How Do White College Students Perceive the Role of a White Ally? Exploring White Allyship Development in Midwestern White College Students

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Yvonne (Bonnie) Salazar and Roland Salazar, who have been my biggest supporters throughout my entire life. Any positive traits or achievements I have or will have are directly attributable to them. Thank you for absolutely everything.

To my partner and love of my life, Christopher Oleska. Thank you for dedicating every one of your days to ensuring I am loved by someone wonderful. You have helped me to grow more than anyone else ever has.

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ABSTRACT

White college students have become increasingly interested in being antiracist White allies, raising questions about how to cultivate effective White allyship development. The extant theoretical literature proposes that White allyship development entails a process of increasing critical reflection on racism and consistent engagement in White allyship behaviors (Spaneriman & Smith, 2017; Heberle et al., 2020). What is less clear is how White college students conceptualize White allyship behavior and which factors support their White allyship development. My research addressed this gap in the literature by using sequential methodological triangulation across two studies. In Study 1, I interviewed 23 White college students and used thematic analysis to learn how they conceptualized and attempted to engage in White allyship behaviors. Then, building on Study 1's findings, Study 2 distributed an online survey to 563 White college students (comprised of 199 recently graduated college seniors and 364 first-semester freshmen) to quantitatively test key patterns observed in Study 1. Both studies found that White students conceptualized allyship behavior in a variety of ways, but how White students understood allyship behavior was largely determined by their level of critical reflection on racism. *Color-evasion color-blindness*, the belief that racial differences should be ignored (Frankenberg, 1993), served as the primary framework for understanding race within students with low critical reflection on racism, and produced a limited understanding of allyship and low engagement in allyship behaviors. Findings further suggested that color-evasion color-blindness may even encourage inaction by limiting allyship to only *transitional interpersonal* behaviors,

such as "helping" People of Color and friendship with People of Color. Both studies also revealed strong evidence that White allyship development follows a predictable process of growing critical reflection on racism alongside engagement in White allyship behaviors. This finding is significant because neither the Critical Consciousness nor the Critical Whiteness Studies literature has empirically tested White allyship development in this way (e.g., Jemal, 2017; Leonardo, 2013). Nonetheless, the process of White allyship development was shown to be distinct from racial consciousness development among Students of Color in that it could be absent, slower, and/or an inconsistent process due to the pervasiveness of color-blindness and the ability for White students to view themselves as "normal" and/or without a racial identity. Finally, both studies confirmed the importance of the college experience, and especially participation in race curricula, on White allyship development. White students may experience major expansion in their White allyship development in college because college can serve as a comprehensive, long-term racial (re)socialization experience in which students have multiple informal and formal opportunities to meaningfully engage with race. My findings call for holding institutions of higher education accountable for either fostering or neglecting White allyship development within their White students. Altogether, my research provided strong qualitative and quantitative evidence for the importance of the college experience on White allyship development, while also revealing the hindering and counter-intuitive effects of color-evasion color-blindness.

CHAPTER 1

Why Study White College Students and White Allyship?

This dissertation sought to explore how White college students conceptualized White allyship and which individual and contextual factors affected their personal White allyship development. Generally, a "White ally" is a White person who engages in antiracism. However, as the topic of race floods social media, Congress, and everyday conversation, more and more people have contributed their ideas on what defines a White ally and what does not. Psychological research on White allyship has primarily focused on racial attitudes and identity development models (e.g., Edwards, 2006; Reason et al., 2005), with some empirical work completed on which characteristics People of Color mark as White allyship (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018). However, little work has been completed on how White people, themselves, define White allyship and which behaviors they appraise as allyship behaviors. For instance, in what ways do White conceptualizations of allyship differ from or match previous theories and empirical work on allyship? Furthermore, which factors influence how a White person conceptualizes allyship or the level of allyship behaviors the engage in? Bettering our understanding for White perceptions of White allyship and any potential contributing factors to their overall allyship development can strengthen our ability to foster effective allyship within our institutions of higher education. However, studying White college students meaningfully—that is, not studying them circumstantially because they happen to be the majority race within our

samples, but rather, studying White college students to understand their personal experiences as a racial group, was uncommon until recent years within the social sciences. As Bonilla-Silva, Goar, and Embrick (2006) stated, "most social scientists have perpetuated the mythology that minorities are 'raced' and experience 'race problems' while ignoring white identity and culture" (p. 231). Therefore, to illuminate a still-dimmed perspective, I investigated White college students' understandings of White allyship along with the potential factors contributing to their White allyship development via a mixed methods approach across two studies.

Organization of this Chapter, Introduction of Appendix A: Glossary, and Utilized Language within this Dissertation

The first chapter of this dissertation is organized into several sections followed by a glossary included in Appendix A. First, I introduce the modern forms of racism present today within the United States which include the intrapersonal, interpersonal, systemic, and cultural levels of racism. Second, I introduce the two conceptual frameworks that informed this dissertation: (a) Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS; Leonardo, 2013), a subset of Critical Race Theory (CRT; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) and (b) Critical Consciousness (CC), a process describing the development of critical awareness and action (Freire, 1993). Third, I then describe how I combined these frameworks to define and investigate White allyship development. Fourth, I detail the current context of White allyship pulling from public perceptions and conversations amidst the largest antiracist movement of the 21st century thus far. Fifth, I examine two important themes within the White allyship development research which view allyship as a developmental process and serving as an action-oriented identity for White people. In this section, I also discuss important criticisms on these ideas. Sixth, I share research evidencing

potential factors to White allyship development including the college context and the impeding factor of color-blindness.

This chapter then includes an overview of the two studies examined within this dissertation: (a) Study 1, a qualitative exploratory study on 23 White college students that examined White allyship conceptualization and potential factors to White allyship development and (b) Study 2, a mixed methods study on 563 White college students that explored predictors of White allyship conceptualization and engagement. This investigation aimed to further our understanding of how White college students conceptualized and engaged in White allyship behaviors, and which factors may influence or impede their White allyship development. This dissertation also produced a glossary of key terms that serve as both a clarification of the terms used throughout this dissertation as well as a resource for White allyship development (see Appendix A).

Lastly, throughout this dissertation I utilize the terms, "allyship" and "antiracism" interchangeably and synonymously (though, I will primarily use the term "allyship"). Not all have agreed with the using the term "ally." "Accomplice" and "co-conspirator," for example, have been offered as alternative and more "risk-taking and rule-breaking" in implication than "ally" (Carlson et al., 2019; Clemens, 2017). However, within my investigation, I find it most useful to use the term "allyship" or "ally" for both its approachability by White students who may have preconceived notions of activism solely as public demonstrations, marches, and protests, and allyship's distinction of engaging in antiracism as opposed to "friendship" which can be achieved without antiracism (Ostrove & Brown, 2018). Other terms like "accomplice" and "co-conspirator" may not be as familiar to White students as "ally." The implications of "accomplice" and "co-conspirator" may also further perpetuate stereotypes of antiracism (and

activism) as violent or morally questionable. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that the language for "ally" may evolve with time, especially as consensus for better language grows.

Forms of Racism in the 21st Century

Race continues to be an important aspect of many Americans' personal identity. However, through racism, a person's race can also adversely affect numerous facets of their life. The United States has long suffered with various forms of racism, with current forms manifesting interpersonally, systemically, culturally, and implicitly within oneself (intrapersonally).

Interpersonal Racism

When most Americans think of racism, they imagine it as occurring interpersonally between individuals in the form of explicit racism, such as calling a Black person the "N-word." After the Civil Rights era, explicit forms of racism became less prominent and decreased in social acceptability (Tatum, 1997). Though in recent years following the election of President Trump White nationalists and alt-right groups have led increases in acts of explicit racism (e.g., Southern Poverty Law Center, 2020), more subtle forms of racism still dominate the 21st century. Psychologists have long theorized about these subtler forms of racism contributing terminology such as *aversive racism* developed by Dovidio and Gaertner (1986), *symbolic racism* by Sears (1988), and *modern racism* by Sears and Henry (2003). Each generally presents a form of racism where individuals believe themselves to be against racism, but because of underlying racial beliefs such as blaming People of Color's failures in social mobility on their lack of hard work, possess discriminatory racial attitudes.

Psychologists Sue and colleagues (2007) also proposed a popular theory of "everyday" forms of racism called microaggression theory. They theorized that microaggressions are "brief

and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color [*sic*]" (p. 271). Microaggressions include three forms: *microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations*. Microassaults mimic the "old-fashioned" explicit forms of racism such as the use of racial epithets or the displaying of swastikas (Sue et al., 2007). However, the other two forms, microinsults and microinvalidations, have been collectively referred to as "microaggressions" by laypeople and academics alike to indicate inexplicit negative communications towards People of Color. More specifically, microinsults are communications that convey "rudeness and insensitivity" concerning race, such as implying to a Person of Color that they were a "diversity hire" and not hired because of skillset. Microinvalidations, which "are characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 274), include situations like a Person of Color being told they are "too sensitive" about race issues or that "we should ignore race and see each other as human beings." Microinsults and microinvalidations, like other theories on subtler forms of racism, can be unintentional and are not often recognized as racism making them difficult to both teach and correct.

Systemic Racism

Modern racism also occurs systemically where racism affects established systems and institutions. This type of racism is aptly referred to as systemic racism or institutional racism and is "less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts," but "is no less destructive of human life" (Stokely & Hamilton, 1967, p. 4). Systemic racism affects our healthcare systems creating poorer access to health care for People of Color as compared to Whites (Smedley et al., 2003) as has been demonstrated within the COVID-19 pandemic where

Black Americans comprise "24.3% of COVID-19 deaths" at "twice their population share" (American Public Media Research Lab Staff, 2020). Systemic racism also affects our economic systems; People of Color are disproportionately of lower social class than Whites (American Psychological Association, 2017). It also affects our educational systems and weakens educational opportunities for People of Color; for example, there are significant racial disparities within standardized testing which lowers opportunities for matriculation into institutions of higher education (Au, 2009). It affects our criminal justice system forming racial inequities like staggeringly high incarceration rates for Blacks, especially as compared to Whites and other races (Alexander, 2010). Systemic racism affects every American system, but because "intention" and "blame" are difficult to pinpoint, racist American systems persist.

A Culture of Racism & Implicit Racism

Racism continues to be embedded within our American culture. People of Color's media portrayals and lack of diverse representations perpetuate racial stereotypes within our society. Therefore, as products of our society, we, ourselves, unintentionally and unconsciously learn, possess, and perpetuate racial biases (Colburn & Melander, 2018; Dukes, & Gaither, 2017; Schug et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2014). Within psychology, these racial biases are known as *implicit bias* (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) which can be held by both the majority group and the minority group(s) adversely affected (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). For example, both Latinos and Whites can experience implicit bias against Latinos as demonstrated in the following scenario: Imagine a Latino man and White woman are walking alone at night. They both encounter another Latino man walking towards them and both move across to the other side of street because they fear this Latino man looks "suspicious." When they both encounter a White man that same night, they continue walking past him on the same side of the street. Whether

intentional or not, they were afraid of the Latino man and not the White man perhaps because of the implicit bias they both share as a result of being a part of our society. Through a culture of racism, Latinos are predominately portrayed as criminals in the media, whereas White men are represented in a variety of portrayals causing implicit biases to form only against Latinos and not Whites. Implicit biases demonstrate that racism can occur within all of us, creating a need for us to take personal responsibility in combatting racism, even within ourselves.

White Allyship's Role within Modern Racism

Racism is learned ubiquitously and occurs interpersonally, systemically, culturally and within oneself through implicit biases. Yet, we often rely on People of Color to begin race movements, to start race dialogues, and even, to study race. With an estimated 60.1% of the United States population identifying as White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019), our country needs Whites to take an active role in combatting the many forms of racism alongside People of Color. This investigation empirically examined current conceptualizations of, and forms of engagement in, White allyship within White college student to explore how they are attempting to combat these various forms of racism.

Critical Whiteness Studies

This investigation applied Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) as its primary framework for analysis. Critical Whiteness Studies, a subset of Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), aims to examine and unpack the social constructions of race and Whiteness. Since the dawn of modern psychology, psychologists have attempted to measure racism and prejudice in predominately White samples by quantifying the strength of participants' prejudice or racist attitudes. However, the conventional approach to examining race in this way importantly differs from a CWS approach. Apart from a few notable exceptions (e.g., Neville et

al., 2000; Sears, 1988; Sears & Henry, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001), psychologists typically do not examine understandings of systemic racism (e.g., Greenwald et al., 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and typically do not measure awareness of Whiteness. Additionally, psychologists tend to study White people because (a) they intend to study the American population, which so happens to be majority White or (b) they utilize White people in their sample as the "control group" for People of Color which can perpetuate "White" as the norm (Syed, 2020). In either circumstance, neither Whiteness nor the multiple forms of racism are explored. A CWS framework allows for us to specifically investigate White privilege, Whiteness, and White people's racialized experiences (Leonardo, 2013).

Within my investigation, I applied a Critical Whiteness Studies lens to understand how White college students are thinking about and engaging in allyship within their everyday lives. Today's form of CWS is a relatively new area of inquiry within the social sciences and especially within psychology (see Fine et al., 2012). CWS began to gain traction in the 90's with the works of Peggy McIntosh's (1988) "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" and Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. However, the concept of examining Whites and Whiteness is as old as the study of race itself and includes seminal works such as W.E.B. DuBois' (1910) "The Souls of White Folk" and Franz Fanon's (2008) [1967] *Black skin, white masks*. Across all works, CWS assumes that Whiteness is a root cause of racism.

Whiteness is the sociopolitical phenomenon where legitimized power (i.e., the mechanism through which one can access resources (Frankenberg, 1993; Parsons, 1963)) is possessed by people who socially and/or systemically are considered White. I define "White" as a racial group typically designated for people who are assumed to be of European ancestry with

socially shifting ethnic and phenotypic norms. Within the United States, Whiteness is legitimized through racist systems that disproportionately advantage White people over People of Color which is often referred to as “White privilege.” The term *White privilege* was popularized by Peggy McIntosh (1988) in her famous work, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” McIntosh likens White privilege to “an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks” (McIntosh, 1988, p. 30) which allow Whites to experience both social advantages, as well as a lack of social disadvantages, due to their Whiteness. Though Whiteness and White privilege are often used interchangeably, I conceive Whiteness as the force by which White privilege is experienced. Moments of White privilege such as the ability of a White person to jog around their neighborhood without worrying their race will threaten their safety exists because of Whiteness. Yet, Whiteness often acts as an invisible force due to its ubiquity and dominance in American society. CWS attempts to make visible the invisibility of Whiteness by explicitly studying the effects of racialized social systems through concepts such as Whiteness and White privilege.

One of the complicated (and debated) underlying assumptions of the Critical Whiteness Studies literature is that through an unveiling and (re)learning of their Whiteness and White privilege, White people may then counteract its effects. In other words, White consciousness is assumed to lead to antiracism (e.g., White allyship behaviors; see Appendix A). However, as Leonardo (2013) identified, CWS has yet to clarify this process or the validity of its existence. Because of this theoretical gap, I turned to the Critical Consciousness literature to extend my theoretical framework of White allyship development. The CC literature shows consistent evidence supporting a positive relationship between critical reflection and action (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2011).

Critical Consciousness

Critical Consciousness (CC) has been long understood as the process by which people who are experiencing oppression become liberated through (a) *critical reflection*, or an awareness of oppression and (b) *critical action* which is taking sociopolitical action to disrupt oppressive structures (Jemal, 2017). Therefore, an established assumption of CC theory is that liberation is obtained only through oppressed groups who are driven by their need to be liberated. Most of the CC literature accordingly focuses on oppressed groups (Jemal, 2017). A small amount of work has included White people but has either focused on White people who are experiencing class marginalization (Diemer & Li, 2011) or White people's general development across a non-specified CC (e.g., not specified to be about class, race, gender, etc.) (Godfrey & Grayman, 2014). Heberle et al. (2020) and others (e.g., Diemer et al., 2017; Jemal, 2017) have recognized this large gap within the CC literature and have called for future research to examine CC development within privileged identity statuses.

However, as previously stated, most of the CC literature has focused on oppressed groups with some CC scholars even understanding critical consciousness development as an exclusive experience of marginalization (Jemal, 2017). Paulo Freire (1993) is recognized as popularizing the term, conscientização or "critical consciousness" in his 1970 work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Freire (1993) [1970] described oppression as a dehumanizing experience for both the oppressed and the oppressor indicating that the process of liberation involves both, but must be led by the oppressed, "the oppressor, who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others, is unable to lead this struggle." Further, Freire's (1993) work also recognized that every person is submerged within a "culture of silence," but can develop an awareness and act against it, which altogether, we might interpret as both White people and People of Color being capable

of critical consciousness development. However, though both the oppressed and oppressor might require liberation from their dehumanization and that both may be capable undergoing critical consciousness, Freire (1993) also importantly stated that these processes are distinct and that efforts must be led by the oppressed.

Heberle et al. (2020) posited that for White youth, the process of racial critical consciousness development may still involve the same components of critical reflection and action but may be experienced differently. For example, White critical reflection may involve critiquing one's own Whiteness and White critical action may involve enhancing one's antiracist allyship (Heberle et al., 2020). Additionally, White critical consciousness development (i.e., White allyship development) might not be as predictable as the CC model and CWS literature assume. There is the assumption that "if White people would only become conscious of their Whiteness, more just behavior would follow" (Andersen, 2003, p. 25; as cited in Leonard, 2013). In fact, the CC literature shows consistent evidence supporting a positive relationship between critical reflection and action in People of Color (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2011). However, the pathway towards White allyship development may not be as linear as is already evidenced in some studies which have found differences between Whites and People of Color in non-specified critical consciousness development (Diemer & Li, 2011; Godfrey & Grayman, 2014; Heberle et al., 2020).

Putting the Pieces Together: Defining White Allyship Via a CWS and CC Lens

Altogether, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) understands allyship much like Critical Consciousness (CC) might. For example, CWS consistently defines White allyship as involving a critical awareness of power and privilege (Reason et al., 2005; Sue, 2017) and taking critical action against racism (i.e., engagement in White allyship behaviors) (e.g., Broido, 2000;

Spanierman & Smith, 2017). In other words, when the CC and CWS frameworks are merged, White allyship development can be regarded as a participatory process of critical reflection on racism (or knowledge of racism and Whiteness) and critical action against racism (i.e., White allyship behaviors). For this dissertation, I label racial critical consciousness development in Whites as White allyship development. Other appropriate labels might be White critical consciousness or White racial consciousness. However, I label this process as *White allyship development* to underscore the role that Whites may assume within liberation.

As previously mentioned, White allyship development may not be as linear nor predictable of a process as CC theory might assume because as a White person is developing an awareness of one's own privilege, while still existing within their privilege. As a result, even with the best of intentions, White allyship development can be curtailed. One of the primary aims of this dissertation is to better understand how White college students conceptualize White allyship to help close the sometimes-wide gap between intention and outcome that can occur because of White privilege. Additionally, Heberle et al. (2020) argued that researchers must consider how some may form a "superficial form of critical consciousness as a tool for upholding their status" (p. 547). For these reasons, I employed the CWS literature on allyship to assess productive versus potentially harmful allyship behaviors.

A core belief within CWS is that racism occurs across all socioecological levels (i.e., intrapersonally, interpersonally, systemically, or societally). Thus, CWS may assume that allyship behaviors include any behaviors that effectively counteract racism on any socioecological level, but CWS has yet to delineate specific types of allyship behaviors. However, it has offered critiques on problematic White allyship which can help illuminate the bounds of effective White allyship behavior. For example, Spanierman and Smith (2017) discuss

what many have called a "White savior complex" or "missionary zeal" (Weah et al., 2000, p. 673). The authors described this occurrence as well-intentioned and aspiring White allies who seek to help People of Color but convey paternalistic superiority. Examples in film have been argued to include *The Blind Side, The Help*, and *Freedom Writers* where a White person comes in to "save" People of Color (Cammarota, 2011; Hughey, 2012; as cited by Spanierman & Smith, 2017). Another popular example is that of White students who go on service trips abroad to poorer countries. Oftentimes these trips are framed by White students as helping the poor communities of Color who "need" their help, while these White students gain personal growth and a foreign experience. Instead, many view these trips as White students exhibiting a "White savior complex" by which White students believe they are "saving" People of Color though these trips are often short-term and lack training in economic development. Consistent with Freire's (1993) criticisms of "false charity" and with Edwards' (2006) criticisms of the aspiring ally motivated by self-interest, Spanierman and Smith (2017) contend that the "role of White allies has nothing to do with helping People of Color to survive in a system of White dominance. Rather, ally work involves transforming systems of White dominance to be equitable, fair, and just" (Spanierman & Smith, 2017, p. 609-610).

