialogue, ones with white students and students of color, often take the form of students of color educating or telling white students about their experiences and lives. To what extent did this happen in your dialogue?

      a. Do you feel that was a good use of dialogue time and energy?

Wrap Up: Reflections & Recommendations

11. Did you find the Dialogue course beneficial? Why or why not?

      a. How did your own participation in this course (e.g., interactive exercises, discussions and Collaboration Project) affect group dynamics?

      b. If you were to participate in this Dialogue again, would your participation be different? Please explain.

12. Do you feel comfortable talking outside the dialogue program with people of another identity group? Why or why not?

      a. Did your participation in the dialogue help you be more comfortable or less so?

          i. How? What happened? What didn't happen?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview!

Appendix G: Consent Form for Participants

EXPLORATIONS OF RACIAL IDENTITY:
A RESEARCH PROJECT INVOLVING THE RACE/ETHNICITY AND WHITE RACIAL
IDENTITY DIALOGUES

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

You are invited to participate in a study of racial identity development. The purpose of the project is to query the students in the Race and Ethnicity Dialogue and the White Racial Identity Dialogue regarding their understanding of racial identity and of their reactions to and learning from the dialogue itself. This project is being conducted by the Program on Intergroup Relations at the University of Michigan.

You are invited to:

1) Provide the research team with copies of the two papers that are a regular part of the assignments in the Race/Ethnicity or White Racial Identity Dialogue. One of these papers is assigned at the beginning of the semester and the other at the end of the semester. The content of these papers is outlined specifically in the assignment handout you will receive but generally asks you to reflect on the meaning of your racial identity, your experiences with race and ethnicity in your life, and expectations of (or reflections upon) the dialogue. You are asked to create a study ID of the last four digits of your social security number and place it in the header of the papers, so that we can match the first and second papers without your name attached. Do not place your name on the paper. Members of the research team will not know your name and your papers are anonymous to them.

2) Allow your papers (without your name on them) to be coded for research purposes by the research team— by someone other than the facilitators and instructors. Specifically, we will be looking to better understand the dialogue process as well as to gain more knowledge about how college students write about and discuss their racial identity.

Later in the term you will participate in a one-hour audio-taped reflective interview about your dialogue experience. You are invited to:

3) Allow your one hour audio-taped reflective individual interview (without your name on it) conducted by a member of the research staff outside of class, to be coded for research purposes by the research team—by someone other than the facilitators and instructors. Specifically, we will be looking to better understand the dialogue process as well as to gain more knowledge about how the dialogue process impacts how college students think about their racial identity.

Your participation will involve the following:

4) Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and you can withdraw your consent at any time. You have received copies of the two paper assignments and the papers will be utilized as written for the class assignment. You will participate in the final reflective interview as part of the regular course assignments.

5) You must be 18 years old to participate.

6) While there are no direct individual benefits to you, the study will benefit other undergraduate students taking the race/ethnicity dialogue and white racial identity dialogue, or students on campus as a whole, by providing information about how students understand the meaning of their racial identity and in helping to improve the dialogue itself.

7) Your answers to the questions in the papers will be kept strictly confidential. This means that your name will not appear on the copy of the papers provided to the research team. The information you give will not be connected with your name in research reports. The reports will present information in the summary for that will not identify any individual. No one other than the research staff will have access (for coding purposes) to my papers. Your name will not be on any of these research instruments.

8) While exploring racial issues may produce some discomfort, there are no known risks with participating in the research project.

9) You may ask questions about this study at any time and can expect truthful answers. You can ask University of Michigan staff member supervising the research effort, Dr. Mark Chesler @936-1985.

10) Should you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, you can contact: Institutional Review Board at 540 East Liberty Street, Suite 202 Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 or 734-936-0933
Email: irbhsbs@umich.edu

11) You will be given a copy of this form after you have signed it.

12) This consent form will be kept in a file separate from the papers. Only the research staff will have access to the consent form.

I have read this document and agree to participate in this research project.

PLEASE SIGN HERE   PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME

_____   _____

DATE:_____

IDENTIFICATION (the last four numbers of your parents' telephone number):_____

Appendix H: Testimonial Assignment

Journal 3 (Assigned during Session 3)
Write your own testimonial; tell your story. What have you experienced regarding social identities? How does this affect the person you are today? Make sure to focus on two things: (1) your experience concerning the identity of focus in your dialogue, and (2) your experience concerning another social identity or something that makes you who you are. Please relate your discussion to at least 2 coursepack readings for this week. [NOTE: This journal must be completed in preparation for Session 4. Plan to practice your testimonial out loud so it is no more than 5 minutes in length].

Session 4: Main Activities
TELLING OUR STORIES (90 minutes)
Ask students to share their testimonials and tell their own stories. Make sure participants understand that they are free to tell or not tell any parts of their stories. Creating an open environment—in which students feel able to take risks and be supported and not judged—is critical to this process. During the process, affirm the sharing and risk-taking without judging what is being said.

As important personal issues may surface for the first time during the session, handout information on Counseling and Psychological services at the University, SAPAC, and/or other support information at the beginning of the session.

It is often helpful for one facilitator to begin with his or her testimonial to demonstrate the depth and openness of sharing permitted and affirmed within the dialogue session.

> Time Management: While you want to make sure that each participant has enough time to share his//her story, ideally testimonials should be finished within this class period. Because testimonials have a tendency to take a long time and it is important to have time to share, set a time limit (such as 5 minutes for each person). If a participant exceeds this limit by more than 2-3 minutes, facilitators should stop the testimonial and thank the participant.