Additionally, Cabrera, Matias, and Montoya's (2017) article on the differences between activism and "slacktivism" offer further insight. Though activism and allyship can be argued to involve some differences in behaviors and theoretical characteristics, their work creates a useful framework for evaluating the bounds and limitations of which behaviors might comprise White allyship as well. The authors warn against slacktivism, which is when an aspiring ally solely performs "clicktivism" or publicly "liking" a cause or political post on social media as a form of activism, sympathy, and/or charity. However, the authors acknowledge that detecting the lines

between activism and slacktivism is becoming increasingly blurred due to social media and offer 10 theoretical premises for student activists to use to better evaluate their own behaviors. Premises include statements such as "student activism involves an intentional, sustained connection to a larger collective;" "to be a student activist is a description of behavior as opposed to an identity;" and "student activism must entail a degree of risk" (p.404 – 407; Cabrera et al., 2017). In agreement with Cabrera et al. (2017), Phillips et al. (2019) also cautioned against the dangers of "ally performers" or demonstrating "performative allyship" which they defined as someone who "primarily focuses on talking about the work, but not doing the work" (p. 15). The authors state that ally performers may be motivated by conveying a public persona of allyship perhaps to be viewed as a "good" White person.

Therefore, CWS might conclude that allyship behaviors consist of engaging in efforts to counteract racism at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, systemic, and/or societal level that do not display paternalism, do not *only* include "safe" or "risk-free" behaviors, and do not rely on intentions of self-interest. Within this dissertation, specific examples of effective and ineffective behaviors will be explored and interpreted via a CWS lens. Outside CWS, more individuals than ever have entered the discussion of what allyship behavior should or should not be, who should be considered an ally, and even, if allyship is necessary.

The Current Context: Allyship and the Largest Antiracism Movement of the 21st Century

Two White men shot Ahmaud Arbery while he was jogging in a Georgia neighborhood; Louisville police officers shot Breonna Taylor at least 8 times while she was sleeping in her bed; a Minneapolis police officer kneeled on the neck of George Floyd until he was unable to breathe. All victims were Black, and all died from these horrific encounters. These were not the first Black lives taken in such circumstances, but the Black Lives Matter movement surged to both

national and global action in 2020. This widescale call-to-action may have been due to Trump's militant and callused responses to the deaths and early protests (Demby, 2020), an increase in empathy as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Demby, 2020), and/or perhaps due to the proximity and virality of the deaths. Nevertheless, by June 2020, over 2000 cities and towns across the world held protests against police brutality and systemic racism broadly (Burch et al., 2020). Unlike previous antiracism movements within recent years, the antiracism movement of 2020 enacted a series of structural changes such as budget cuts at some police departments (Johnson & Moreno, 2020) and the passing of an executive order by President Trump which banned chokeholds (except in life-threatening circumstances), launched a national database of police officers' use of force, and began incentivizing police departments to use social workers on nonviolent calls (Colvin et al., 2020). The movement also increased many people's urgency to combat racism. For instance, a CNN poll conducted from June 2nd to June 5th of 2020 revealed that 42% of Americans were now prioritizing race within their voting decisions (Angiesta, 2020). Racism is one of the darkest, long-standing issues in the United States and the 2020 antiracism movement marks the largest antiracism movement in the 21st century thus far.

Displays of, and Current Conversations on, White Allyship

Amidst protests, even more took to social media to demonstrate solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. Millions posted Black Lives Matter hashtags and participated in #blackouttuesday—a social media movement begun by the music industry in response to police brutality—by posting a black square to their personal feeds on June 2nd, 2020. Taking to social media after horrific racial events are not novel, but in addition to posting outrage against police brutality and support for the Black Lives Matter movement, several have also used social media to facilitate action and allyship engagement. Users, many of which have been White, have

crowd-sourced resources on places to donate, petitions to sign, who to write to or call to advocate for justice, key literature for entry-level understanding on systemic racism, and Black businesses and artists to support. As the number of Whites engaging in allyship have risen, so too have the conversations surrounding the definitions and boundaries of White allyship.

Perceptions of Allyship

Perceptions of allyship vary depending on the intended ally behavior, the person performing the ally behavior, and the People of Color involved (if any). For instance, during the peak of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 some proclaimed, "if you haven't posted anything on social media, I will unfriend/block you"—citing silence on social media as compliance or complacency with current racist events. Whereas others have seen the surge of social media support as performative. Mark Ritson (2020), a White man, in his opinion piece featured on *Marketing Week's* website called out mega-brands Nike, Adidas, Apple, and Spotify for posting on social media in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement while having all-White or nearly all-White boards with no Black board members. One twitter user even remarked, "performative allyship is way more sickening than plain discrimination. Like, they're cognizant of what they're doing and benefitting from it." Still others like Cali Rockowitz, a White woman, posted a now-viral post which read, "Some are posting on social media, some are protesting in the streets, some are donating silently, some are educating themselves, some are having tough conversations with friends & family. A revolution has many lanes—be kind to yourself and to others who are traveling in the same direction. Just keep your foot on the gas" (Rockowitz, 2020). Perceptions of what is *sufficient* allyship can clearly differ, especially with racial tensions high and distrust justifiably present.

Even the same action can be perceived differently by two People of Color. For instance, imagine a race discussion is occurring in a classroom. One White student shares with their group that they are uncertain as to whether their understanding of a particular race topic is correct, so they turn to the only two students of Color within their group to confirm. Student of Color A believes that this action of confirming understanding instead of making presumptions is a valiant effort, while Student of Color B believes this action to be an unfair ask as it requires the students of Color in the group to educate the White students. Perhaps Student of Color A happens to be close friends with the White student, or perhaps, the topic being discussed is deeply personal to Student of Color B. Nevertheless, differing perceptions of the White student result between the two students of Color. Allyship is both personal and political; perceptions of effective allyship may differ depending on situation, social identities present, and the personal and interpersonal history of those involved. Empirically understanding how Whites are currently thinking about and engaging with allyship behaviors can act as a starting point for us to better align White folks in effective allyship behaviors. Gorski and Erakat (2019) also discuss how some White activists can contribute to burnout for activists of Color. Contribution to burnout may occur via racism; "undermining or invalidating racial justice work of activists of color;" unwillingness "to step up and take action when needed;" "exhibiting white fragility;" and "taking credit for participants' racial justice work and ideas" (Gorski & Erakat, 2019, p.1-2). The authors outlined their participants' recommendations for White activists to be "more mindful" which included willingness "to defer to activists of color" especially when considering the activists of Color's lived experiences and "prioritizing movement goals" before White activists' personal "needs for recognition and validation" (p. 21).

Research Perspectives on White Allyship Development

Most research on White allyship development has remained largely theoretical. Regardless, exploring theoretical models on White allyship development along with current scholars' perspectives on the potential drawbacks to these models can help to better frame and interpret this investigation. Across the theoretical literature two common ideas have emerged on White allyship: (a) White allyship can be understood as a developmental process (i.e., White allyship development) and (b) White allyship can serve as an action-oriented identity for White people. This understanding of White allyship and White allyship development can be best attributed and summarized within the work of Janet Helms' (1984) White Identity Development Model.

Helms' (1984) White Identity Development Model

The work of Janet Helms on racial consciousness derives from a different theoretical literature than the modern CC literature. Modern CC theory derives its understanding of critical consciousness from Paolo Freire, whereas Helms and others (e.g., Cross, 1971) derive their understanding of critical consciousness directly from DuBois' (1903) and Fanon's (1967) ideas on *double consciousness*—the psychological internal tensions and "two-ness" experienced by Black people living within a White dominated society—and how this then uniquely impacts the development of a Black identity. Cross (1971) applied these ideas to his Nigrescence theory, a psychological model exhibiting the process for Black racial identity development, followed by Helms (1984) who applied Cross' ideas to White racial identity development, which predated current CC conversations on White identity by several decades. The convergence between modern CC theory and racial consciousness are its shared goals: liberation from oppression via the development of critical reflection and critical action. However, I chose to utilize and test

White allyship development within a CC model rather than within a “Helmsian” approach because of CC’s explicit separation of critical reflection and critical action as individual components, rather than Helms’ (1984) model which either largely ignores critical action or confounds it with critical awareness. Instead, Helms’ model seems to better capture the psychological tensions and feelings a White person experiences as they develop their critical consciousness.

Helms’ (1984) White identity development model assesses the relationship that a White person has with their Whiteness by evaluating a White person’s level of “racial consciousness.” These statuses of racial consciousness included: (1) *contact,* characterized as the denial of the meaningfulness of race usually accompanied by color-blind race beliefs (see Appendix A); (2) *disintegration,* characterized as discomfort and confusion upon becoming aware of racism and Whiteness; (3) *reintegration,* defined as negative affect towards People of Color in order to relieve the responsibility of social change; (4) *pseudo-independence,* characterized as an intellectualized awareness of White privilege but uncertainty of what to do with this awareness; and (5) *autonomy,* defined as a healthy identification with a White identity that recognizes and tries to combat Whiteness.

The last status, the autonomy status, aligns with the visions of White allyship that both CC and CWS promote: a White person who has high levels of critical reflection on racism and high levels of critical action against racism (i.e., White allyship behaviors). However, critical action is not mentioned until this final status. In fact, the pseudo-independence status is intended to characterize a White person who is high in their level of critical reflection with low to no critical action, which further implies that the model believes that action cannot occur until the autonomy status. Helms somewhat has addressed this limitation in her earlier model and

application through the White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990), arguing that these statuses are not orthogonal and "may appear in different combinations if assessed at the individual level" (Carter et al., 2004, p.5; Helms, 1999). Helms seems to have shifted in considering her model as comprising distinct statuses and instead, as comprising of related trait-like statuses by which individuals may vary as one might vary in traits (Carter et al., 2004; Helms, 1999). Therefore, Helms reasons that a White person may be at the contact status and reintegration status at the same time—or any of the statuses at the same time. However, even still, the model does not allow for a White person to vary in critical action and critical reflection as separate, but interrelated, experiences. Therefore, CC—though not as practiced in tackling White racial consciousness—was a better theoretical model for White allyship development allowing for White students to vary in their level of either critical awareness or critical action.

Nevertheless, Helms' model was the first to demonstrate complexity within the White identity and the White experience. Helms argued that solely measuring one's level of prejudice as previous psychologists tended to do, limited White identity to racial attitudes providing "no information about how Whites feel about themselves as racial beings" (Helms, 1984, p.155). Further, she explained how many assessments of prejudice only measured explicitly racist views "rather than multiple forms of bias lying along a continuum" (p. 155). A White person is not reduced to oversimplified racial attitudes within Helms' model but allowed White people to experience development in their psychological feelings towards their Whiteness.

White Allyship as an Affirmative Transformation of White Identity

One of the first appearances of the term, "White ally" was used by Beverly Daniel Tatum (1994) based on Helms' (1984) autonomy status, the aforementioned final status within Helms' White Identity Development Model. Helms' (1984) "autonomy status" represented a White

person who not only “feels comfortable about her or his racial identity,” but who tries to combat Whiteness (p. 159, Helms, 1984). Tatum (1994) then labeled the autonomy status “White Allyship” and emphasized that an ally “understands that it is possible to use one’s privilege to create more equitable systems” (p. 37). She envisioned White allies as offering a positive White alternative to White supremacist, color-blind, and “guilty White” models. Tatum asserted, “Whites, like people of color [*sic*], continue to be works in progress” (Tatum, 1997, p. 112). In other words, White people, like People of Color, undergo racial identity formation that must be acknowledged and fostered. Tatum viewed White allyship as an affirmative transformation of the White identity, therefore conceptualizing allyship *as* an identity. Together, Helms (1984) and Tatum (1994) helped to set the stage for White allyship to be conceived not only as a developmental process, but also an identity.

White Allyship Development Models

Especially for the time, Helms’ (1984) model uniquely demonstrated White identity’s complexity: White people are not simply identified as “a racist” or not a racist, nor simply aware of their White identity or not. Likely for this reason, many educators widely use Helms model because it offers White students an ability to locate themselves within the model and progress beyond an (explicitly) “racist White” representation. Many other scholars have also viewed allyship as an identity and developmental process (e.g., Edwards, 2006; Reason et al., 2005; Sue, 2017). For example, Sue (2017) identified four important themes of White allyship: (a) “develop[ing] trusting and authentic relationships with People of Color;” (b) “developing an awareness of Whiteness and White privilege, and overcoming the many obstacles that discourage social advocacy and social justice;” (c) not only being nonracist, but also taking on an antiracist identity and engaging in antiracist actions; and (d) integrating personal, lived experiences to

one's cultural competence (p. 701-712). Edwards (2006) proposed the Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development model, which was designed for social justice allyship broadly, but can be applied to White allyship development as well. The model includes three identities each driven by a different motivation. First is the *aspiring ally motivated by self-interest* who operates paternalistically, next is the *aspiring ally motivated by altruism* who operates submissively and with guilt, and last is the *ally motivated by social justice* who operates alongside oppressed groups (see Edwards (2006) for further illustrations). Edward's model also offers a comprehensive framework to understanding allyship by considering a series of other aspects, such as the differences amongst these identities in approaching mistakes and views of justice. Another ally identity development model was proposed by Reason et al. (2005) after they completed two independent qualitative studies on White allyship. Their model for racial justice ally development outlined the pre-college and college factors to White allyship development. The authors identified college as the setting by which the most "salient influences on the exploration and reconstruction of Whiteness" appeared. Similarly, Chapters 2 and 3 of this investigation focused on White college students because of the college setting's key role in White identity development. Importantly too, these models root allyship within an identity development model framework.

Criticisms of White Allyship and Identity Development Models

Some Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) scholars (e.g., Applebaum, 2010; Foste & Jones, 2020) have heavily cautioned against relying on White development models because it can "strip" race from "its historic and political contexts" and ironically, can "perpetuate the good white / bad white [*sic*] binary" (p. 173, Foste & Jones, 2020) Helms (1984) originally attempted to avoid. Foste and Jones (2020) further argue that relying on White people to strive for positive

relationships with their White identity—that is, striving for the autonomy status in Helms model (1984) and White allyship as conceptualized by Tatum (1994)—may free White people from taking responsibility for racism. Instead, Foste and Jones (2020) propose conceptualizing Whiteness as a "racial location" instead of an identity in an attempt to re-center Whiteness within a CWS framework that is critical in perspective and keeps Whiteness as "an integrally relational category" and within its historical context (p. 193, Levine-Rasky, 2016).

Likewise, many have also criticized viewing allyship as an identity. For instance, many LGBTQ+ ally resources include a statement on how an ally "does not denote an identity—it is not who you are, it's what you practice" (British Columbia Teachers' Federation, n.d.). A HuffPost article titled, "Ally is Action, Not an Identity" also asserted, "You cannot be an ally. …You see people prioritize being *seen* as an ally more than acting like one. This is only possible when we misconstrue the word 'ally' into an identity" (Murphy, 2016). Because actions are louder than words, many within the LGBTQ+ community contend that allyship should not be conceptualized as an identity. Nevertheless, White racial identity is argued by Helms (1984) and others (Edwards, 2006; Reason et al., 2005; Sue, 2017; Tatum, 1994) to be completely dependent on one's critical consciousness development. Therefore, most scholars and educators who utilize identity development models might also argue that solely identifying as an ally as a form of allyship is insufficient. For instance, Tatum (1992) declares that it is "unethical" and "a prescription of despair" to heighten "students' awareness of racism without also developing an awareness of the possibility of change" (p. 20). She specifically calls for the empowerment of students as "change agents" who can counteract racism through antiracist behaviors. Additionally, because of the prominence of viewing allyship as an identity and White students'

self-identification as “allies,” a link may exist between those who prioritize engagement in allyship behaviors and those who may view allyship as a part of their identity.

Personal identities, including racial identity, are often theorized within development models in which an individual may progress linearly (i.e., through stages) or nonlinearly (as in the case of Helms (1984)) in hopes of achieving some form of self-actualization. Thus, viewing allyship as an identity may also inadvertently suggest allyship can be “achieved” as Foste and Jones (2020) stated. This is especially likely when some aspiring allies believe that simply understanding allyship is enough to be an ally, rather than how many ally scholars envision allyship. Instead, Spanierman & Smith (2017) declare that allyship must be viewed as a continual process of growth in not only critical reflection on racism, but also critical action. As such, this investigation distinguishes between critical reflection on racism and allyship behavior (i.e., critical action) as separate components of White allyship development to acknowledge and mitigate criticisms of allyship.

Potential Factors Influencing Allyship

One central aim of my investigation was to further understand potential factors influencing allyship. In Study 1, I conducted an exploratory qualitative study to investigate White allyship development within my sample of White college students. Based on Study 1’s results, I then focused on examining the role of the college context and color-evasion color-blindness (see Appendix A) on White allyship development in Study 2. Though not many studies have been dedicated to exploring factors influencing White allyship, a few qualitative studies from the CWS literature can provide some further insight. Smith and Redington (2010) explored the “turning points and developmental experiences” of White antiracist activists. They found that turning points could include an antiracist training experience, exposure to racism (including

within their households which motivated some participants to become antiracist), or being raised in a progressive or liberal home. Other turning points included being influenced by the Civil Rights Movement, a book, a public speaker, or public figure; connection to another oppression; and educational experiences. Though focused on predictors of a feminist identity, Frederick and Stewart (2018) similarly found predictors could include exposure to sexist situations, relationships, and education. Finally, Reason et al. (2005) found that the most salient college factors for White allyship development were race-related coursework, "minority" experiences (e.g., attending a majority POC school), and meaningful interracial relationships. Importantly, they also discovered a trend between critical reflection and allyship such that participants who "exhibited little reflection on race had little understanding of Whiteness beyond skin color and took no racial justice action" (p. 543). Altogether, these works indicate the importance of education, exposure to racism, family influence, interracial relationships, and critical reflection in White allyship development. These various factors all appear throughout my dissertation as important factors in White allyship development. My first study explored critical reflection in detail because the Critical Consciousness literature is a primary theoretical framework for this dissertation; however, in Study 2, I also explored the influence of a college education and the inhibiting effects of the Color-Blind Racial Ideology because they appeared as strong predictors of White allyship development in Study 1.

The College Context

I will discuss the importance of the college context along with associated theoretical and empirical research throughout Chapters 2 and 3. The appearance of the college context as an important overarching theme within my dissertation is not surprising. Many studies have demonstrated how the college experience serves as a pivotal site for White students' allyship

growth. Namely, Broido (2000) found that within her sample of White social justice allies, participants described instances of change occurring while they were in college through extensive discussions within the college classroom or with their college peers (inclusive of friends and classmates). Similarly, Reason et al. (2005), found that through coursework and interracial interactions, college could lead to engagement in White allyship behaviors. In their collaborative work, Broido and Reason (2005) outlined key research contributions that demonstrated how college can be an important setting for allyship growth and exploration. Specifically, they point to the findings completed by the University of Michigan's Preparing Students for a Diverse Democracy project. Findings show that the college experience can improve "the importance students place on social action engagement" (Hurtado et al., 2003, November), develop students' social awareness (Greene & Kamimura, 2003), and support their development of a pluralistic orientation (Engberg et al., 2003) (p. 23). Broido and Reason (2005) also shared research showing how the college context can provide White students the opportunity to interact with diverse peers which can then lead to greater openness to diversity (e.g., Whitt et al., 2001; Taylor, 1998; Pike, 2002; Hurtado et al., 2002). Additionally, when students participated in race curricula such as courses or workshops, several studies found significant increases in White students' racial awareness (i.e., their critical reflection on racism) (e.g., Palmer, 2000; Whitt et al., 2001; as cited by Broido & Reason, 2005) and sometimes, significant increases in allyship behaviors (Hurtado et al., 2002, 2003, November). Finally, Broido and Reason (2005) argued that college importantly occurs within an institutional context meaning that how an institution of higher education conveys their commitment to antiracism also can play a significant role in mediating allyship development within their students. When the

commitment is strong, the college/university as an institution may also positively influence White students' allyship development.

The works of Broido (2000), Reason et al., (2005), and Broido and Reason (2005) provided evidence for the unique role of the college context on White allyship development in White students. Chapters 2 and 3 will further explore how college experiences impact White allyship behaviors and specifically, which types of experiences seem to be most salient in producing White allyship growth across critical reflection and behavior engagement. Chapter 2 used exploratory qualitative methods to investigate White allyship development in White college students and discovered college—and specifically, completion of race curricula (see Appendix A)—to be associated with students who were higher in their level of critical reflection on racism and students who had higher engagement in White allyship behaviors. Chapter 3 then quantitively tested how race curricula may or may not predict engagement in specific White allyship behaviors. Chapter 3 found that race curricula could significantly predict higher allyship engagement as well as engagement in more productive allyship behaviors (refer to Chapter 3).

The Color-Blind Racial Ideology

An impeding factor to White allyship development that emerged within both studies of this investigation was the Color-Blind Racial Ideology, which is a racial ideology defined by the minimization or denial of racism (Frankenberg, 1993; Neville et al., 2000). Within a CC framework, we might understand that a person's level of critical reflection on racism reflects their racial ideology. Thus, a person who has a higher critical reflection on racism should possess an understanding of race, racism, Whiteness, and power (Reason et al., 2005), whereas a person who has a lower critical reflection on racism should demonstrate the opposite which is captured within the Color-Blind Racial Ideology. Therefore, this investigation's finding that color-

blindness negatively impacts White allyship behavior supports the central assumption of CC which understands that higher critical reflection should lead to higher critical action (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011).

The Color-Blind Racial Ideology (CBRI) was first theorized by Frankenberg (1993) and expanded by Neville et al. (2000, 2013). The CBRI proposed that color-blindness consists of two distinct, but often interrelated domains: *color-evasion* and *power-evasion.* Color-evasion color-blindness is the "denial of racial differences by emphasizing sameness," such as someone who believes that they do not "see" color (Neville, 2013; p. 455). Alternatively, power-evasion color-blindness is the "denial of racism by emphasizing equal opportunities," such as someone who denies systemic racism and instead, blames People of Color for not working harder (Neville, 2013; p. 455). Back in 2000, Neville and colleagues released the now widely used Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000) which dominates as the most prominent measure for color-blindness. However, this measure operationalized only power-evasion color-blindness and not color-evasion color-blindness. Therefore, many studies who claim to measure the Color-Blind Racial Ideology are only measuring power-evasion color-blindness—that is, how much a person denies systemic racism and promotes meritocracy. Nevertheless, power-evasion color-blindness as measured by CoBRAS is related to higher negative racial attitudes and prejudice (Neville et al., 2000), higher opposition to equity policies like affirmative action (e.g., Oh et al., 2010), and lower likelihoods of perceiving microaggressions (Offermann et al., 2014; Zou & Dickter, 2013). Conversely, a solely color-evasion measure is used in comparison studies where researchers are interested in testing differences between color-blindness and multiculturalism (Wolsko et al., 2000; see Appendix A). No measure currently captures both domains as Frankenberg (1993) or Neville et al. (CRBI; Neville et al., 2013) originally proposed.

Yet, color-evasion and power-evasion are both referred to as simply "color-blindness" within the literature and often without clarification. Therefore, I will distinguish between the two domains by using the terms *color-evasion color-blindness* and *power-evasion color-blindness* when referring to a specific domain.

Though not many have studied the relationship between color-blindness and behavior, an informative study by Yi et al. (2020) found that endorsing color-evasion color-blindness led to lower likelihoods in taking action to address prejudice as compared to endorsing a multiculturalism ideology. As CC theory might expect (Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011), racial ideologies might be able to directly influence allyship behaviors. Furthermore, because a racial ideology acts as a framework for viewing race, someone with a color-blind ideology may differ in what they consider an allyship behavior as compared to someone who does not endorse color-blindness. Chapters 2 and 3 will further examine not only color-evasion's effects on White students' levels of White allyship behavior engagement, but also how color-evasion color-blindness may affect their White allyship conceptualizations—that is, the types of behaviors White students appraise as allyship behavior. Results indicated that color-evasion color-blindness negatively limited ideas on White allyship and produced lower engagement in allyship behaviors.

Dissertation Overview

My dissertation explored two primary research questions: (a) How do White students conceptualize White allyship and (b) which factors influence their allyship behavior engagement and conceptualization? I applied a social constructionist epistemology, which importantly recognizes knowledge as dependent on social contexts, informed by a Critical Whiteness Studies (Leonardo, 2013) and a Critical Consciousness (Jamal, 2017) framework. Therefore, my

assumptions included that race and Whiteness were social constructs, that racism persisted in our modern world through systemic racism and other forms of racism, and that the experiences of Whites as a racial group are inherently bound within these social contexts. Methodologically, I utilized a mixed methods strategy called sequential methodological triangulation (Morse, 1991), which both uses multiple methods to tackle a research question (triangulation) and uses the results of one method to inform the next method (sequential). I started with a qualitative method in Study 1, followed by a mixed methods survey in Study 2. A sequential triangulation methodology that starts with qualitative methods is especially useful when the research topic of interest is "immature" "due to a conspicuous lack of theory and previous research" (Morse, 1991, p. 120), as is the case with research on White allyship. Study 1 qualitatively explored White perceptions of White allyship, whereas Study 2 tested color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula as predictors of allyship behaviors.

Study 1: Investigating White Conceptualizations of White Allyship and the Various Factors in White Allyship Development among White College Students

Study 1 was developed with the support and co-authorship of Brandon Dull, Lorraine Gutierrez, and Fiona Lee. Study 1 aimed to (a) understand how White college students were conceptualizing allyship and (b) to understand the factors that mediated or hindered White allyship development. I interviewed 23 White college students on White allyship and analyzed their interviews through data-driven thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). I selected the qualitative approach of private, semi-structured interviews to allow White participants freedom to "story" their thoughts and experiences with race and allyship.

Study 1 revealed that students were conceptualizing allyship behaviors via eight categories: *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive race dialogue, political*

engagement, "shut up and show up," "helping" People of Color, personal and private actions, friendship with People of Color, and social activism. Prior to the interviews, I predicted that White students would primarily conceptualize allyship as political engagement such as voting and protesting because I assumed many would conflate allyship with preconceived notions of political activism (Dottolo & Stewart, 2013). However, my findings demonstrated the ability of White college students to define and engage in allyship in a variety of ways.

Study 1 then discovered four overarching themes related to potential factors in White allyship development. The first theme I discovered was a positive relationship between critical reflection on racism and both allyship behavior engagement and more advanced conceptualizations (see Appendix A) of allyship behavior. My finding on allyship behavior engagement verifies the central assumptions of the Critical Consciousness (CC) literature which assumes that higher critical reflection will lead to higher critical action (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011). However, as Heberle et al. (2020) discuss, White CC is unique from traditional processes of CC because it is inherently embedded within White privilege. Therefore, though critical reflection does seem to be linked with behavior in Study 1, it was vital to also explore the relationship between critical reflection and the types of allyship behaviors White students were engaging in. For example, there has been a tremendous amount of criticism within the Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) literature cautioning against unproductive or even harmful allyship behaviors (e.g., Spanierman & Smith, 2017; Cabrera et al., 2017). Therefore, Study 1 investigated and discovered a link between low critical reflection on racism—specifically, endorsing color-evasion color-blindness (e.g., "I do not 'see' race")—and conceptualizing allyship as merely "friendship" with People of Color or "helping" People of Color.

Furthermore, I was interested in exploring potential factors to White allyship development which led to my second and third themes. The second theme I found was that college could serve as an important site for allyship development. For this theme, I discovered that those who possessed a higher critical reflection on racism were often older, upperclassman students. Additionally, many of these students who possessed a higher critical reflection on racism reported on their exit surveys that they had taken many race courses and participated in race-related co-curriculars (see Appendix A) indicating the significance of college race curricula in White allyship development. Study 1's third theme was that family could serve as either a barrier or catalyst in allyship development. Specifically, Study 1 showed that family could serve to positively influence White students in their White allyship development, specifically when a student's parents engaged in race dialogues and engaged in allyship behaviors. However, for most students, parents were apathetic to or even against White allyship. For these students, it seemed much more difficult for them to grow in their allyship, especially when they were early in their college careers.

Finally, Study 1 showed patterns between White students' relationships with their White identity and their level of critical reflection on racism. In Study 1, I primarily explored White college students' critical reflection on racism and engagement in, and ideas on, White allyship behaviors. However, I was also interested in understanding the psychological perceptions White students held about their own White identity and how these feelings might vary depending on one's level of critical reflection on racism. I found that regardless of a student's level of critical reflection on racism, the sample unanimously agreed that negative relationships—as opposed to a positive or neutral relationship—with one's White identity was unproductive and harmful. On the other hand, students with a higher critical reflection on racism viewed positive relationships,

which were defined as an acceptance of one's own Whiteness, as necessary for White allyship development. Altogether, via an exploratory qualitative study, Study 1 revealed that White allyship development involved a process of developing critical reflection on racism and engagement in allyship behaviors. Additionally, Study 1 highlighted the importance of other factors on White allyship development such as the college setting, and specifically race curricula, family influences, and feelings of acceptance towards one's Whiteness.

Study 2: Investigating Color-Evasion and Race Curricula in White Allyship Development among White College Students

Study 2 expanded on Study 1's findings and aimed to investigate the role of color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula in White allyship behavior engagement and conceptualization. Study 2 utilized a mixed methods online survey distributed to 563 White college students (comprised of 199 recently graduated college seniors and 364 first-semester freshmen). I was interested in quantitatively testing color-evasion as a potential predictor of low allyship behavior and conceptualization because in Study 1, one primary component of low critical reflection on racism was the endorsement of color-evasion color-blindness. Further, low critical reflection, and especially color-evasion, were all linked to lower allyship behavior engagement and less advanced ideas on White allyship. In Study 2, I was also interested in testing race curricula as a potential predictor of allyship engagement and conceptualization because Study 1 evidenced race curricula to be an especially important factor for White students with higher levels of critical reflection. Based on findings from Study 1, I predicted that (a) race curricula would positively predict allyship engagement and more advanced conceptualizations of allyship behaviors, whereas (b) color-evasion color-blindness would negatively predict allyship engagement and advanced conceptualizations of allyship.

To test effects on allyship behavior engagement, I utilized hierarchical regression analysis. Matching Study 1, Study 2 found that even when controlling for a series of demographic variables including gender, sexual orientation, income, political orientation, religious affiliation, or whether a student's degree plan included a race course requirement, color-evasion color-blindness negatively predicted White allyship behavior engagement. Race curricula positively predicted White allyship engagement. To test effects on allyship behavior conceptualization, I collapsed the allyship behavior categories developed in Study 1's and Study 2's samples into four broader categories based in part on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory model: *Intrapersonal* (e.g., reflecting on one's Whiteness), *transitional interpersonal* (e.g., friendship, helping behaviors), *reciprocal interpersonal* (e.g., intervening, engaging in race dialogue), and *organizational* behaviors (e.g., social activism, political engagement; see Chapter 3 for further explanations). I then utilized a series of binary logistic regressions while controlling for demographic variables. The regression models revealed that color-conscious (opposite of color-evasion; see Appendix A) students and students who had completed more race curricula positively predicted engagement in intrapersonal behaviors, reciprocal interpersonal behaviors, and organizational behaviors. Conversely, color-blind students and students who had completed less race curricula positively predicted engagement in transitional interpersonal behaviors such as friendship with People of Color and "helping" People of Color—matching findings from Study 1 as well.

Finally, I compared the 199 recently graduated White college seniors to the 364 first-semester White freshmen on their levels of color-evasion, engagement in allyship behaviors, and conceptualizations of allyship behaviors to further analyze the role of college in White allyship development. To test the effects of academic year on color-evasion color-blindness, I applied a

binary logistic regression and found that graduating seniors displayed 3.5 times lower odds in endorsing color-evasion color-blindness than incoming freshman, even when controlling for demographic variables. To test the effects of academic year on race curricula, I applied a Poisson regression model which indicated that graduating seniors were at least 2 times more likely to have completed race curricula than incoming freshman, even when controlling for demographic variables. Next, I compared their levels of allyship engagement while controlling for demographic variables; a Poisson regression revealed that graduating seniors were nearly 1.5 times more likely to engage in White allyship behaviors than incoming freshmen. Lastly, I compared allyship conceptualizations between seniors and freshman while controlling for demographic variables. Graduating seniors and incoming freshmen did not significantly differ in their levels of intrapersonal, reciprocal interpersonal, nor transitional interpersonal behaviors. However, they did differ in organizational allyship behavior engagement; graduating seniors engaged in organizational allyship behaviors, such as political engagement and social activism, nearly 4 times as much as incoming freshmen. Study 2's results evidenced the important role that college, and especially race curricula, can play in White allyship development, while also displaying the hindering effects color-evasion color-blindness on White allyship development.

Study Aims and Implications

Altogether, findings from both studies build empirical understanding of White college students' White allyship development, along with the various factors that may influence this development. This year marks the largest antiracism movement of the 21st century with more White students than ever desiring to engage in allyship behaviors. My findings aim to strengthen understanding on White allyship development so that we may better foster effective allyship in White college students.

CHAPTER 2

Investigating White Conceptualizations of White Allyship and the Various Factors in White Allyship Development among White College Students

Introduction

A White ally is generally understood as a White person who holds a clear understanding of racism, power, and privilege (i.e., a high level of critical reflection on racism) and is actively engaged in White allyship behaviors (Spanierman & Smith, 2017; reference Appendix A for a review of key terms). Though some empirical work has been completed on which characteristics Students of Color recognize as White allyship (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018), little research has been dedicated to which behaviors White students, themselves, label and intend as allyship behavior. Therefore, using a critical consciousness and Critical Whiteness Studies lens, I interviewed 23 White college students across different levels of critical reflection on racism to describe their beliefs of, and engagement in, White allyship behaviors. Furthermore, Study 1 also investigated potential mechanisms and barriers to White allyship development (i.e., critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors) including college, family, and White identity. Study 1's findings hope to strengthen our approaches to fostering effective allyship within psychology and our institutions of higher education.

A Critical Whiteness Studies Framework: What is White Allyship and White Allyship Behavior?

In this study, I am investigating White allyship development (i.e., critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors) in White college students through a Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) framework, a subset of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Importantly, the CWS literature (e.g., Leonardo, 2013) views race as a social construct and "Whiteness" as a sociopolitical phenomenon where legitimized power is possessed by people who socially and/or systematically are considered "White." A small subset of CWS scholars have focused on White allyship. Generally White allyship is defined as White people who are cognizant of both power and privilege (i.e., a high level of critical reflection on racism) (Reason et al., 2005) and are actively working to dismantle systems of oppression (i.e., engagement in White allyship behaviors) (Broido, 2000). However, which specific behaviors comprise White allyship is not often delineated in CWS; rather sufficient allyship behaviors seem to be determined via the adage, "I know it when I see it" as Cabrera, Matias, and Montoya (2017) argued. Nevertheless, since racism occurs across all socioecological levels (i.e., intrapersonally, interpersonally, institutionally, or societally), then allyship behaviors seem to include any behaviors that effectively counteract racism on any socioecological level.

Though defining allyship behavior is not common in CWS, much of CWS has contributed theoretical literature on what allyship is not. For example, Spanierman and Smith (2017) noted the problematic potential of White allyship when it exhibits a "White savior complex" or "missionary zeal" which is described as aspiring allies who want to help People of Color but reinforce a deficit model of People of Color via a "paternalistic posture" (p. 609; Weah, Simmons, & Hall, 2000; Endres & Gould, 2009). Moreover, the authors state that most

importantly, these types of behaviors remain at attempting to counteract interpersonal racism and do “nothing to challenge systems of dominance” (p. 609). Other CWS scholars (Cabrera, Matias, & Montoya, 2017; Phillips et al., 2019) also warn against performative allyship which is described as someone who talks about being an ally but does not engage in allyship behaviors. Altogether, it can be argued that CWS scholars view allyship behaviors as including actions that work to counteract racism at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, and/or societal level with limitations on any behaviors that display paternalistic or performative allyship and/or that remain only at the interpersonal level.

Additionally, the CWS research has highlighted that even when White ally behaviors are carried out with good intentions, the behaviors still can be damaging to People of Color in certain circumstances (Mathew et al., 2021). To combat this, allyship behavior should strive to match its good intentions to its perception by People of Color. Perceptions of an intended allyship behavior can widely vary depending on the type of behavior intended, the actor, the context, and individuals involved (if any). Brown and Ostrove (2013) explored which characteristics People of Color recognize as allyship, discovering two main dimensions: *affirmation*, “showing care and respect for People of Color,” and *informed action*, “taking action among White people to address racism and being involved with issues relevant to People of Color” (p.199). Their work empirically demonstrated how Students of Color perceive allyship as affirmative attitudes and informed action aligning with the broader CWS literature. Informed action included behaviors such as “is active in racial/ethnic communities other than his or her own" and “takes action to address bias among his or her own racial/ethnic group” (Brown & Ostrove, 2013, p. 2216). Study 1 complements their work by not only empirically investigating how White students perceive allyship, but which specific behaviors they are appraising as

allyship so that we can work towards closing the sometimes-wide gap between intentions and outcome.

Critical Consciousness

Study 1 employed a critical consciousness (CC) lens to understanding White allyship development in White students. Critical consciousness refers to the process through which individuals become aware of oppression and become liberated by a critical analysis of their social conditions and taking sociopolitical action (Freire, 1993). Generally, there are thought to be two reciprocal components to critical consciousness: critical reflection and critical action (Jemal, 2017). Critical reflection refers to the understanding of inequality. Critical action consists of behaviors taken to generate social change. Therefore, when combining CC and CWS frameworks, *White allyship development* can be seen as involving two components: *critical reflection on racism* (or an understanding of racism) and critical action against racism (i.e., *White allyship behaviors*). Accordingly in Study 1, one of my primary aims was to investigate how a student's level of critical reflection on racism was linked to their understandings of White allyship behaviors.

However, this application of CC to White allyship has not been completed in the broad CC literature. In line with Freire's writings, CC has mostly been studied among those who are experiencing marginalization and thus, few studies have sought to examine critical consciousness among more privileged populations (such as White college students). Scholars have argued that limiting the study of CC to those only experiencing marginalization "may inadvertently support the proposition that oppression is a problem for the oppressed to solve." (Jemal, 2017 p. 617). In fact, Freire's writings on CC also detailed the process through which the oppressor may join

forces with the oppressed to fight alongside them, which aligns with intentions of White allyship (Freire, 1993).

Further, most research on critical consciousness focuses on broad understandings of inequality across multiple systems of oppression and privilege (i.e., understanding of sexism, racism, classism, etc.) rather than focusing on a particular domain or system (Heberle et al., 2020). Studying domain-specific CC can be beneficial to understand how White college students make sense of inequality as it relates to particular systemic forces (Bañales et al., 2019; Diemer et al., 2015). By focusing on multiple areas at once, measurements of CC may mask White students' low level of critical reflection in certain areas by responding with high levels in other areas. For example, though a White student may have high level of critical reflection on their sexuality, they may still lack critical reflection on their Whiteness. Therefore, in Study 1, I apply a CC lens to Whiteness and narrow the focus to the domain-specific area of racism.

Critical Reflection on Racism

One aim of Study 1 was to investigate the link between critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors. CC theory and research establishes that higher critical reflection should lead to higher critical action (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011). However, this work has largely been completed on groups of Color and/or has not focused on White allyship specifically. Outside of the CC literature, the broader race literature does demonstrate the important role that an understanding race (inclusive of racism, power, and Whiteness) plays in antiracist engagement (e.g., Case, 2012; Linder, 2015; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005), which indicates that there is a connection between critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors. For example, Reason et al. (2005)

interviewed both White college students who were engaged in racial justice activities as well as White college students who were not yet involved in such action. Their findings elucidated developmental mechanisms that contributed to racial justice allyship in college, including how racial justice actions were influenced by students' level of critical reflection on racism. They found that their ally/activist sample, who engaged in many allyship behaviors, understood the role of power and privilege within systemic racism and their own Whiteness. Whereas many of the first-year students, especially those who had yet to take any race coursework, did not exhibit an exploration of their Whiteness often conceptualizing being White as merely "the color of [their] skin" (p. 536). Importantly, these students who lacked a clear understanding of Whiteness also had much lower engagement in allyship behaviors. Reason et al.'s work offers Study 1 a foundation evidencing the link between critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors.

Color-blindness

A racial ideology is a set of attitudes and beliefs about race and racism. Understood within CC, we might view a racial ideology as an embodiment of a student's critical reflection on racism. Accordingly, for Study 1, I decided to measure students' critical reflection on racism using five factors (refer to the Methods section for further information) including the use of color-blind or color-conscious (see Appendix A) language. Though investigating color-blindness was not an original aim of Study 1; the theme of color-blindness appeared as one of the strongest indicators for low critical reflection on racism within my conversations with White college students.

I used Frankenberg's (1993) and Neville et al.'s (2013) definition of color-blindness in the present study. They define color-blindness as including two dimensions. The first dimension

is *power-evasion color-blindness* which denies racism through “the minimization and/or distortion of” blatant racism, institutional racism, and racial privilege (Neville et al., 2013; p. 458). Power-evasion color-blindness therefore denies that White allyship is necessary because to power-evasion endorsers, race is “a thing of the past” (p. Neville et al., 2013; p. 459). However, the second dimension of color-blindness is *color-evasion color-blindness* which promotes sameness “as a way of rejecting the idea of White racial superiority” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 147). Thus, color-evasion endorses utilize sameness as a White allyship strategy. In my review of the literature, I could not find any research investigating how color-evasion affects White allyship behaviors. However, despite any good intentions, color-evasion has been consistently linked to negative stereotypes against People of Color (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, & Graham, 2017; Denson, 2009; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007). Therefore, the literature does suggest that color-evasion color-blindness would negatively affect White allyship behaviors as well. Study 1 addressed this gap in the literature and investigated the impact of a student’s level of critical reflection on racism—inclusive of their endorsement of color-blindness—on White allyship behaviors.

Factors in White Allyship Development

Research suggests that many factors can serve to promote White allyship development (i.e., critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors). Study 1 sought to further explore these potential factors including: the college context, the family context, and a student’s relationship with their own White identity.