Participants will be sitting in a circle. When one begins telling his/her story, have the person on their right hold a watch and indicate when there is one minute left and when time is up (this way, no one feels guilty for stopping each others' stories—it's the watch's fault). Everyone else in the circle should be listening attentively to the person sharing. Explain to participants that it may be best to begin with the most difficult or important part of their stories so that they do not miss sharing it because of the time constraint.

SHARING IN DYADS (10 minutes)
After everyone has finished sharing with the large group, break into dyads and allow five minutes for each participant to share their thoughts and feelings with one other person. Once participants have paired up, explain that each person in the dyad will have five minutes to speak

and that they can decide who will go first. One of the facilitators should time their interactions to allow five minutes for the first and five minutes for the second.

<u>RE-GROUP</u> (5 minutes)
After returning to the large group, affirm students' participation in the session. Thank the group for their stories and their willingness to share.

Appendix I: Cross the Line Activity

Facilitators select statements to use at the time of the activity, as well as alternate between "Target" and "Agent" statements.

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Cross the Line

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For each category, facilitator says: "Please step silently to the other side of the room if you are _____(the category). (Pause). Notice who is standing with you. Notice who is not. Notice what you are feeling. Please step back together."

Target
- If you are a woman.
- If you are African-American or Black.
- If you are Asian or Pacific Islander.
- If you are Latino/Chicano/Mexican-American.
- If you are Native/American Indian.
- If you were raised poor.
- If you were raised by a single parent or currently are a single parent.
- If you come from a working-class family.
- If you were raised in the country, rurally.
- If neither of your parents received a college education.
- If you were ever held back in grade school.
- If you were raised Hindu or Muslim.
- If you were raised Jewish.
- If you have a visible or non-visible physical disability or suffered a catastrophic or life-threatening illness.
- If you are an immigrant to this country.
- If you speak English as a second language.
- If you come from a family where alcohol or drugs were a problem.
- If you are a non-management worker, do not supervise anyone on your job.
- If you have ever received public assistance and/or ever been homeless.
- If you grew up in an abusive or violent household.
- If you were ever called fat.
- If you were ever a child.

Appendix J: Race and Ethnicity Privilege Walk

RACE & ETHNICITY PRIVILEGE WALK (aka Power Shuffle) (20 minutes)
(Note: it is important not to mention the title of this exercise before it happens. Let participants come up with their own ideas about the meaning and significance of this experience)

Facilitator explains: "To begin, please form a straight line in the middle of the room facing XXX wall. We will read a series of statements asking you to take a step backward or forward, depending on your experience with the statement. We ask that you do this exercise in silence, helping to maintain a reflective atmosphere for all participants."

Sample statements to be read aloud by facilitators:

If, growing up, you could find dolls or action figures with skin color like yours, take one step forward.

If English is not your first language, take one step backward.

If you grew up with parents of two (or more) different races, take one step backward

If you ever lived in a neighborhood where you were the same race as the majority of people living there, and it was considered "a good neighborhood", take one step forward.

If you've ever been confused with or mislabeled as a race other than your own, take one step backward.

If you see members of your race depicted in healthy and positive ways frequently in mass media, please take one step forward

If you've ever been forced to check a single box (and not one labeled "multiracial"), take one step backward.

If your ancestors were forcibly brought to this country, please take one step back

If English is your first language, please take one step forward

If you are guaranteed to have your religious holidays off from school/work without request, please take one step forward

If the history of your race wasn't taught with American History, please take one step back

If people question why you segregate yourself with people of your race, please take one step back

If people consider your race to be exotic, please take one step back

If you've ever thought you've been pulled over by the police because of your race take one step back

If you've ever had difficulty finding hair or skin products in a regular supermarket take one step backwards.

If you can buy flesh tone bandaids and/or nude stockings that match your skin tone take one step forward

If you generally know that people will look like you most places you go take one step forward.

If you've ever felt out of place because of your race take one step backwards.

If you qualify for race-based affirmative action take one step backwards.

If you have ever been blamed for the bad economy because of your race or ethnicity, take a step back.

If you rarely think about your race, take a step forward.

If you look to others to educate you about race, take a step forward.

If because of your race, people automatically assumed you weren't American, take a step back.

If you are a "hyphenated American", take a step back.

If because of your race or ethnicity, people assume you don't speak English, take a step back.

If because of your race, people expect you to have an "accent", take a step back.

If you have ever been told that you are not in school, got your job, etc because of your merit, take a step back

If you feel you don't have a lot of experience with race, take a step forward

If anyone has ever asked if they could touch your hair because it was different, take a step back.

If things associated with your culture (music, food, fashion) are seen as trendy, take a step back.

Take a moment and look around the room. Notice where you and others are standing.

DEBRIEFING (40 min)
At first, it is important to focus on participants' experiences during this exercise. People will have different reactions to moving backward and forward, as well as to the ending statement. The content of the statements may also elicit strong reactions from participants. After participants' experiences in the exercise are acknowledged, it is important to relate these

experiences to situations in society such as the invisibility of privilege and oppression, the motivation of the disadvantaged, and the feelings often associated with different positions in a social hierarchy.

Begin debriefing in three fishbowls (back, middle, front) Each group addresses same questions:

- How did it feel to participate in this exercise?
- How did it feel to be at the back/middle/front of the group?
- What does this exercise say about you?

Large Group Processing Questions:
- What did you hear that surprised you? What didn't you hear?
- What is this activity about?
- How does it relate to the course and/or readings?
- How did it feel to think about these issues?
- How did it feel to look around the room at the end of the exercise?
- How might this represent the reactions of individuals in society?