The College Context

The college context may act as important factor within allyship development because it can serve as an important source of racial socialization for many White students. Unlike previous

generations socialized through the "American Melting Pot" pedagogy (Tatum, 1997), the current generations of students have lived with considerable public discussion of race. However, due to "white habitus" (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, & Embrick, 2006), many White students still lack racial socialization. Prior to attending college, White students likely "lived in predominantly white [*sic*] neighborhoods (Orfield et al., 2003), attended white schools (Sohoni & Saporito, 2009), learned via a whitened curriculum (Kincheloe et al., 1998 [2000]), and worshipped at white churches and synagogues (Emerson & Smith, 2001)" (Brunsma, Brown, & Placier, 2013, p.722). This contemporary segregation normalizes Whiteness for Whites (Ayscue & Orfield, 2015; Billingham & Hunt, 2016). Still, even within predominately White institutions, the college setting is where many White students have their first meaningful interactions with People of Color (Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Thus, the college context acts as a pivotal growth period within critical reflection on racism for many White students creating a spectrum of often newly shifted beliefs and curiosity for allyship engagement.

In Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales' (2005) proposed racial justice ally development model, White students' racial justice attitudes before college were often characterized by a lack of exploration and engagement with Whiteness and race. However, through a variety of experiences in the college setting, such as coursework or interracial interactions, White students were able to confront their Whiteness leading to allyship behaviors. Research over the past decade has focused on the role of intergroup dialogues (Alimo, 2012; Tittler & Wade, 2019; Yeung et al., 2013), diversity courses/interventions (Bañales et al., 2021; Neville et al., 2014; Soble, Spanierman, & Liao, 2011) and intergroup contact (Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015; Martin, Trego, & Nakayama, 2010) on White college students' racial attitudes, White privilege awareness, and White allyship development. Across these studies, findings generally reveal that

White college students' attitudes and beliefs about race are not static (e.g., Neville et al., 2014) and that the college context can play a consequential role in cultivating White college students who are actively engaged in combating racism.

The Family Context

Prior research has consistently demonstrated a strong relationship between the similarity in intergroup attitudes of children/adolescences and their parents (Degner & Dalege, 2013). Additionally, some work has also demonstrated the important role parent's play in White allyship development in White college students. For example, Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) explored precollege and college factors within racial justice ally development. The ally/activist sample within their study described their parents as one of the most influential sources on their racial justice attitudes pre-college. Students expressed how their parents were "liberal" or "open-minded" and talked to them about race and racism. Tatum (1994) also found that many White students' most influential ally role models were their parents. However, Tatum also noted that though these students learned their anti-racist attitudes from their parents, they still felt unprepared to engage in antiracism outside of the "family circle" (p. 466). Tatum's finding indicates that family may be an important catalyst for allyship, but that other factors are still important for full allyship behavior engagement. Finally, Pancer et al.'s (2007) results suggested that parents could also influence students' engagement in allyship behaviors. Within their study, Pancer et al. found that frequent discussion with parents was more associated with students who were grouped as "Activists" than students grouped as "Helpers." Activists exhibited high levels of engagement in political and community-based activities, while Helpers were involved in more volunteer- and individualistic-oriented activities. Nevertheless, what is perhaps less clear is how the family may or may not impede aspiring allies who experience value

conflicts with their family. Tatum (1994) did acknowledge that not all White allies experienced parents who espoused antiracist values and that there were some students who had parents who chose not to discuss race or racism openly with them. However, it was not disclosed how this may or may not have impacted their allyship development. Nevertheless, the research suggests that families, especially parents, can serve as important motivating factor in White allyship development.

White Identity

In Study 1, one of the measures I used to capture a students' level of critical reflection on racism was whether they explicitly acknowledged their White privilege (refer to the Methods section for further details), however, this measure did not capture their level of understanding of their White privilege. Instead, I captured understandings of Whiteness and privilege through an analysis of how they discussed their White identity. I also explored how White identity may or may not be linked to White allyship development.

Research has shown that White people's understanding of their own Whiteness can be an important factor in White allyship development (e.g., Case, 2012; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005). More broadly, the process of building critical consciousness is viewed as a highly personal pursuit; "as people challenge oppressive conditions within local sociopolitical contexts, a new understanding of themselves, other group members, and of those contexts arises (Garcia et al., 2009; Sonn & Fisher, 1998)" (Jemal, 2017; p. 616). In other words, as CC develops so does the relationship that one has with their social identities. In a qualitative exploration of the members of the group, White Women Against Racism (WWAR), Case (2012) found that

recognizing their own White privilege served as a daily lens for WWAR women navigating their everyday lives and engaging in antiracist behaviors.

Theorizing White racial identity development began with Janet Helms' White Identity Development Model (1984). Consistent with Critical Whiteness theorists such as Frankenberg (1993) and the CC literature, the model argues that one's White critical reflection on racism determines one's racial identity; therefore, to hold a certain racial identity status is to hold a specific understanding of race and Whiteness. Helms' model presents a progression of racial identity statuses beginning with a denial of racism and culminating with an awareness of racism and feeling fully "comfortable" with one's White identity (Helms, 1984, p. 159). This final status, which is labeled the *autonomy* status, is also characterized by active engagement in efforts to challenge White supremacy—that is, White allyship. In fact, one of the first appearances of the term, "White ally" was used by Tatum (1994) who directly applied the term to embody Helms' autonomy status. Tatum (1994) defined a White ally as a White person who "understands that it is possible to use one's privilege to create more equitable systems" (p. 37). She envisioned White allies as offering a positive White alternative to White supremacist, color-blind, and "guilty White" models. Freire (1993) similarly envisioned oppressors (i.e., people with privilege) as having to engage in action to challenge oppressive systems alongside those who are experiencing the oppression. Therefore, the literature supports a link between White identity with White allyship development, which Study 1 aimed to explore further.

Study Aims

Empirical work on how White college students understand White allyship needs further investigation. Most work on White allyship focuses on motivations for action (Case et al., 2020; Radke et al., 2020), how White allies are judged (Ostrove & Brown, 2018), or the experiences of

doing anti-racist work (Case, 2012; Smith & Redington, 2010). Thus, most of the literature on White allyship has been conducted with individuals who are already actively engaged in White allyship behavior, leaving questions about how a broad range of White college students—even those who have lower levels of critical reflection on racism—conceptualize or attempt to engage in White allyship behaviors. To address this gap, Study 1's primary goal was to elucidate the breadth of behaviors White college students intend (or understand) as White allyship. Additionally, Study 1 also aimed how the factors of the college context, the family context, and White identity may influence or limit White allyship development.

To allow for a broad spectrum of responses and the freedom for participants to "story" their experiences, Study 1 conducted individual interviews with 23 White college students in Fall 2018. Using thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006) and a critical consciousness (Jemal, 2017) and Critical Whiteness Studies (Leonardo, 2013) framework, I first found that (a) White students conceptualized allyship behaviors via eight conceptualization categories and (b) that the sample seemed to comprise of three levels of critical reflection on racism. Then, after examining these conceptualizations and levels further, I also found four themes for White allyship development: (a) a relationship between critical reflection on racism and allyship behavior; (b) college as an important site for allyship development; (c) family as a barrier or catalyst in allyship development; and finally, (d) patterns between one's relationship with White identity and critical reflection on racism. Collectively, Study 1 aimed to not only map a spectrum of White college students' conceptualizations of White allyship across varying levels of critical reflection on racism, but also to better understand how and why these conceptualizations formed so that we may work to enrich psychology's and higher education's approaches to increasing White allyship development in White college students.

Methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 23 White college students in Fall 2018. I analyzed the data using data-driven thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Boyatzis (1998).

Participants

Recruiting Participants

My goal was to recruit participants with a range of understandings of race (i.e., critical reflection on racism) to capture common trends across different White students. Using a convenience sampling strategy, I recruited White undergraduates from a large Midwestern university's Introduction to Psychology courses. I interviewed 19 participants whose experience was solely in the U.S.. Prescreening questions required participants to identify as "White" and to check "yes" when asked if they would be interested in discussing race. Many students were unaware of the study's contents or interview setting before participating. Students were compensated with research credit after the completion of the interview and allowed to exit the study at any point without risk of losing compensation. After interviewing 12 participants, I realized the sample lacked students representing high levels of critical reflection on racism. To address this disparity, I additionally recruited four students from race-focused organizations, an intergroup dialogue program, a social justice-focused minor program, and from professors who taught race courses. These four students self-identified as or were nominated to be "White allies and/or activists who are actively involved in combatting racial issues." Recruited participants were compensated $15 via mail after the completion of the study and allowed to exit the interview at any point without risking compensation. The final sample was comprised of 23

students. I ended recruitment after determining each level of critical reflection was well represented across the sample and that saturation had been achieved.

Demographics

The sample averaged 20 years old (SD = 1.47) split between underclassmen (n = 12) and upperclassmen (n = 11). Participants were majority women (n = 16), Democrat (n = 14), had not completed any race curricula (n = 14), and represented three levels of critical reflection on racism (refer to Table 1).

Procedure

The first author developed five open-ended interview questions verified through three pilot test interviews, one pilot test focus group, and several discussions with the research team and an expert qualitative researcher. A copy of these questions was provided to participants at the start of the interview for them to reference. Prepared open-ended probes were also identified but were not always asked verbatim.

1. "Think about having a conversation about race. Consider who you had these conversations with, were they People of Color or others who were also White? Tell us about a specific time when you were having a conversation about race and you felt included."
2. "There are many ways that communities have tried to resolve racial issues. One strategy is for White people to be allies to People of Color, or what we call, 'White allyship.' What is your understanding of a White ally?"
3. "Please share with us about a time when you have tried to be an ally to a Person of Color."
4. "What are some challenges you still face with White allyship or with being a White ally?"
5. "White identity can be seen by many as a challenge because it involves accepting White privilege along with other harsh realities. Tell us about your relationship with your White identity."

All participants were interviewed in person by the first author. An assistant moderator who took field notes and a scribe, who typed a transcript, were also present. The assistant moderator and scribe sat in obstructed view or completely out-of-view, respectively. The participant and interviewer spent several minutes rapport-building with the microphone turned off. Interviews ranged from 17 to 54 minutes with an average of 34 minutes. All participants received a notepad and writing utensil as an alternative way to share their thoughts privately, if needed. After the completion of the interview, a check-in assistant would provide the participant with an anonymous feedback survey, an exit survey to collect demographic information and prior relevant coursework, and a debriefing form. Each interview was followed by a 10- to 45-minute debriefing session amongst the research team after the participant had exited.

Positionality and Interviewer Style

My goal as an interviewer was to elicit honest responses from participants. My interviewer style can be characterized as "high in affirmation" and "self-disclosure" which is effective for interviews on "moderate threat topics" as Pezalla, Pettigrew, and Miller-Day (2012) describe in their article on interviewer characteristics. I limited my "self-disclosure" to only include affirmative self-disclosure—avoiding sharing any countering beliefs, steering the conversation, or taking extensive time. I am a Latina (often seen as racially ambiguous) and identified myself to participants as a graduate student at the university. The visible identities of the research assistants included one Black woman, one Middle Eastern woman (who is also sometimes seen as racially ambiguous), one White man, and two White women.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed verbatim by research assistants. Because I allowed participants to answer questions at their own pace and to revisit questions, I coded the interviews

in their entirety and not by question. Using QSR International's NVivo 12 qualitative data analysis software, I employed two levels of coding. I coded every line semantically first, then additionally coded for latent codes. My interpretation of participants' accounts was captured in latent coding and theme development following a social constructionist perspective informed by Critical Whiteness studies (Leonardo, 2013). I reported frequencies and percentages in some of my findings which counter some social constructionist perspectives (e.g., Patton, 2015); however, I include frequencies not to demonstrate generalizability, but to illuminate the prominence of particular patterns within my specific sample. "Lone-wolf" coding (Saldaña, 2015) was utilized, where the first author/interviewer coded all transcripts. However, the coding process was team-checked throughout. The assistant moderator notes and debriefing session notes were referenced before, during, and after a transcript was coded. After the first ten interviews were coded, the first author met with the research team to discuss the coding completed. The first ten interviews were judged representative of the sample by the research team, and the research team verbally coded these ten interviews' transcripts while the first author verified and corrected the initial codes developed. Codes were utilized to develop three areas of results: (a) the sample's eight conceptualizations of White allyship, (b) participants' critical reflection on racism and, (c) themes across the sample which were team-checked after every round of development.

Results

Eight Conceptualizations of Allyship

When asked about their definitions of and personal engagement in White allyship, White students most often conceptualized White allyship as *intervening in explicit racism* or "pointing out racism when you see it" (n = 17; 73.91%) and *engaging in productive race dialogue* (n = 17;

73.91%). However, I discovered that White students conceptualized allyship in many ways, which I categorized into eight categories (reference Table 2). For instance, twelve students (52.17%) mentioned *political engagement*, which included voting behavior and advocating publicly for People of Color at marches and protests. *"Shut up and show up"* was mentioned by 8 participants (34.78%) and was described as attending People of Color events without stifling.

Interestingly, 7 participants (30.43%) mentioned *"helping" People of Color* as an allyship behavior. An example of this type of allyship is shown in the following participant who shared that White allyship is when "somebody who is White would help somebody else who's not White…like maybe people in my lab who don't understand certain American cultural aspects, I could help them understand those." Other allyship definitions included *personal and private action*, such as thinking about one's Whiteness daily or taking time to educate oneself (n = 5; 21.74%); *friendship with People of Color* (n = 4; 17.39%); and *social activism*, which involved creating spaces for People of Color and/or allies (n = 2; 8.70%).

Critical Reflection on Racism

I used five factors to determine each participants' critical reflection on racism: whether a participant believed racism was a current issue in the United States, their explicit acknowledgement of White privilege, their racial ideology (i.e., color-blind or color-conscious), contradictions within their interviews (i.e., endorsing both color-blindness and color-consciousness statements), and the research team's debriefing session following each participant's interview (see Table 1).

I identified six students as having low critical reflection on racism. These students shared statements that confirmed their belief that racism persisted in the United States; however, their interviews also displayed a strong color-evasion color-blind ideology of choosing not to "see" or

"notice" race (Frankenberg, 1993). For example, Stephen stated that race does not play a significant role in his daily life, "some people like really care what race you are, like, that means something to them...I don't, I can be around whoever." These students used a humanist approach to justify their color-blindness, substituting racial identity with an overarching "human" identity, "I don't care [what race someone is]" and "a person is a person." Additionally, at least one participant, Lauren, expressed meritocracy ideals (labeled *power-evasion color-blindness* by Frankenberg (1993)) throughout her interview sharing statements such as,

> "I feel like everyone is pretty much given the same opportunity in life and...they [People of Color] shouldn't act like a victim when they have—I just feel like everyone has the same opportunity in life. Like if you work hard, you'll go far in life; if you have a good personality or you're like confident in yourself and you're a good person…"

I categorized eleven students as possessing medium critical reflection on racism because students within this group displayed key contradictions in their critical reflection demonstrating that their race beliefs were still taking form. For example, Nancy discussed the importance of recognizing intersectionality in her interview which could be considered uncommon for college students in 2018 and hence, evidence for a higher level of critical reflection on racism. However, Nancy also demonstrated lower critical reflection throughout her interview as well, such as the following excerpt where she equates privacy in one's voting choice to experiencing racism and homophobia,

> "I didn't want people to judge me because of my skin...Like I had a friend who kept asking me who I voted for, for example, and I kept saying that's my own personal thing and I told him...'What if I voted for so-and-so?'...And they said 'no, [I would not be your friend]' and I don't think that's fair to judge one person; it's the same as if you were to judge someone based if they were gay."

Nancy and others judged to have a medium critical reflection on racism exhibited areas of strength (i.e., understanding the importance of race); however, like those in the low critical reflection group, they also exhibited areas of necessary growth (i.e., further reflection on structural racism).

Finally, I categorized 7 students as possessing high critical reflection on racism. These students displayed confidence and specificity in their discussion of race and recognized systemic racism throughout their interviews. As a key example, Jess explains,

> "...And then also, understanding that racism isn't an interpersonal problem, right? I think there's a huge tendency to do that, where it's like, 'oh you know, I can change the way I interact with others and racism will go away.' And it's not; it's a systematic problem and it's upheld by all of these norms and cultural beliefs, and systems that are just racist. And so I think as a White person, just understanding a systemic level of oppression is so important and actively resisting that as well."

High critical reflection students differed from students with low or medium critical reflection on racism through their definitive understandings of systemic racism and conveyed confidence in their discussions through the interviews.

Theme 1: Bringing Together Critical Reflection on Racism & Allyship Behaviors in White Allyship Development

I discovered a link between critical reflection on racism and allyship behaviors, such that White students who had a higher critical reflection on racism were more likely to have more developed understandings of allyship behaviors and more likely to have engaged in allyship behaviors.

Low Critical Reflection: A Constrained Allyship

Conceptualizing allyship behavior as *friendship with People of Color* appeared exclusively in the low critical reflection group and was one of their most prevalent conceptualizations of allyship. For these students, friendship, as an expression of sameness and equality, was perceived as a reasonable allyship behavior. Low critical reflection students shared similar sentiments such as, "I'm an ally to all of my friends" and "I don't think [friendship] has anything to do with race." Another common conceptualization among the low critical reflection group was *"helping" People of Color*. Though participants insisted on color-evasion color-blindness and disregarding race throughout their interview, their perceptions of People of Color as requiring "White people's help"—therefore recognizing Whiteness—displayed not just a White savior complex, but also a narrative of hierarchy and supremacy. This group displayed a general uneasiness when discussing allyship, as was evidenced by stumbling over words, awkward laughs when answering questions, and a lack of expansion within their responses. Lauren, for example, when asked to describe an ally, responded,

> Lauren: "...Just kind of like being there for People of Color and like going out of your way to like be their ally and be with them and help them through times that they're like going through..."
> Interviewer: "Yeah, and how about for actions? Like what do you envision a White ally actually doing?"
> Lauren: "Um… I don't know… Um…. I have no idea [laughs]."

Students with low critical reflection did identify *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive race dialogue,* and *political engagement* as allyship behaviors, but many only mentioned personally engaging in friendship as their sole attempted allyship behavior. In fact, two students were unable to recall any allyship behaviors they had attempted. Many students attributed their poor engagement to a lack of opportunity explaining that they had minimal

contact with People of Color and had not been in situations that required allyship, “I don’t think there’s ever really been a situation… (laughs) not saying that I wouldn’t be an ally to a Person of Color—but like I don’t think that there’s been a situation where I have been like asked to be or like thought that there was a need to be, essentially.” Furthermore, internal conflicts prevented some low critical reflection students from engaging in more developed allyship behaviors—namely, political engagement. For example, Michael and Will both conceptualized political engagement as a form of allyship but expressed concerns in personally engaging in this type of behavior. Michael disclosed,

> “I mean like [for] me personally, [the discomfort is] just with my personality. I probably would never like join a protest not because I'm against protests or against the causes, but just because it's just not something I feel comfortable with...I feel much more comfortable in like smaller environments like helping, you know, like a specific person or maybe you know, like a friend or something, you know or like helping somebody talk through something… I'm not like a huge like big giant...like bumper stickers and this and that, you know? I wouldn't change my Facebook Banner [or] my profile picture, but I wouldn't do that for anything and like I hope that doesn't make me like a bad person because like some people could totally see that as like, ‘Oh my gosh, you didn't like join this...sign this petition or like whatever. I don't know. …Maybe I'm a little ignorant or I don't know. Yeah, I don't know. It's just like not me.”

When the interviewer asked Michael to explain his feelings towards political engagement further, he expressed fears of constant responsibility, public perception, and a lack of knowledge,

> “I don't know it's just I almost feel like that's just like a label that you put on yourself and it's almost like a constant responsibility, which I feel like I just can't accept which I don't know maybe like I'm lazy...I let everyone know that I'm involved in this—that I'm an ally for this I guess I'm almost afraid that people would come to me that I don't know how to help you know, and it's almost like I'm trying to avoid that and it's not that I don't want to help them. It's just that like I'm afraid I don't have what they need, you know because it's like I can support this cause and I can do this, but I can't do everything and I don't know everything. You know, like I'm not a professional; I'm just like a person like, I'm just a kid, you know?”

Medium Critical Reflection: A Developing Allyship

Students with a medium critical reflection on racism listed a variety of behaviors that they considered to be White allyship. They were not as constrained in their conceptualizations as those in the low critical reflection group and conceptualized allyship beyond friendship and "helping" behaviors. Instead, medium critical reflection students' conceptualizations included *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive dialogue, political engagement, "shut up and show up,"* and *personal and private action*. Still, though students with medium critical reflection possessed comparatively developed conceptualizations about allyship than those with lower critical reflection, they still had trouble translating these ideas of allyship into behaviors. This may have been because many of the students in this group were still forming their beliefs on race as was evidenced by several of their contradictory statements during the interview and as a result, they may have not yet established their personal commitment to allyship. For example, Susan envisioned White allyship similar to other students categorized as high critical reflection. She believed allies engaged in political engagement, intervening against explicit racism, and "fighting alongside [People of Color], not just standing behind them saying that 'I support you.'" However, when asked explicitly about her Whiteness, she abruptly changed her tone and suddenly shifted to emphasizing the unimportance of race as the key to White allyship matching our low critical reflection participants,

> "I kind of just see it as a label like, I don't like talking about the fact that I'm White because to me it just doesn't matter, like I recognize there are a lot of privileges and a lot of things that come with the certain color of my skin, but...I like to normally believe that race doesn't matter, so why should mine? ...I don't believe the color of my skin or anyone's skin should matter so why do I have to answer this question? ...I just kind of see [it] as like saying my hair is brown, it's just kind of like it's there and it doesn't really matter...it's just another physical descriptor. I don't think of it in the sense of meaning something else and I take that stance because I believe that's how everyone should think about it."

Though few in the medium critical reflection group mirrored Susan's significant shift in race beliefs, several did contradict themselves to lesser extents. Furthermore, medium critical reflection students ascribed their poor allyship engagement to a lack of knowing how to traverse spaces as an effective ally. Lisa, for example, was concerned that her inexperience might lead to inadequate allyship,

> "Sometimes I wonder if I am really missing like a concept or something like that [because I am] coming from a place [where] my family is White...all my friends growing up were White... I must once in a while be missing something just like an absence of knowledge which is why I am always like trying to, as much as I can, talk to people. ...I'm always worried that like I won't know how to approach a situation in the best way or I won't be able to like—I don't know—be the advocate that I should be."

Other medium critical reflection students shared Lisa's concern of offending or provoking conflict which led them to inaction. Amy disclosed, "I kind of just avoid saying something even though I don't have anything to say that's like offensive. ...I don't want to say anything in the wrong way [and] get the wrong reaction."

High Critical Reflection: A White Allyship in Progress

High critical reflection students tended to engage in continual reflection on their Whiteness and allyship. Like those in the medium critical reflection group, they also viewed allyship as *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in race dialogue, political engagement, shut up and show up,* and *personal and private action*. None of the students in this group cited *friendship* as an allyship behavior; nevertheless, one person was classified as utilizing *"helping"* language during a segment of their interview suggesting that high critical reflection students might be susceptible to White saviorship rhetoric as well. However, unlike low critical reflections students, this student did not use this language throughout their interview indicating that this was not their primary framework for understanding allyship.

Students with high critical reflection on racism engaged in the most allyship behaviors. In contrast to the other two groups, they exhibited a pattern of sustained allyship engagement and engaged in not only interpersonal behaviors, but also behaviors that challenged oppressive systems and institutions, such as social activism and political engagement. Unique to this group was the mentioning any sort of involvement in *social activism*, or taking on leadership roles in race organizations, groups, or movements. Further, high critical reflection students shared many recent times when they had intervened in explicit racism with at least two students mentioning that they served as lead facilitators in race discussions at the institution. Contrastingly, when students with low or medium critical reflection students recalled intervening in explicit racism or engaging in race dialogues, they often described events that occurred many years ago or just once.

High critical reflection students had a strong sense of self-awareness and were constantly reflecting on their Whiteness. Kimberly, for example, described how she intentionally navigates spaces and takes action as a White person,

> "As a White person, you have a lot of privilege...you can dominate in spaces easier...so realizing that you need to take a step back sometimes and go, 'this is not my space'. ...because it's not my job to educate People of Color about People of Color's experiences. But if I have knowledge about some experience or history that I can share with a White person who may not have that, I'd be ready to do that. ...I still agree [White people] should have conversations with People of Color but also like realizing that it's not their job to tell [us] about like the history and context. I mean personal experience is different, but it's like realizing that...you have to take a sense of responsibility if you want to be a White ally, you can't just rely on other people to teach you about it."

High critical reflection students did express challenges to their allyship. However, their challenges were specific to bettering their allyship, rather than opposing allyship or struggling to engage in any allyship behaviors. Moreover, many high critical reflection students mentioned

feelings of overwhelm due to perceived inadequacy in their allyship. For example, Jess disclosed,

> "I get a lot of anger. Sometimes it's just kind of I know I'm tired of it. ...over Thanksgiving dinners, I mean my parents had asked me not to get into any controversial conversations because my parents think I'm too radical or something. Yeah and so I just stayed quiet. That was hard. But yeah, so there are definitely some times where I don't [engage] and I feel a little bit guilty and I feel ashamed for doing so because I know that I like I have this White skin that enables me to connect with other White people in a way that I want to always be doing…but I just yeah, I get pretty exhausted myself..."

Kimberly similarly admitted, "Like I said about like being 24/7, that's a lot and although I think that that's really important to me...Like it takes a lot of strain to be like anything, to be on top of anything 24/7 takes a lot. So…like making sure I don't get burnt out of like talking about these conversations because I know they need to happen and like showing up and that I just have [to have] ample space and energy to do them."

Theme 2: College as a Site of Allyship Development

Other than within the exit survey, I did not specifically inquire White college students about their college setting. Yet, college emerged as an important overall theme throughout each interview and for many, served as the main site for developing their critical reflection on racism and engaging in productive race dialogue. For high critical students, the college setting additionally served to cultivate their White allyship development offering them spaces to intentionally engage in White allyship behaviors.

The College Setting Created Productive Dialogue

Half (n = 12; 52.17%) of the students across the critical reflection spectrum recalled that their productive race dialogues occurred in college, mainly in the college classroom. The courses mentioned were not limited to race-based courses, demonstrating the wide opportunity for

exposing students to race across college curricula. Outside the classroom, students recalled productive dialogue occurring at race dialogue workshops and events hosted by their dorms.

I invited White students to share which mechanisms they believed allowed their recalled race conversations to be productive. Eight White students (34.78%) across the critical reflection spectrum attributed their inclusive experience to the setting, such as a small-group environment, the presence of a good facilitator, and/or the dialogue-not-debate style of the conversation. These students described productive spaces as being non-judgmental and respectful, open-minded, and allowing students to be vulnerable and honest. Ten students (43.48%), comprised disproportionately of high critical reflection students, attributed the success of their conversations to themselves, recalling that they understood “their role” as a White person within race dialogue. These students knew to listen, to educate themselves beforehand, and to be vulnerable. Six students (26.09%) across the critical reflection spectrum mentioned that inclusive dialogue occurred because the Person (or People) of Color made them feel comfortable and confident; Ashley (high critical reflection) said, “if I don't know something, don't belittle me, educate me.”

However, not all students experienced productive conversations within the classroom. Two students spoke about how their high school classrooms were all-White and hence, inclusive of them as White students, but not productive. Another student, Will (low critical reflection) labeled their college classroom as unproductive because the space lacked diversity of thought:

> Will: “Especially at [university name], there’s usually not many dissenting opinions. I feel like this school is very one-minded on things like that.”
> Interviewer: “Mhm. And do you feel like you fit that mold, and it’s like a comfortable environment?”
> Will: “Yeah, I would say so. But it’s not a healthy environment for sure…You don’t want to be in a place where everyone has the same idea about something and [university name] is very much one of those places.”

High Critical Reflection Students Maximized Race Curricula Opportunities

In the exit surveys, I asked students to share their history with race-related coursework and involvement in race-related co-curriculars such as race organizations/programs and service-learning programs. Important differences emerged between high critical reflection students and medium or low critical reflection students on their levels of engagement in race curricula (see Appendix A). High critical reflections students seemed to not only benefit from the college context, but also to maximize the opportunity to expand their White allyship development by partaking in a variety of race curricula.

Apart from one, all high critical reflection students listed completing at least one type of race curricula. By contrast, only four (one low critical reflection, three medium critical reflection) students had listed completing any type of race curricula—with all four specifically listing that they had completed one race course. However, course titles listed by these four students were comparatively broader than the courses listed by high critical reflection students. The courses listed by low/medium critical reflections students included a course focused on Slavic cultures, an introductory gender studies course, an introductory anthropology course, and a sociology course on "social inequality." In contrast, courses listed by the high critical reflection students were undoubtedly race-based courses with course titles including phrases such as "Black Child Psychology," "Mexican Society," "Racial Violence," "Preharlem Literature," "African Diaspora," and "the Black Experience." Therefore, not only did a clear difference emerge in the number of race curricula completed, but also in the types of race curricula completed.

Additionally, high critical reflection students listed other race co-curriculars such as intergroup dialogue programs, student organizations, and service-learning programs (see Appendix A). None of the low or medium critical reflection students recalled completing any of these other types of race curricula. Meanwhile, three high critical reflection students had completed at least one service-learning program, two were members of race-related organizations with at least one high critical reflection student additionally serving in a leadership position within a race-related organization, and two acted as facilitators to an intergroup dialogue program leading race conversations. Therefore, Study 1 indicates a link between race curricula and high critical reflection on racism.

Theme 3: Family as a Catalyst or Barrier to Allyship Development

I found that family could act as a barrier to engaging in allyship behaviors for students across the critical reflection on racism spectrum. I did not directly inquire about the students' hometowns nor families. Still, 14 out of the 17 students (83.35%) who chose to describe their hometown shared that they had grown up in predominately White areas that were mostly Christian and/or conservative. No distinct pattern emerged between critical reflection groups other than low critical reflection students disproportionately not mentioning their hometowns (with the two that did share, disclosing that they had grown up in predominately White, majority conservative towns). This pattern likely emerged among the low critical reflection on racism group because they were not as likely to discuss race unprompted.

Over half (n = 15; 65.22%), with a disproportionate amount of medium and high critical reflection students represented, named their family as a challenge in race dialogue and other forms of allyship. White students could have productive race dialogues at college with their

mostly White peers or friends who shared their same values. However, at home, their families would say things students found to be problematic or would be openly and explicitly racist.

White students primarily conceptualized allyship as intervening when explicit racism occurred and engaging in race dialogue. However, when that intervention or dialogue involved their own family, White students were apprehensive. Students found confronting family members to be very challenging because their families chose not to listen to them and/or disparaged them; for example, Kimberly (high critical reflection) disclosed,

> "I have avoided [race conversations] in some situations with my parents. And if my family members like say something, they know that I will tell them off…and they think it's funny. …But if a friend or someone came up and was like, 'Oh I want to have a conversation with you about this,' I wouldn't avoid it."

Susan (medium critical reflection) similarly shared, "I do a lot of things like marches and stuff, but I really don't like to be active on social media, 'cause I know certain family members who don't share my beliefs…" Some students described their family members as even being directly opposed to allyship; for example, Will (low critical reflection) disclosed,

> "If I were to sign up for this [becoming an ally], I have many family members…that are staunchly and overtly against many of the things that at least they conflate with White allyship…They probably haven't heard of it, but if you told them about it, they would immediately reframe it into SJW/PC [Social Justice Warrior/Politically-Correct] stuff. …Um, and, yeah, I don't think that would be good."

Still, family members could also serve as powerful mediators to allyship development, as was the case for especially Jess and Sandra who were both determined to be high critical race participants. Sandra explained her parents' vital role in her allyship:

> "Coming from a very 'Bible Belt' and a very heavy Republican area with a lot of minorities, we have a lot of racial tensions…and one thing that my parents really did when I was growing was make me very aware of that…I kind of grew up having those conversations and we kind of continued to do so especially with today's politics."

Jess and Sandra show the role of the family in cultivating higher, and perhaps easier, White allyship development.

Theme 4: White Identity and White Allyship Development

Negative Relationships with White Identities Viewed as Unproductive

The interviews ended with a discussion on students' White identities. After they initially described their relationship, I would ask, "If you could categorize your relationship with your White identity as positive, negative, or neutral, what would you categorize yourself as?" Ten participants (43.48%) labeled their relationship as neutral, which was described by students as having feelings of passivity, unimportance, or failure to connect with their White identity. Of these 10, three were low critical reflection students, six were medium critical reflection, and one was high in critical reflection on racism. The rest of the 13 participants (56.52%) categorized their relationship to their White identity as positive, reflecting feelings of acceptance towards their White identity and privilege. Of these 13 participants, three were low critical reflection students, five were medium, and five were high critical reflection on racism students. In other words, high critical reflection students disproportionately categorized themselves as having a positive relationship with their White identity whereas, low and medium critical race participants were generally split between identifying their relationship as neutral or positive.

No participants labeled themselves as having a negative relationship with their White identity. Instead, the consensus was that a negative relationship, which was described by students as having a relationship with one's White identity structured by guilt and shame, was unproductive. For example, one of high critical reflection students, Jess, explained,

> "They [some White ally friends] feel anger at White people... And, not to say that's invalid, but it's not from a place of like 'I'm angry at this system that created this like

thing', [instead] they're angry at these [White] people. …It's this anger that they feel towards themselves that manifests as like anger towards the world."

High Critical Reflection: Viewing Positive Relationships as a Necessity for White Allyship Development

Nearly all (5 of 6) White students labeled as high critical reflection on racism described their relationship with their White identities as positive. Moreover, both Jess and Carolyn explicitly mentioned that having a positive relationship with one's White identity was a critical part of White allyship development. Jess shared,

> "I think having a positive relationship is just accepting what is and not being scared. I think that's what's necessary to be an ally as well. Yeah, and I think that if you have a positive racial identity you embrace that and you understand the implications of it and that you are not afraid of that. …and also, I think what it really means to me is like using my racial identity for positivity."

Carolyn agreed saying that positive relationships demonstrated anger instead of guilt,

> "I think that if you have, [what] I would consider…to be a holistic understanding, like a whole understanding of Whiteness, [then] there's nothing to feel guilt or shame of. There's something to feel angry about, you should feel angry. Like I feel angry about it. I don't feel angry at myself, I feel angry at this system that created that. So I think, I think that it's impossible to not have a positive relationship if you truly understand Whiteness."

Low and Medium Critical Reflection: Viewing White Privilege as a Lucky Benefit

Though, the last question did mention the words, "White privilege" I did not explicitly ask participants to discuss their privilege. Nevertheless, most students (n = 20; 86.96%) acknowledged their White privilege; specifically, all high critical reflection students acknowledged their privilege, 10 of 11 medium critical reflection students acknowledged their privilege, and four of six low critical reflection students acknowledged their privilege. However, when talking about their privilege, nearly half (n = 9), comprised of four low and five medium critical reflection participants described their privilege as a "lucky" social benefit. For example,

James (low critical reflection) stated, “I have a positive view of my White identity. I’m just fortunate enough—[it’s] I guess luck, at some point. There aren’t many negatives to [my White identity]…I can’t think of any.” Viewing privilege as a benefit was accompanied with deficit social perceptions of People of Color as demonstrated in the following excerpt from Amanda (medium critical reflection),

> “Um, I’m not sure [a negative relationship with one’s racial identity] would even exist with White people. Because it could happen with minorities because you don’t want to be a minority ‘cause you want to be not seen as lesser, and things like that. So, I’m not sure anybody would say that they have like, a bad relationship with their White identity. ‘Cause, you have privilege…there’s nobody that doesn’t want to be White, I don’t think.”

Notably, none of high critical reflection participants reflected on their privilege as a lucky benefit, but as matter-of-fact or burdensome, and to be used for action.

The Distinct Relationship Between Guilt and Critical Reflection

Half (n = 11; 47.83%) of the participants shared at least one time they felt guilty or ashamed about their privilege or being White, with no pattern emerging between guilt and labeling one’s relationship as positive or neutral. However, none of the 11 participants who admitted to feelings of guilt were categorized as the low critical reflection group. Instead, guilt emerged only with medium (n = 6) and high (n = 5) critical reflection on racism students. Guilt was especially a characteristic of high critical reflection students with five of the six high critical reflection students admitting guilt or shame about their Whiteness. Meanwhile, four of the six low critical reflection students directly stated that they did not feel guilty. For instance, when debating the pros and cons of how allyship is promoted, Will (low critical reflection) candidly shared,

> “If they [those who call for allyship] could make it less an admission of guilt, that would help. Because I really don't feel like I did anything. I didn't ask to be White, you know? I

was born, you know, with just as much chance as you were born a Person of Color. I didn't ask for you to be oppressed."

Reactive Guilt vs. the Guilty White Identity. The guilt students experienced took two forms. Most participants described a *reactive guilt* that was markedly temporary. Students described passing feelings of guilt after the election of Trump, a school shooting, or in unexpected moments of privilege such as hearing about a negative race experience that they had not considered or faced as a White person. For example, Kimberly (high critical reflection) stated,

> "They talk about feelings of guilt with being White but it's never about like generally it's more about a specific thing. …I mean I've even said this myself, like if I see something or read a headline…[I say], 'Oh my gosh, I hate White people.' …But like it doesn't necessarily mean I *mean* it, but I think that there are some people who even if they are White like ask, 'What is happening? Why are White people act[ing] in this way?'"

However, at least a few students, including Kimberly, seemed to hold a guilty White identity in which their guilt was distinctly prominent—even though they had described their relationship as positive or neutral. For instance, Jennifer (medium critical reflection) disclosed,

> "I know I am privileged. But then it's kind of like that weird paradox. Like I've read some articles about it. It's like White guilt… Or it's like people talk about the discrimination they faced and then I feel bad for saying I'm privileged but then I shouldn't feel bad because I'm lucky to be privileged. That kind of thing. …I don't know what the right—I don't know if there is a right answer like, of how to feel."

Students who seemed to possess a guilty White identity comprised of two medium and two high critical reflection students meaning that high critical reflection students were overrepresented. Though not a characteristic of the entire group, guilt seemed to play a distinct role in a portion of high critical reflection students.

Discussion

Study 1's primary goal was to capture White college students' perspectives of White allyship behaviors across a spectrum of critical reflection on racism. Study 1 found that White students conceptualized White allyship behaviors via eight conceptualizations including: *intervening in explicit racism*, *engaging in productive race dialogue*, *political engagement*, *"shut up and show up," helping" People of Color, personal and private action*, *friendship with People of Color*, and *social activism*. Additionally, as expected from the critical consciousness (CC) and Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) literature which has theoretically and empirically demonstrated a relationship between critical reflection and critical action (e.g., Jemal, 2017; Reason et al., 2005), Study 1 also demonstrated a close relationship between critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors. White college students who had higher levels of critical reflection on racism were found to have more sophisticated conceptualizations of White allyship behaviors and to have engaged in more allyship behaviors.

Secondly, Study 1 sought to explore the potential factors of college, family, and White identity to White allyship development (i.e., critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors). The CWS (and I argue, the CC) literature conceptualizes White allyship as comprising of two components: critical reflection on racism and engagement in White allyship behaviors. I then conceptualized the continuous process of attaining both a high critical reflection on racism and sustained engagement in White allyship behavior as *White allyship development* (for further term clarifications, reference Appendix A in Chapter 1). Study 1's findings demonstrated a close relationship between critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors such that any patterns that were identified as a pattern of critical reflection were also a pattern of engagement in White allyship behavior. Therefore, if something is shown to motivate

critical reflection, it also motivates White allyship behaviors within my findings (unless specified otherwise). Therefore, I collectively interpret any patterns on each factor as motivating or impeding White allyship development as a whole.

Study 1 found that though the family context could serve as an important precollege catalyst for White allyship development in some students, most students in the present sample viewed their family as a barrier to their White allyship development. However, despite the precollege barriers of family and growing up in predominately White hometowns, Study 1 also found that the college context served as one of the most important sites for allyship development across the sample. The college context provided White college students multiple opportunities for meaningful engagement with race. Lastly, Study 1 discovered that possessing a positive relationship with one's White identity in which Whiteness is understood and accepted may be an important characteristic in White allyship.

White Conceptualizations of White Allyship Behaviors

I asked 23 White college students to describe and define White allyship behaviors. Study 1 found that White students conceptualized White allyship via eight allyship behavior categories: *intervening in explicit racism*, *engaging in productive race dialogue*, *political engagement*, *"shut up and show up," helping" People of Color, personal and private action*, *friendship with People of Color*, and *social activism* (refer to Table 2). Just as racism occurs interpersonally, systemically, and within oneself implicitly (see Appendix A), White college students also listed antiracist behaviors across socioecological levels. Specifically, the conceptualization of *personal and private action*, which include reflecting on one's biases, Whiteness, or privilege daily or taking time to educate oneself, captures the intrapersonal level of attempted antiracism. *Intervening in explicit racism, engaging in productive race dialogue, "shut up and show up"*

(which included attending People of Color events but importantly spotlighting People of Color instead of oneself), *"helping" People of Color* (which included instances of the participants wanting to "help" People of Color through difficult personal issues) and *friendship with People of Color* captured the interpersonal level of attempted antiracism. Finally, *political engagement* and *social activism* (which included creating spaces and events designed for People of Color and/or to combat racism) captured the organizational/systemic level of attempted antiracism.

Though CWS establishes that racism occurs at all socioecological levels including intrapersonally, interpersonally, and organizationally, CWS contends that good intentions do not necessitate sufficient outcomes (e.g., Spanierman & Smith, 2017). Some attempted allyship behaviors might even be seen as directly counter to the goals of White allyship. Moreover, not all these behaviors received equal endorsement amongst my sample. Instead, Study 1 produced patterns in White allyship behaviors conceptualizations based on students' levels of critical reflection on racism. Lower critical reflection students tended to conceptualize allyship behaviors in ways counter to CWS perspectives, while medium and high critical reflection students tended to conceptualize allyship in ways more aligned with CWS perspectives.

"Helping" People of Color

In the low critical reflection group, the most common conceptualizations of allyship were "helping" People of Color and friendship with People of Color. Much of the CWS literature has warned against paternalistic and/or performative allyship (e.g., Cabrera et al., 2017; Spanierman & Smith, 2017). It can be argued that the conceptualization of "helping" People of Color aligns with paternalistic allyship. Students who mentioned this type of behavior vocalized wanting to help People of Color in situations in which the POC is perceived to need a White person's help or support. For example, one student mentioned how they wanted to help People of Color with

“their English” and other “cultural aspects” to aid in assimilating them to White American culture. Spanierman and Smith (2017) labeled this type of thinking as a “White savior complex” or “missionary zeal” (Weah, Simmons, & Hall, 2000, p. 673) in which White people seek to help People of Color to “survive in a system of White dominance” rather than trying to transform these systems of White dominance (Spanierman & Smith, 2017, p. 609-610).

“Shut Up and Show Up”

In complete contrast to this conceptualization, other students in Study 1 outside of the low critical reflection group listed “shut up and show up” as an allyship behavior to which they described showing up to People of Color events and spaces to demonstrate solidarity but not to “take over.” Their main concern was being a “White savior” and inadvertently stifling People of Color’s voices instead of supporting them. Aligned with these White students’ concerns, Gorski and Erakat (2019) found that racial justice Activists of Color were experiencing burnout due to White activists’ demonstration of White saviorship.

Friendship with People of Color

Friendship with People of Color was not mentioned by any other group other than the low critical reflection group. When examining the educational literature, we see that interracial friendships are key to White allyship development (e.g., Neville et al., 2014). However, Study 1’s finding does not necessarily indicate those within the low critical reflection group have more or less friendships with People of Color than other groups—conversely, there were many low critical students who admitted not having much interaction with People of Color. Instead, this finding may exhibit their comparatively limited conceptualization of allyship behavior. When asked to describe antiracism, students within the low critical reflection group did not list systemic actions or intrapersonal actions, they instead were limited to largely interpersonal

behaviors. Then, when asked to share their own antiracist action, many listed friendship as their only attempted allyship behavior. Thus, friendship may not be an indicator of the quantity nor quality of interracial friendships, but rather an indicator of struggling to list behaviors.

Moreover, the question remains as to whether friendship should be considered an allyship behavior. For example, students placed within the low critical reflection group were largely categorized because of their color-blind ideology. In fact, when listing friendship as their allyship behavior, they often justified it within color-evasion color-blind statements which Sue et al. (2007) viewed as a potential racial microaggression. Sue et al. (2007) argued that when a White person denies their own individual racism, they will often qualify it with statements such as, “I have several Black friends” which to Sue et al. actually communicates, “I am immune to racism because I have friends of color” (p. 277). Therefore, friendship can be argued to not be sufficient allyship behavior, especially when it is potentially only listed to avoid a racist image.

Similarly, Sleeter (1993) proposed that some White people endorse the “human relations” approach to antiracism, which generally views American society as “fair and open” (Sleeter, 1993) and that “disharmony among students (such as racial name-calling or social segregation on the playground) [is] a result of misunderstanding and untrue stereotyping.” Thus, the strategies for antiracism within the human relations approach are to “provid[e] information about groups as well as contact experiences to eliminate such disharmony.” As such, Epstein (2019) argued that those who endorse this approach “are not explicitly antiracist” and instead focus on “creating positive contact experiences, or friendship…without building students’ critique of racism” (p. 7). Further, Epstein (2019) found that White teachers who were more avoidant about race dialogue were also more likely to endorse a human relations approach. Likewise, Study 1’s low critical reflection students also seemed to take a human relations approach with low antiracist action

limited to friendship or positive intergroup contact. Additionally, lead CWS thinker, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2002, 2003) argued that color-blindness was the new *racetalk* (or style of discourse) among White folks to guise their racism "without sounding 'racist'" (p. 41). Bonilla-Silva (2002) gave the following example for demonstrating this contemporary racetalk, "Some of my best friends are Black." Again, here we see friendship being used as a device for modern racism within the CWS literature. When considered too with the pattern of low levels of critical reflection on racism, Study 1 strongly suggests that friendship should not be considered a sufficient allyship behavior. Or at the very least, Study 1 can conclude that when students list friendship as their allyship behavior, it may be an indicator of low critical reflection on racism and low or lack of engagement in allyship behaviors.

Social Activism and Political Engagement

Unique to the high critical reflection group was involvement in organizational-level behaviors. No other group except the high critical reflection group displayed social activism which captured taking on leadership positions in antiracist organizations, programs, or movements. Additionally, the high critical reflection group disproportionately engaged in political engagement as well. Organizational behaviors are distinct from intrapersonal and interpersonal behaviors because they attempt to directly transform systems of oppression as Spanierman and Smith (2017) and others (e.g., Tatum, 1994) within the CWS literature have primarily envisioned as allyship behavior. Both behaviors also align well with Cabrera et al.'s (2017) premises for activism in that they are more likely to involve an "intentional, sustained connection to a larger collective" and to "entail a degree of risk" (p.404 – 407; Cabrera, Matias, & Montoya, 2017). Further, a few students in the low critical reflection group admitted to not wanting to engage in political engagement because it was too public and/or because doing so

might go against their own ideologies. Therefore, Study 1's findings demonstrate that these organizational behaviors might be the most closely associated with a high level of critical reflection on racism.

Personal and Private Action

Personal and private action appeared in both medium and high critical reflection groups but seemed to be a key practice within the high critical reflection group. Personal and private action included reflecting on one's Whiteness or taking time to education oneself. The research on White allyship has consistently shown that having a sense of one's own Whiteness is a crucial part of White allyship (e.g., Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Case, 2012; Reason et al., 2005). For example, one of the themes People of Color proposed as an ally characteristic in Brown and Ostrove's (2013) work was to "acknowledge power differentials and understand their own racial identity" and how it will then "affect their relationship." (p. 2214). Additionally, Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) found that White ally/activist students who reflected more on their Whiteness also participated in "more, and 'higher level,' racial justice actions, such as leading campus groups" which directly aligns with Study 1's findings on high critical reflection students (p. 543).

Intervening in Explicit Racism and Engaging in Productive Race Dialogue

Finally, two of the most common conceptualizations of allyship behavior demonstrated across the critical reflection spectrum were the interpersonal behaviors intervening in explicit racism and engaging in productive race dialogue. Much of the literature on White allyship also contends with these conceptualizations. For example, Brown and Ostrove (2013) found that People of Color perceived allyship as affirmation of People of Color expressed through conversations and informed action which included taking "action to address bias among his or

her own racial/ethnic group" (p. 2216). Additionally, Case (2012) and Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) both found that their ally/activist samples largely conceptualized allyship as intervening against the racism displayed by strangers, family, or students. Therefore, aligning with Study 1's sample, the CWS literature supports intervening and engaging in race dialogues as allyship behaviors.

Linking Critical Reflection on Racism to White Allyship Behaviors

Study 1 interviewed White college students with varying degrees of critical reflection on racism and assessed how key differences in critical reflection related to White allyship behavior conceptualization and engagement. Importantly, Study 1 was able to link critical reflection on racism to White allyship behaviors. This is a vital finding for the critical consciousness (CC) literature because though some CC scholars have called for more research investigating the potential for critical reflection to lead to White allyship in White populations (Jemal, 2017), few empirical studies have investigated this relationship (Heberle et al., 2020). Study 1 assessed critical reflection on racism for White students by measuring a participant's awareness of White privilege, structural racism, the racial ideology they espoused, and general statements about race during the interview. Three levels of critical reflection on racism were then found and utilized: low, medium, and high critical reflection on racism. Distinct patterns emerged within each critical reflection group which demonstrated an overall trend between critical reflection and allyship behavior.

Specifically, low critical reflection students had undeveloped and color-blind perspectives on race which resulted in naming allyship behaviors that may be seen as more problematic by the CWS scholarship (e.g., friendship) and low to no allyship engagement. For students with medium critical reflection, their ideas about race were evolving with many

expressing contradictory ideas about race and racism. Moreover, though their conceptualizations of allyship matched many of the high critical reflection students (e.g., political engagement), medium critical reflection students still reported only low to moderate engagement in allyship behaviors. Lastly, students with high critical reflection on racism reported having a continual reflection on their Whiteness, race, and positionality. This deep level of critical reflection related to much more developed and sophisticated allyship behaviors and sustained allyship engagement. Based on these results and the theoretical work of scholars (Jemal, 2017), perhaps the question of whether CC applies to White populations should be reframed. By not conceptualizing CC and more specifically, critical reflection, as a tool to engender more critically aware and conscious White college students, Whiteness may remain untouched and unchallenged. Nevertheless, CC among White college students and Students of Color operate distinctly, and more theoretical and empirical work is needed to theorize the pertinent components of critical reflection and critical action for White college students.

The College Context as a Factor in White Allyship Development

Study 1 found that college was an important site for White allyship development. For students across the critical reflection spectrum, college provided opportunity for productive race dialogue and for high critical reflection students specifically, college provided opportunity to apply and expand their critical knowledge. The extant research demonstrates that White college students disproportionately arrive at university settings without much critical reflection on race (Spanierman et al., 2008). However, as Study 1's findings exhibited, the transition to college for White students can serve as a critical developmental period where ideas and beliefs about race and racism begin to expand or take form. For example, most White students within Study 1 named the college context, and especially the college classroom, as a space for encouraging

critical reflection on racism. For many, the college classroom served as a space for their first productive race dialogues. Further, one of the most conceptualized and practiced allyship behavior was engaging in race dialogues. Alimo (2012) investigated the impact of cross-race intergroup dialogue on White allyship and found that those who participated in dialogues experienced higher engagement in allyship behaviors and higher confidence in their allyship engagement. Additionally, Alimo (2012) found that White students who participated in cross-race intergroup dialogues were also more likely to engage in other types of allyship behaviors such as self-directed action (which included behaviors I labeled as *personal and private actions* in the present study); intervening in explicit racism and "reinforcing others' behaviors that support cultural diversity;" and intergroup collaborative actions (which included behaviors I labeled as *political engagement* and *social activism* in the present study). Therefore, Alimo's (2012) findings suggest that intergroup dialogue may be an important foundational or incentivizing behavior for White allyship development. However, the amount of *intergroup* dialogue White students recalled within the present study was not clear, with many students in Study 1 describing race dialogues occurring in majority White classrooms or with their majority White peers, friends, and family.

Nevertheless, the college classroom served as an important setting for White allyship development. Research supports that diversity courses can lead to desirable White allyship outcomes, such as lower (power-evasion) color-blindness (Bañales et al., 2021; Neville et al., 2014; Soble, Spanierman, & Liao, 2011). The opportunity to take race curricula was especially important to students with high critical reflection on racism. All but one high critical reflection student had completed at least one type of race curricula. Race curricula included traditional race courses, race-focused intergroup dialogue courses, race-focused service-learning courses, and/or

memberships in race organizations. Additionally, many of these high critical reflection students were taking several race curricula further indicating a relationship between race curricula and White allyship development.

Taking traditional lecture courses on race was the most popular form of race curricula across the critical reflection spectrum. However, the types of courses high critical reflection students were taking were on comparatively more advanced and specialized race topics such as, “Black Child Psychology” or a course on “Racial Violence,” as compared to broader introductory-level courses other students had listed such as an introductory anthropology course. This difference in coursework may stem from class year; all high critical reflection students were upperclassmen who likely had easier access to more specialized courses unlike low or medium critical reflections students who were a mix of under- and upperclassmen. Still, the link between race coursework and high critical reflection on racism found in Study 1 highlight the unique role race coursework seemed to play in White allyship development. Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales’ (2005) work on a White ally sample also found that race coursework was especially important in influencing their White allyship engagement further supporting the unique role of race coursework.

The college context was especially useful for high critical reflection students who seemed to maximize race curricula opportunities to expand their critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors. Though race courses were the most common type of race curricula completed within Study 1, the high critical reflection group also completed other types of race curricula as well. Unlike the other students categorized as possessing a low or medium level of critical reflection, the high critical reflection students were involved in race co-curriculars such as intergroup dialogue programs, antiracist student organizations, and/or race-focused service-

learning programs. They were also the only group to engage in what I labeled, *social activism* which involved creating spaces and events designed for People of Color and/or to combat racism. Many of these high critical reflection students took on leadership positions as well; for example, one student was a leader in a race-related organization and two students served as intergroup dialogue facilitators for race dialogues. This pattern demonstrated a potential link not only between race curricula and White allyship development, but also experiential leadership positions and White allyship development. This was also evidenced in Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales' (2005) study which found that student leaders (which were not limited to leaders of antiracist organizations like in the present study) were associated with more advanced White allyship development.

One interpretation of why Study 1 might show a pattern between race curricula and more advanced White allyship may be because many of these high critical reflection students were more likely to seek out these various opportunities due to their already established commitment to antiracism. In other words, while other low and medium critical reflection students dedicated their degree or spare time to other subjects and topics, these high critical reflection students have self-selected race curricula because of their personal (and potentially, professional) interests in race. Another complementary explanation for this pattern is that the race curricula themselves are cultivating White allyship development. Race curricula, and especially co-curriculars, can provide an experiential learning experience or "learning by doing" (Kolb, 1984) for White college students. In fact, many researchers have highlighted the importance of experiential learning in promoting social justice in students (e.g., Pugh, 2014; Williams & Melchiori, 2013). Through these experiential curricula, White students can apply their critical knowledge and actively experiment their White allyship behaviors in safer microcosms of the real world.

Altogether, the college context seemed to provide White students with many avenues for White allyship development whether through opportunity for intergroup contact; opportunity to take courses to build critical reflection on racism or engage in productive race dialogues; or opportunity to engage in other types of race curricula to apply their critical knowledge. As Study 1 showed, the more meaningfully students engaged in racism, the higher their critical reflection and White allyship engagement appeared.

The Family Context and White Allyship Development

Study 1 found that family could act as a barrier or a catalyst to White college students' White allyship development. Many White college students in Study 1 shared that they had grown up in predominately White, Christian and/or conservative hometowns and households reflecting the broader literature (e.g., Brunsma, Brown, & Placier, 2013). Growing up within this family context (and larger hometown context) can render Whiteness invisible and unexamined (Applebaum, 2016) creating tensions once these students enter the college context. Accordingly, for most students, especially (but not limited to) those in the medium and high critical reflection groups, family members were depicted as a barrier to allyship engagement. These students described how their family members would say things that students found to be problematic or racist. Students were fearful of confronting family members in their racism especially if attempts had been made before.

Study 1 also showed that family was an important barrier for a few low critical reflection students. At least two of the low critical reflection students shared the desire to be a White ally but faced major barriers with their family. Unlike other low critical reflection students who were constrained in their allyship via their color-evasive ideologies, these students (Will and Michael) clashed with their families' values. Their low critical reflection on racism seemed to represent

enduring tensions with family values. Will even disclosed that many of his family members would be "staunchly and overtly" against White allyship which prevented him from labeling himself as an ally.

Study 1 also showed that family members could serve as powerful catalysts to some White students' White allyship development. Two students in Study 1 shared that their family openly discussed race and racism with them and had a positive influence on their White allyship development. Both students were categorized within the high critical reflection on racism group. This finding aligns with prior research on the family context which have shown the positive role that parents can have on their children's White allyship development (Liao et al., 2017; Pancer et al., 2007; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005; Tatum, 1994). For example, Liao et al. (2017) investigated the role of parents in White students' intergroup experiences and attitudes. They found that White college students were more likely to report greater openness and less color-blindness if their parents had reported the same. Furthermore, a parents' openness to diversity was also linked to White students' greater likelihood to engage in campus diversity experiences.

Altogether, Study 1's findings demonstrated how family can serve as an important factor in students' White allyship development. Prior literature establishes that parents have a strong influence on their children's racial attitudes and social behaviors (e.g., Degner & Dalege, 2013; Pancer et al., 2007; Tatum, 1994). Thus, this literature would suggest that White college students are more likely to arrive at college with their parents' level of White allyship development which Study 1 does demonstrate in some students. However, despite most students in Study 1 being raised without critically examining their Whiteness in their households, they exhibited growth in their White allyship develop via the college experience. Therefore, what Study 1 also importantly showed is that White allyship development is not static. The college context, despite

the family and precollege context, can provide opportunity for White students to expand their critical reflection on racism and White allyship engagement. However, having family members as role models instead of barriers, can perhaps make that growth much easier.

White Identity and White Allyship Development

White college students within Study 1 described their relationship with their White identity as either positive or neutral. Positive was described as feeling acceptance towards their White identity and privilege, whereas neutral was described as feeling passive or uninvested in their White identity. None reported their relationship to be negative, which was defined by participants as possessing guilt and shame about one's White identity. The interpretation of these results is complicated by the likelihood that many of these students are still developing their relationships with their White identity. Nevertheless, when paired with their level of critical reflection on racism, patterns did emerge. For example, among low and medium critical reflection students, half described a neutral relationship with their White identity and half described a positive relationship with their White identity. However, for the high critical reflection students, five of the six students, described their relationship as positive. This indicates that a feeling of acceptance towards one's privilege and Whiteness may be associated with a higher level of critical reflection on race and higher engagement in White allyship behaviors.

This finding corresponds to the research on White allyship which also shows that having a greater understanding one's own Whiteness is an important factor in White allyship development (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Case, 2012; Reason et al., 2005). For example, Brown and Ostrove (2013) found that one of the major characteristics that People of Color associated with White allies was their ability to "acknowledge power differentials and understand their own racial identity" (p. 2214). Additionally, Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales' (2005) ally sample

utilized an understanding of their Whiteness to engage in antiracism. One ally in Reason et al.'s study even expressed, "So I'm proud to be White and able to use my Whiteness to advocate social justice and multiculturalism" (p. 535). Though feeling "proud" was not a shared sentiment among Study 1's high critical reflection students, the general pattern persisted of using an understanding of one's Whiteness and privilege to take action against racism.

Additionally, no White students in Study 1 labeled their relationship as negative which they described as a White person befalling to guilt, shame, and self-hatred. White students in Study 1 viewed guilt as an unproductive and undesirable emotion. In fact, the high critical reflection students saw a positive relationship with one's White identity as a necessity for White allyship, which aligns with research conducted by Iyer et al. (2003) and Linder (2015). Both found that though White guilt can come with the benefits of acknowledging White privilege, it is ultimately self-focused and results in low action. One of the high critical reflection students in Study 1 recommended that instead of guilt or shame, a "holistic understanding…a whole understanding of Whiteness" involves anger—not anger at oneself, but anger at "this system that created [it]." Indeed, Iyer et al. (2004) also found that moral outrage (i.e., a systemic-focused anger) was a better predictor than guilt for "every prosocial activity in the study, including giving monetary contributions, signing a petition, or participating in demonstrations" (p. 356).

However, to contrast this pattern in Study 1 and Iyer et al.'s (2003, 2004) and Linder's (2015) work, though none described their relationship as negative, half of the students in Study 1 reported feeling guilty about their privilege or being White at least once. Of the 11 students who reported feeling guilt, none were a part of the low critical reflection group, five were a part of the medium critical reflection group, and six were a part of the high critical reflection group. Thus, Study 1 also showed a strong relationship between both guilt and a higher critical reflection on

racism, as well as between no guilt and a low critical reflection on racism. In a key study interviewing White student leaders, Foste (2019) discovered students employing an *enlightenment narrative* in which they guised themselves as enlightened and racially conscious to free themselves from a racist self-image. For the present study, it is important to consider how a lack of admittance to guilt within especially low critical reflection students may be part of this same enlightenment narrative. In other words, an avoidance of guilt within some students may also suggest an avoidance of wrong-doing and the same clinging to "White innocence" that Foste (2019) discovered. Moreover, students who possess lower critical reflection on racism may only understand racism as occurring explicitly at the interpersonal level (Tarman & Sears, 2005). Therefore, it might be easier for these students to distinguish themselves from explicitly "racist" individuals easing them from feelings of guilt in a way others who understand multiple levels of racism cannot.

Additionally, Study 1 exhibited at least two types of guilt: reactionary guilt (a temporary guilt in reaction to racist events or moments of privilege) and possessing a guilty White identity in which guilt was a primary feature within a student's reflections on Whiteness. Most students described moments of reactive guilt, however at least a few students—two medium and two high—did appear to hold a guilty White identity. A guilty identity was overrepresented amongst the six high critical reflection students, reinforcing the notion that guilt may be linked to a higher critical reflection on racism and higher allyship engagement. These findings support Spanierman et al.'s (2006) results on the Antiracist type. Complementing Foste (2019), studies on the "Antiracist type" highlight guilt as a major characteristic of White allyship. When analyzing White student scores on the Psychosocial Costs of Racism to Whites Scale (PCRW; Spanierman & Heppner, 2004), Spanierman et al. discovered the "Antiracist type," an affect pattern which

maps onto the concept of White allyship (Spanierman et al., 2006). Those within the Antiracist type were found to demonstrate the most "racial awareness, cultural sensitivity, and understanding of White privilege" (Spanierman et al., 2006, p. 34) and a stronger commitment to allyship engagement as compared to other types (Kordesh, Spanierman, & Neville, 2013). Importantly, the Antiracist type also "reported the highest levels of White empathy and guilt" and when interviewed, reported guilt as a "primary emotional response" (Kordesh, Spanierman, & Neville, 2013, p. 34). Therefore, matching the literature, Study 1 found that positive relationships of acceptance for one's Whiteness were associated with White allyship development as Iyer et al. (2003, 2004) and Linder (2015) also demonstrated. However, counter to Iyer et al. (2003, 2004) and Linder (2015), Study 1 also found that guilt was an important feature of White allyship development as was demonstrated by Spanierman et al. (2006) and Kordesh et al. (2013).

What is a Productive White Identity?

Research has long linked White identity to White allyship (e.g., Helms, 1984; Tatum, 1994). Helms (1984) original theory on White racial identity development viewed an understanding of one's Whiteness as the culminating status in her model, which she labeled the autonomy status. White allyship itself was then synonymized with Helms' autonomy status indicating that having an understanding of Whiteness was a core component of White allyship. Critical Consciousness theory and research also shows that critical consciousness involves developing one's relationship with social identities (Garcia et al., 2009; Sonn & Fisher, 1998). Finally, empirical research has consistently shown that having a good understanding of your Whiteness is important for White allyship development (e.g., Case, 2012; Reason et al., 2005). However, what is less known is what this developed relationship with White identity might

involve. One of the major contribution of this study is providing evidence for what a White ally's developed relationship with their White identity might look like.

Study 1's findings suggest that this relationship involves a generally positive relationship with one's identity in the sense that one accepts their White identity. However, it seems that students with more developed relationships with their White identity viewed their privilege not positively (which was conversely associated with lower critical reflection on racism), but instead as more matter-of-fact and even, burdensome. Additionally, there is a core understanding that this privilege must be dismantled or utilized for antiracist action. Guilt also seems to be an important emotion within a developed White identity—though largely as reactionary guilt when White privilege "moments" are made visible.

Some literature shows support for guilt as a productive emotion (Foste, 2019; Kordesh, Spanierman, & Neville, 2013; Spanierman et al., 2006), whereas other literature shows guilt as an unproductive emotion (Iyer et al., 2003, 2004; Linder, 2015). Study 1 highlights two types of guilt which may account for this difference in the literature. For instance, there were some high critical reflection students who described moments of reactionary guilt in response to racist incidents or situations of White privilege and others in the same group who described a longer lasting guilt that seemed to be intrinsic to their relationship with their White identity. Perhaps guilt is cyclical amongst those with more developed White identities where there are some moments, days, or months where a longer sense of guilt is present, such as after hearing a series of police brutality incidents in the news. Another possible explanation is that there are individual differences to account for whether guilt is present in a high critical reflection student such as their personality or gender.

Altogether, Study 1 shows the important, and unclear, role of guilt in developed White identities. What remains unclear is whether in moments of experiencing guilt, if a White person is more or less likely to take antiracist action, which future research should explore further. Nevertheless, it may be best practice to ensure that students do not "get stuck" in guilt and instead use any feelings of guilt as a call to action. It may also be useful to present students with many ways to engage in antiracism as well as the opportunity to discuss their feelings of guilt in intragroup settings amongst other White students which can potentially alleviate inaction when guilt does emerge.

The "White Privilege Pedagogy": Some Cautions.

For the students in Study 1 that explicitly discussed their White privilege, nearly half described their White privilege as a "lucky" or "fortunate" social benefit. The students who described their White privilege as this lucky social benefit only comprised of low and medium critical reflection students with students in the low critical reflection group overrepresented. Therefore, this finding indicates that viewing White privilege in this way may be associated with lower critical reflection on racism and lower engagement in White allyship behaviors.

White identity involves an understanding of one's White privilege. White privilege is defined as the social, historical, political, and economic advantages experienced by White people because of racial inequity, inequality, and injustice (McIntosh, 1988). Since Peggy McIntosh introduced the term "White privilege" into academia back in the late 80's, the term has spread to reach general audiences and especially, college classrooms. However, many states (and an executive order by Trump in 2020) have banned the use of the term "White privilege" (Ray, & Gibbons, 2021). The term has been misunderstood as viewing White people as inherently racist and "evil" (BBC, 2020). However, across the United States there is a spectrum of understanding

on White privilege from considering White privilege a “racist term” in of itself to conceptualizing White privilege as McIntosh intended. Much research has found that a recognition of White privilege is important for engaging in antiracism (e.g., Case, 2012; Robbins & Jones, 2016). For example, Case (2012) found that for members of the group, White Women Against Racism (WWAR), recognizing White privilege was an everyday practice for their White allyship engagement. However, I could not locate any research that empirically explored the nuances amongst various (mis)understandings of White privilege. Instead, research has largely focused on whether White people could admit White privilege or not.

Though aware of their own White privilege, lower critical reflection students in Study 1 seemed to contextualize it as a social benefit, sharing how “lucky” they were to have privilege and/or how “fortunate” they were to not “*have to* worry about” race. Additionally, these White students primarily utilized a deficiency model to view People of Color as disadvantaged and “unlucky.” Many scholars (Blum, 2008; Margolin, 2015) have criticized the pedagogy of White privilege. Petty (2008) specifically asks, “Is it truly a privilege to be connected to a legacy of lynching, displacement, redlining, etc.” (p.6)? Petty goes on to criticize the language of “allyship” as well, calling for the term “co-liberation” instead. White students viewing “White privilege” and their Whiteness as “lucky” and People of Color as “unlucky” also introduces an interesting concern when in dialogue with Foste and Jones (2020), who argue for the usage of “racial location” instead of White identity. They argue that unlike White identity, racial location “highlights the inherent relationality of whiteness by placing white students firmly within a racial hierarchy vis-à-vis People of Color” (p. 186). However, my finding demonstrated a potential drawback to only discussing Whiteness within the sole context of being on to the top of the racial hierarchy: it might result in the viewing of People of Color as inherently “below.” Though I

agree with Foste and Jones (2020) that conceptualizing Whiteness as a racial location is essential because it constantly contextualizes Whiteness within is sociopolitical standings, it may also be important to share narratives of People of Color's pride when teaching about White privilege and Whiteness as well to alleviate a pure deficiency conceptualization of non-dominant groups. This might also help Students of Color to be proud of their racial identities, instead of being overwhelmed with negative deficient depictions of their race. Perhaps too, we are ready for new language—replacing privilege with a focus, instead, on dismantling racial hierarchies.

Addressing Limitations and Future Directions

The Population of Focus

Study 1's sample comprised of White students who attended a large, Midwestern, and predominately White institution (PWI) located in a predominately White and affluent town. Over 80% of the students in my sample also explicitly mentioned that they grew up in a predominately White hometown. Additionally, the university's student population has the highest median income of any public university. I chose to focus on this population for a few different reasons. Firstly, it gives insight into a familiar U.S. context: White undergraduates from predominately White hometowns attending a predominately White institution. PWIs are "microcosms of the larger, White-dominated society" (Cabrera, p. 77) and thus can offer a window into the ways in which White supremacy shapes interactions, policies, and behaviors. Secondly, given recent events of nationwide protests for racial equity in the United States, PWIs are responding with commitments to anti-racism and "will have to move beyond platitudes and simply talking around the edges about racial equality and racism" (Burke, 2020, p. 178). PWIs are likely to address structural racism and their commitment to anti-racism by encouraging White allyship. Lastly, research has shown that midwestern White college students often come to university from

racially homogenous upbringings with little to no prior engagement with their Whiteness (Spanierman et al., 2008). Moreover, as Spanierman et al. (2008) argued, several other cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Houston (Frey & Myers, 2005; Spanierman et al., 2008) also experience high rates of segregation leading to low levels of racial socialization within White students prior to entering college (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, & Embrick, 2006). Though limited by the midwestern experience, this investigation may demonstrate experiences that align with other White college students outside of the Midwest. Thus, this investigation of midwestern White college students may shed light on the developmental aspects of White allyship.

However, these students also were likely from very affluent backgrounds (only two students mentioned coming from lower class backgrounds) and living in an affluent college town. Therefore, future research should assess these issues in other university settings across more diverse class backgrounds. Moreover, these contexts may have influenced Study 1's findings. Firstly, one of the most interesting findings was that students who mentioned friendship with People of Color were also those who embraced a color-evasion color-blindness ideology. Students in this sample attended a PWI in a predominately White and affluent town and it is not unlikely that the opportunity for interacting with People of Color was less common than in other university settings such as HSI's, commuter universities/colleges, or universities/colleges located within a higher Person of Color population. As such, questions remain as to whether the results would have been different had Study 1 occurred at a different university with more People of Color present. Would these relationships differ, such as being more nuanced—and less color-blind—in intergroup dynamics unlike what was demonstrated in the present study? Further, because of increased opportunity for interactions with People of Color, would we see more

complex forms of allyship conceptualizations generally or perhaps new types of allyship behaviors?

Another interesting finding from Study 1 was that most participants accepted their own White privilege and that many medium and lower critical reflection students tended to view White privilege as a social benefit. One potential explanation for these findings may be the influence of the higher social class of the participants. I do have some evidence that the White students within this sample may have been associating privilege with wealth, especially considering that only two participants mentioned coming from lower class backgrounds. As such, it remains unclear if White students could disentangle race and class and whether students from working class backgrounds would as easily and readily accept the existence of their own White privilege. Similar studies have demonstrated how White people can vary in their understandings of race concepts such as White privilege and racial ideology (e.g., Ancis & Szymanski, 2001; Feagin & O'Brien, 2003). Therefore, investigating a spectrum of understandings and beliefs on White allyship beyond the present study is necessary to enhance anti-racist efforts, programs, and curricula that will likely need to address students at various levels of allyship development. Therefore, future research should also investigate how students from lower class backgrounds conceptualize Whiteness and White allyship.

The Study Design

The interviewer was a young woman of Color while the interviewees were White and of various genders. Research suggests that implicit biases (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006) and anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) can affect intergroup interactions. These issues may have arisen in my study. However, I do have evidence that Study 1's study design was effective in achieving its goals. I gave all participants the option to provide anonymous feedback about the interview.

Only one student chose not to provide feedback. Two independent coders then coded the feedback (89.58% inter-rater reliability). One question asked, "Is there anything that you did not have the opportunity to share, or anything that you were not comfortable with saying during the interview?" Most students (18 yes, 1 no, 4 blank) indicated that they could share their thoughts entirely. Five students expressed how they rarely share their views on race but during the interviews, "felt pretty comfortable even though when I first saw the questions, I was kind of dreading this. Made it seem casual and just a conversation." Nevertheless, the best way to control for potential effects of interview dynamics would be to interview participants with same/similar-identitied interviewers or to use anonymous measures such as open-ended surveys.

The purpose of this study was intended to capture how White college students conceptualize White allyship. Understanding *effective* White allyship requires the input of People of Color; therefore, future research should also focus on comparing the allyship conceptualizations found within this study against People of Color's understandings. Finally, I recognize the language of "White allyship" has faced considerable backlash (Helms, 2017). This study accepts that language is meant to evolve, and that better language may replace allyship in the future; however, the meaning of its findings on antiracist action will remain. Despite the limitations, Study 1 importantly revealed the value for research on White college students across the spectrum of White allyship development. I encourage future research to also explore White college students at various levels of White allyship development as well as further exploration on critical consciousness in White college students, broadly. White allyship is one of the most important—yet understudied—avenues to progressing racial equity. Because without White allyship, the labor of anti-racism falls solely onto People of Color.

Table 1

Participant demographics for Study 1[a]

Name	Gender	Political Affiliation	Sexuality	Race Curricula	Year	Critical Reflection
Lauren	Woman	Republican	Straight	No	Freshman	Low
James	Man	Democrat	Straight	No	Freshman	Low
Robert	Man	Democrat	Straight	No	Junior	Low
Stephen	Man	Democrat	Gay	Yes	Senior	Low
Michael	Man	No Affiliation	Questioning	No	Freshman	Low
Will	Man	No Affiliation	Straight	No	Junior	Low
Amanda	Woman	Democrat	Bisexual	No	Freshman	Medium
Jennifer	Woman	Democrat	Straight	No	Freshman	Medium
Victoria	Woman	No Affiliation	Straight	No	Freshman	Medium
Amy	Woman	Democrat	Straight	No	Freshman	Medium
Mary	Woman	Prefer not to answer	Straight	No	Freshman	Medium
Susan	Woman	Democrat	Straight	No	Sophomore	Medium
Jessica	Woman	Democrat	Straight	Yes	Sophomore	Medium
Sarah	Woman	Democrat	Straight	Yes	Sophomore	Medium

Nancy	Woman	No Affiliation	Straight	No	Senior	Medium
Jaime	Nonbinary	Democrat	Gay	Yes	Senior	Medium
Lisa	Woman	Democrat	Lesbian	No	Junior	Medium
Rachel	Woman	Democrat	Bisexual	No	Sophomore	High
Sandra	Woman	Democrat	Straight	Yes	Junior	High
Ashley	Woman	Independent	Bisexual	Yes	Junior	High
Kimberly	Woman	Democrat	Straight	Yes	Senior	High
Jess	Nonbinary	Socialist	Queer	Yes	Senior	High
Carolyn	Woman	Independent	Straight	Yes	Senior	High

a. Participants ordered by their critical reflection on racism, allyship development, and academic year.

Table 2
Eight data-driven conceptualizations of White allyship behaviors within Study 1's sample

Ally behavior	Definition	Example quote
Intervening in Explicit Racism	Described as stepping in during a racist occurrence where the intended ally defends the Person of Color (POC) affected and/or corrects the perpetrator. Event can occur with or without POC present.	"I can think of in high school, it was a couple of [White] friends of mine…they had started using the 'N-word' sort of as a joke. …the best thing that I could think to do at that time was to just, I guess, **explain to them my own feelings and how I thought that was not okay.**"
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	Described as dialogue between people (either with White people or POC) on race topics. The conversation, especially when with a POC, is that of listening and validation. When with a White person, the dialogue is didactic.	"And we were sitting in the kitchen and she [a woman of color] was talking about like police officers…**Listening to her talk made me really understand the issue because as opposed to like being on national TV, it's someone you actually relate to and you understand the position behind it.**"
Political Engagement	Participant describes political actions such as marches and protests as well as voting behavior. Actions may also include advocating publicly for POC rights.	**"…who you vote for. Vote for people who will support other people. Don't vote for people that oppress; don't go and support stores and communities that aren't [inclusive to] other people."**
"Shut up and show up"	Attending People of Color events without stifling; also captured here is the concept of "passing the mic"	"I think it's super important when, as like a White ally when you're in White spaces…that's when I think you should be the vocal one**. And then if there's like protests or marches or conversations with the intention of discussing race like showing up and showing support, and also standing back when you need to**."
"Helping" People of Color	Participant explains the intended allyship behavior as "helping" a POC through a negative situation.	**"I guess, it would mean that somebody who is White would help somebody else who's not White. I could see that from a more, uh, functional point of view, like maybe people in my lab who don't**

		understand certain American cultural aspects, I could help them understand those."
Personal and Private Action	Any action that is reflexive, reflective, and/or internal. Examples can include reflecting on one's biases and thinking about Whiteness or privilege daily or taking time to educate yourself.	"**I guess still just considering [Whiteness] like an everyday issue**. I have the privilege of not thinking about it…so kind of just trying to be conscious of that…"
Friendship with People of Color	Participant expresses that being an ally is simply being friends with a POC. Oftentimes, this is qualified by statements of color-blindness such as "I don't think it has anything to do with race"	"If by being an ally you mean like **being friends with them** and helping them out, of course, yeah. But it doesn't have to be a White ally, **I'm just friends with them, you know? I don't think race has to be part of that**."
Social Activism	Participants described creating spaces and events designed for People of Color and/or to combat racism.	**"So we try to make [the space focused on immigration] as like comfortable as possible…I think almost 100% of our performers were People of Color which is really important. …I think that was a point where I was an ally because it wasn't about me. Like I wasn't performing, I wasn't there, it wasn't my experiences, but I was able to help create this space and environment where they could showcase all."**

CHAPTER 3

Investigating Color-Evasion and Race Curricula in White Allyship Development among White College Students

Introduction

The primary goal of this chapter was to investigate the role of color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula in White allyship development (reference Appendix A for a review of key terms). Results from Study 1, a qualitative exploratory study on 23 White college students, exhibited color-evasion color-blindness (i.e., "not 'seeing' color") as a potential impeding factor and race curricula as a potential motivating factor within White allyship development. Study 2 now focuses on testing these potential factors in a large-scale, anonymous quantitative survey distributed to 563 White incoming freshmen and White graduating seniors.

College often serves as the first racial socialization experience for many White students who prior to college have lived in predominately White and segregated areas (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, & Embrick, 2006). Accordingly, research throughout the years has established the important role college plays in developing students' critical reflection (e.g., Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008a) and critical action, broadly (Bowman & Brandenberger, 2012; Bowman & Denson, 2012; Hurtado et al., 2002). However, I was only able to locate one study by Reason et al. (2005) that specifically explored White critical action on racism—that is, White allyship. In their study, Reason et al. (2005) qualitatively examined how college experiences

affected students' racial justice allyship (i.e., White allyship development). They found that race curricula were one of the primary factors in allyship development with the most "powerful racial attitude changes" seen in students who "applied the course content to co-curricular experiences" such as when interacting with students of Color in residence halls or at student events (p. 539). This finding aligns with Study 1 which found that high critical reflection students seemed to maximize their race curricula opportunities to engage in allyship behaviors. Not only were high critical reflection students in Study 1 taking comparatively more race courses, but also, many of them were in leadership positions in antiracist organizations (a behavior I categorized as *social activism*). Finally, Reason et al. (2005) discovered that students who were more "privilege-cognizant" (Bailey, 1998, p. 27; as cited in Reason et al., 2005) also exhibited higher engagement in racial justice actions. Therefore, matching Study 1's conclusions, Reason et al.'s (2005) work indicated that critical reflection and critical action may be linked directly.

Study 1 measured critical reflection on racism using five factors: (a) whether a participant believed racism was a current issue; (b) their explicit acknowledgement of White privilege; (c) their racial ideology (i.e., color-blind or color-conscious); (d) contradictions within their interview; and (e) notes from the research team's debriefing sessions (refer to Chapter 1 for further information). For Study 2, I narrowed the focus to racial ideology (i.e., whether a participant expressed a color-blind or color-conscious ideology), one of the five components comprising Study 1's measurement of critical reflection on racism. I decided to focus on testing color-evasion color-blindness on White allyship development in Study 2's quantitative study design because in Study 1's interviews I found that color-evasion color-blindness was one of the strongest indicators for less developed conceptualizations of allyship and hence, lower engagement in diverse allyship behaviors. For example, many in the low critical reflection group

listed friendship as an allyship behavior, whereas none of the participants categorized as having medium or high critical reflection on racism mentioned friendship as an allyship behavior. Moreover, these low critical reflection students used color-evasion color-blindness to justify how friendship was a sufficient allyship behavior. They shared statements such as, "I'm an ally to all of my friends" or "I don't think [friendship] has anything to do with race." Friendship was the suitable expression of this color-evasion allyship because unlike any other behaviors mentioned, friendship does not explicitly confront or acknowledge race therefore not contradicting the core principle of color-evasion.

The present research expands Reason et al.'s work and Study 1 to not only quantitatively test formal race curricula inclusive of race coursework, intergroup dialogue courses, service-learning courses, and membership in race organizations, but also to additionally test how color-evasion might affect allyship development as well. Lastly, though prior research strongly suggests that college may play a significant role in allyship development, the secondary goal of this study was to provide empirical evidence directly for the college context on White allyship development. Therefore, I also collected data on both incoming freshman at the beginning of their college experience and graduating seniors who had just completed their college experience to illuminate the unique contribution of the college context on White allyship development.

The Conceptual Framework: Critical Whiteness Studies and Critical Consciousness

Study 2 utilized Critical Whiteness Studies and Critical Consciousness as conceptual frameworks for testing and understanding factors in White allyship development. Critical Race Theory (CRT) posits that racism penetrates all socioecological systems including the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels to advantage White people and disadvantage People of Color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), a subset of

CRT, focuses on investigating the social constructions of Whiteness, White privilege, and White allyship. Therefore, one of my guiding conceptual frameworks for understanding White allyship is through CWS. CWS psychologists, Spanierman and Smith (2017) broadly define White allyship as White people who,

> "a) demonstrate nuanced understanding of institutional racism and White privilege; b) enact a continual self-reflection of their own racism and positionality; c) express a sense of responsibility and commitment to using their racial privilege in ways that promote equity; d) engage in actions to disrupt racism and the status quo on micro and macro levels; e) participate in coalition building and work in solidarity with people of color; [and] f) encounter resistance from other White individuals (Spanierman & Smith, 2017, p. 609)."

In other words, Spanierman and Smith argue that White allyship comprises of two components: critical reflection on racism and critical action against racism, which links the CWS literature with the Critical Consciousness (CC) literature. CC refers to the process in which individuals become aware of oppressive structures (critical reflection) and are liberated by taking sociopolitical action (critical action) (Freire, 1993). This dissertation contributes to the CC literature by specifically applying a CC framework to White populations. Prior CC literature has largely been applied solely to People of Color which as Jemal (2017) argues, "may inadvertently support the proposition that oppression is a problem for the oppressed to solve" (p. 617).

Outside of the CC literature, most studies on White students have concentrated on factors leading to what CC would label White students' critical reflection exploring outcomes such as their increased awareness of systemic racism (e.g., Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003; Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008b). However, not many studies on White students have explored the potential factors leading to critical action. The CC literature shows strong support for the link between critical reflection and action in groups of Color (e.g., Diemer et al., 2015), with Reason et al. (2005) and Study 1 demonstrating specific evidence for this relationship within White

students. Specifically, Study 1 found that White students with high critical reflection also exhibited higher engagement in allyship behaviors and more sophisticated understandings of White allyship linking critical reflection and critical action in White allyship development.

However, some CC literature shows that there is not necessarily a perfect correlation between critical reflection and action with many researchers additionally exploring the moderating role of critical motivation, which is the belief that taking action will result in social change (Diemer et al., 2017). Moreover, in Study 1, I did not discover a perfect relationship between students' level of critical reflection and critical action. For example, one student, Lisa, who I categorized as having medium critical reflection on race displayed high allyship conceptualizations and behaviors. This leads to the possibility that there may be unique factors that lead to critical action outside of critical reflection. Though the research suggests that there is likely a very high correlation between critical reflection and action in White students, it may be worth investigating factors influencing White allyship behaviors, specifically, and not only critical reflection on racism. Therefore, for Study 2 presented in this chapter, I focused on how racial ideology (a component of critical reflection) and race curricula (a potential factor in increasing critical reflection and action) influenced White allyship behaviors. I not only measure allyship behaviors through allyship engagement (i.e., how many allyship behaviors a White student reports they engage in), but also which types of behaviors White students are considering allyship (i.e., their White allyship conceptualization).

Defining and Understanding White Allyship Behaviors Using CWS

The CWS scholarship generally understands White allyship as comprising of critical reflection on race and critical action against racism. Critical action against racism, or what I label in this study as White allyship *behaviors*, generally includes behaviors that work to challenge or

dismantle racism at any socioecological level (Broido, 2000; Spanierman & Smith, 2017) but with important limitations and considerations. In fact, much of the CWS scholarship focused on White allyship behavior is dedicated to clarifying that allyship does not rely on good intentions and may inadvertently lead to harmful effects to People of Color (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Edwards, 2006; Spanierman & Smith, 2017). In Study 1, I found that color-evasion color-blind students, who were all categorized as possessing low critical reflection on race, conceptualized allyship as "friendship with People of Color" and "helping" People of Color. In the CWS literature, friendship with People of Color can be argued to represent a mindset of tolerance (e.g., Gillborn, 2006), but not antiracism which requires intentional and deliberate action to dismantle oppressive structures or ideologies. Likewise, viewing People of Color as needing to be "helped" or saved by White people (a concept understood in CWS as a "White savior complex" (Spanierman & Smith, 2017)) can be viewed as a demeaning microaggression towards People of Color and may actually represent a comfortable guise for antiracism without engaging in risk-taking, structural action (a concept understood in CWS as "performative allyship" (Cabrera, Matias, & Montoya, 2017; Phillips et al., 2019)). A common problem for especially emerging White allies is a discrepancy between intentions and outcomes of their allyship behavior. To reduce this miscommunication, it may be useful for researchers to understand how White people are attempting to engage in antiracist behaviors. However, little empirical work has attempted to describe what allyship looks like with important exceptions including Case (2012) and Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) who found that White people largely conceptualized allyship as interpersonal daily acts of disrupting racism with strangers, family, or students. Still these studies did not attempt to map all conceptualizations of allyship and from the broader CWS literature, we understand that antiracism includes behaviors beyond interpersonal action. Altogether, it can

be argued that CWS views allyship as antiracist actions that counteract racism at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, and/or societal level with some limitations on any intended allyship behaviors that may represent tolerance but not antiracism—namely, friendship, paternalistic allyship, and performative allyship.

Racial Ideology and Allyship Development

Study 1 revealed that racial ideology, and specifically color-evasion color-blindness, may influence how students conceptualize allyship behaviors. In the current study, Study 2, I aimed to test color-evasion color-blindness as a potential factor in White allyship behavior—that is, how color-evasion affect students' level of allyship engagement and which types of behaviors they are engaging in (White allyship conceptualization). There are many racial ideology theories in the extant literature such as Altemeyer and Altemeyer's (1996) Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale, Pratto et al.'s (1994) Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), and Neville et al.'s (2000) Color-Blind Racial Ideology Scale (CoBRAS; measures power-evasion color-blindness) which all strongly predict racist attitudes (e.g., Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2005; Neville et al., 2000). In this study, I chose to focus on color-evasion color-blindness to test patterns emerged from Study 1 which showed that color-evasion specifically may have impacted allyship behaviors.

Are We Measuring Race? Color-Evasion Color-blindness

As discussed in Chapter 1, two racial ideologies dominate the psychology literature: multiculturalism and color-blindness. Multiculturalism is understood as recognizing and valuing cultural differences (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, & Graham, 2017). However, Frankenberg (1993) argued that color-blindness, which is a racial framework utilized to avoid racism by ignoring race, actually contains two dimensions. The first is color-evasion color-blindness which avoids

race by emphasizing “sameness as a way of rejecting the idea of white racial superiority” often materialized in statements such as “I do not ‘see’ color” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 142, 144). The second is power-evasion color-blindness which avoids race by embracing meritocracy beliefs: “any failure not to achieve is therefore the fault of people of color [*sic*] themselves” (Frankenberg, 1993 p. 144). Therefore, if multiculturalism embraces differences, then the dimension that most embraces sameness is color-evasion color-blindness.

Accordingly, one of the most popular measures to assess the effects of multiculturalism versus color-blindness (i.e., color-evasion color-blindness) was developed by Wolsko et al. (2000). Yet, Wolsko et al.’s (2000) assessment does not measure the valuing of racial differences, specifically. Instead, this measure and other adaptations measure “group differences” (e.g., Wolsko et al., 2000) or “cultural and ethnic” group differences (e.g., Vorauer, Gagnon, & Sasaki, 2009); “race” is rarely mentioned. Race is a sociopolitical and specific term, whereas “culture” and “group” are ambiguous to capture “city folks” and “rural folks,” “Western cultures” and “Eastern cultures,” or “this company” and “that company.” Similarly, ethnicity is not as sociopolitical as race either. Many ethnicities can be present within a race, for instance a White person can be German or English and a Black person can also be German or English. Race is a socially constructed term designated to groups of people, which within the U.S. can include “White,” “Black,” “Indigenous,” “Latinx,” and “Asian,” all placed relationally within a power relationship (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). For this reason, CWS scholar, Helms (2017) has argued that multiculturalism is used as a “protection” of Whiteness by allowing White people to claim antiracism without actually engaging in race. Usage of the term “race” forces participants to engage with the sociopolitical weight that terms like “culture” or “group” can avoid (Helms, 2017).

Therefore, within this study, I offer a new measure to capture color-evasion color-blindness called the Color in Context Racial Ideology which not only incorporates race explicitly, but also better represents the responses provided in Study 1's interviews. Instead of having participants select between a color-evasion color-blind and multiculturalism option, I had participants select between a color-evasion color-blind and *color-conscious* (e.g., Hagerman, 2014; Lenes et al., 2020; Perry, Skinner, & Abaied, 2019; Vittrup, 2018) option which specifically applies to race. Color-consciousness, which Frankenberg (1993) also labeled *race-cognizance*, recognizes the significant role that race plays in every person's everyday lives due to racism. Therefore, whereas color-evasion color-blindness ignores racial differences, color-consciousness acknowledges racial differences situated within an understanding of racism.

Research on Color-Evasion/Color-Consciousness and Allyship Behaviors

Because most White people are socialized without awareness of their Whiteness and the privileges associated with it, White people can generally navigate the world assuming a color-blind approach in which race (color-evasion) or racism (power-evasion) is denied (Neville et al., 2013). The first step in allyship development is to recognize that racism is still a present issue. Therefore, power-evasion color-blindness, which denies the existence of systemic racism, is completely at odds with White allyship. In other words, one cannot engage in White allyship if they are also power-evasion color-blind. Conversely, as demonstrated in Study 1, White students can believe racism is a present issue but still employ a *color-evasion* color-blind ideology as their attempted White allyship. Therefore, questions remain about how color-evasion color-blindness can affect allyship engagement and conceptualization. The research on color-evasion color-blindness demonstrates that though this dimension is distinct from power-evasion, it can still significantly predict negative stereotypes against People of Color (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, &

Graham, 2017; Denson, 2009; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007). Therefore, we see that color-evasion works to perpetuate racist attitudes. With several studies displaying the essential role of racial attitudes in allyship development (e.g., Case, 2012; Linder, 2015; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005), the literature strongly suggests that color-evasion color-blindness will negatively affect White allyship development. Moreover, there is strong support in the CC literature for the notion that stronger critical reflection—that is, stronger social justice attitudes—lead to greater critical action (Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011) therefore suggesting that color-consciousness should lead to increased White allyship development whereas color-evasion should lead to decreased White allyship development. However, research has yet to demonstrate empirical evidence to support this hypothesis explicitly. Therefore, Study 2 tested the following hypotheses on color-evasion color-blindness and White allyship behaviors:

H1a. Color-evasion color-blindness will predict lower allyship behavior engagement.

H2a. Color-evasion color-blindness will predict less developed allyship behavior conceptualizations.

Race Curricula & Allyship Development

In Study 1, White students with more developed understandings of White allyship and sustained engagement in White allyship behaviors also had completed more race curricula than other participants. The high critical reflection students were active in race organizations, often serving in leadership positions, and had completed different types of race courses from traditional coursework to intergroup dialogues and service-learning programs. Therefore, in the current study, I sought to test if the number of race curricula could predict allyship development.

Within this study, I tested these effects on incoming freshman who provided a precollege context and graduating seniors who provided a college context.

Race Curricula: Coursework

Existing literature exhibits the positive effects of diversity experiences, like race curricula, in the college and precollege settings (e.g., Bowman & Denson, 2012; Chang, 2002; Jayakumar, 2015; Milem & Umbach, 2003; Spanierman et al., 2008a). However, most studies focus on the effects of the college context, over precollege, perhaps due to colleges possessing comparatively higher racial compositions than many students' high schools (Jayakumar, 2008; NCES & American Institutes for Research, 2019; Orfield, Frankenberg, & Lee, 2003; Reardon & Yun, 2002; Sohoni & Saporito, 2009; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Additionally, higher education has had an increasing dedication to multicultural education since the Civil Rights Era (Francis & Russell, 1993). Many institutions of higher education have led the way in instituting policies to increase racial demographics, funding multicultural centers and organizations, diversifying the curriculum, creating ethnic studies programs, and eventually, instituting diversity course requirements. Accordingly, the college context has been linked to a series of desired outcomes. Performing a meta-analysis of 27 studies, Denson (2009) found that race curricula reduced racial bias. Though racial bias is not being directly measured in this study, I argue that it does show how race curricula can contribute to critical reflection on racism by reducing racial bias. I define race curricula within this study as traditional race coursework, race-related intergroup dialogue courses, race-related service-learning courses, and membership in race organizations.

Research has long demonstrated that diversity experiences, which can include other social topics beyond race, is related to increased racial awareness (critical reflection on race) and reduced power-evasion color-blindness. For example, Spanierman et al. (2008a) and Jayakumar (2015) both found that formal college diversity experiences, which they defined as participation in ethnic studies courses and racial/cultural awareness workshops, reduced power-evasion color-blindness among White students. Likewise, Neville et al. (2014) completed a key longitudinal study which examined White students' changes in power-evasion color-blindness over time and importantly, how diversity experiences predicted these changes. Diversity experiences included (a) courses on "ethnic studies, gender and women's studies, intergroup dialogues, and general diversity" and (b) diversity-related activities such attending "Black History month events" or "Asian American Heritage Month" events (p. 183). The authors found that students who completed more diversity experiences demonstrated a significant decrease in power-evasion color-blindness within their four years in college. Perhaps most unique and relevant to the impact of race curricula (and not diversity broadly), was a study performed by Case (2007) which evaluated a racial diversity course, specifically. The syllabus for the course was provided demonstrating the course's consistent focus on race and usage of a critical framework. Case's diversity course increased students' racial awareness of White privilege and racism, increased support for affirmative action, and decreased racial bias in college students.

Race Curricula: Race Organizations

Generally, co-curricular activities may include involvement in on-campus organizations, programs, and student government. In this study, I specifically included membership in race organizations as a type of race curricula. However, the research on White students' involvement in race-related organizations is underdeveloped. In his dissertation work, Von George (2014)

explains that White students and students of Color tend to join different organizations. Students of Color are more likely to join multicultural and race organizations, whereas White students are more likely to join campus-focused organizations that are predominately White (Guiffrida, 2003; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Lavant & Terrell, 1994; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001; as cited in Von George, 2014). However, Von George's (2014) work does show that involvement in any type of student organization can "break this cycle of lack of experience with diversity" for some White students by providing them additional opportunities for informal cross-racial interactions outside the college classroom. Previous literature also shows precollege exposure to diversity tends to predict continued diversity experiences (i.e., cross-racial interactions, diversity coursework, and diversity co-curriculars) in college (Damico & Scott, 1984; Locks et al., 2008; Milem & Umbach, 2003; Milem et al., 2004; Saenz et al., 2007).

Nevertheless, some research has been completed on informal diversity experiences which can provide additional evidence for how race organizations may affect White students. Neville et al. (2014) found that diversity activities such as attending campus-sponsored lectures and events predicted lower power-evasion color-blindness over time. However, race coursework was an even stronger predictor of lowering color-blindness within their study. Additionally, Denson, Bowman, and Park (2017) measured how college diversity engagement influenced students' post-college citizenship. Diversity engagement included participating in racial/cultural awareness workshops, racial/ethnic student organizations, or ethnic studies courses. The authors found that diversity engagement had a positive "direct effect on discussing racial issues even six years after college" and positive indirect effects on "keeping up to date on politics and news consumption" (p. 32).

The Research on Race Curricula and Allyship Behaviors

Study 1 revealed that engagement in race curricula may serve to provide White students with the critical motivation and competence to engage in White allyship behaviors providing them not only diverse examples of allyship engagement opportunities, but also the ability to practice engaging in these types of behaviors. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the potential unique contribution of race curricula on White allyship behaviors. However, there is a limited amount of research on race curricula's role in White allyship behavior, specifically. A key exception is the work of Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) who in a study closely resembling Study 1, interviewed 11 first-year White students and 15 White allies/activists to explore how racial diversity experiences, including race curricula, influenced White allyship engagement. They found that first-year students with precollege experiences such as greater structural diversity in high school and greater diversity within their friend group and family had more "developed understandings of Whiteness" (p.537). Students who were deemed by the authors to hold more developed understandings of Whiteness spoke about their Whiteness directly and were able to express how power and privilege affected their everyday lives. Additionally, as was witnessed in Study 1, many ally/activists interviewed by Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) engaged in allyship through leadership roles in student organizations. Other research also indicates that race curricula may positively affect White allyship development. For instance, Laird, Engberg, and Hurtado (2005) correlated participation in diversity courses—which were described as "a social diversity course and a women's studies course"—to increased positive interactions with "diverse peers" and placing increased importance on social action (p.456). Altogether, the research suggests a positive relationship

between race curricula and White allyship behaviors. Therefore, I tested the following hypotheses on race curricula:

> H1b. Fewer race curricula will predict lower allyship engagement.
> H2b. Fewer race curricula completed will predict less developed allyship conceptualizations.

The Precollege vs. College Context

College is often the setting White students are first exposed to racial diversity experiences due to the racial homogeneity of many White students' hometowns and schools (Orfield, Frankenberg, & Lee, 2003; Reardon & Yun, 2002; Sohoni & Saporito, 2009; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Despite potentially experiencing some prior exposure to race and racism, White students often arrive to college with unexamined views of their own Whiteness and privilege perceiving themselves as "normal" (Park & Chang, 2015; Tatum, 1994). Additionally, high schools often do not provide opportunities for students to engage in critical reflection or action. Therefore, White students, unlike Students of Color, often begin the process of understanding racism and their role in combatting racism, in college (Tatum, 1994). College can provide many opportunities to experience racial diversity including exposure to racially diverse groups (Bowman & Denson, 2012; Milem & Umbach, 2003), participating in discussions on race, joining organizations that focus on race issues, and/or attending race events (Hurtado et al., 2002). Research strongly supports that college diversity experiences produce positive student learning and democratic outcomes (see Gurin et al., 2002), especially for White students who often have significantly less precollege diversity experiences than Students of Color (Reardon & Yun, 2002).

Nevertheless, the precollege context may still play a significant role in White student's allyship development. The perpetuation hypothesis (Braddock, 1985; Milem, Umbach, & Liang,

2004) states that racial segregation tends to perpetuate itself—if students interact with White peers in high school, it is likely they will interact with White peers in college and so on. However, Milem, Umbach, and Liang (2004) also argue that the perpetuation hypothesis can also occur the other way as well so that desegregation early in life also leads to desegregation later in life. Accordingly, the literature also strongly supports that those who have precollege diversity experiences are more likely to continue to engage in diversity experiences in college (e.g., Bowman & Denson, 2012; Damico & Scott, 1984; Hurtado et al., 2002; Milem & Umbach, 2003; Milem, Umbach, & Liang, 2004; Pascarella et al., 2012). Pascarella et al. (2012) discovered that both students who come with precollege diversity experiences and those who lack precollege diversity experience still both benefit from college diversity experiences. Most interestingly, Pascarella et al. (2012) found that especially for those who did not have precollege diversity experiences and who identified as "middle-of-the-road, conservative, or far right" politically were less likely to be exposed to college diversity experiences overall; however, when they were exposed to college diversity experiences, this group obtained far more growth toward social and political activism than their counterparts. As such, the college experience, even in students with precollege diversity experiences, may still uniquely benefit all students within their allyship development. Moreover, work by Park and Chang (2015) found that students can attend racially diverse high schools but still come ill-prepared for racial diversity engagement in college. For example, they found that some diverse high schools did not provide students with critical engagement in race, which left students to "not think much of it" (p. 358). Park and Chang's (2015) work reminds us that though racial diversity is important, we must also strive to provide students with precollege racial diversity experiences that critically engage students in race. The present study, Study 2, sought to build on the present literature by comparing incoming

freshmen to recently graduated seniors to investigate the unique role of the college context on allyship behaviors. Study 2 examined the following hypotheses testing differences in White allyship development between incoming White college freshman and recently graduated White college seniors:

> H4a. Recently graduated White college seniors will be significantly less color-evasion color-blind than incoming White college freshmen.
> H4b. Recently graduated White college seniors will have completed significantly more racial curricula than incoming White college freshmen.
> H4c. Recently graduated White college seniors will have engaged in significantly more allyship behaviors than incoming White college freshmen.
> H4d. Recently graduated White college seniors will list significantly more developed allyship conceptualizations.

The Current Study

This dissertation is dedicated to exploring the research question: *How do White students conceptualize White allyship and which factors influence their allyship behaviors?* Study 1 used exploratory qualitative methods to investigate this question discovering many themes such as eight White conceptualizations of White allyship and the pivotal role of college in allyship behaviors. Study 2 extends the findings of Study 1 to quantitatively investigate the specific roles of race curricula and color-evasion on White allyship behavior. Specifically, in Study 2, I distributed a mixed-methods online survey to 563 college students (199 recently graduated White college seniors and 364 incoming White college freshmen) to test color-evasion color-blindness and precollege and college race curricula as predictors of White allyship engagement and conceptualization. Though research has yet to explore the role of color-evasion and race curricula in both allyship engagement and conceptualization, there is a strong literature supporting an association between a color-evasion color-blind ideology in producing negative stereotypes against People of Color (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, & Graham, 2017; Hachfeld et al.,

2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007). Moreover, existing literature exhibits the positive effects of race curricula in the college and precollege settings (e.g., Bowman & Denson, 2012; Chang, 2002; Jayakumar, 2015; Milem & Umbach, 2003; Spanierman et al., 2008a). Hence, I will address the large gap in the literature by investigating the potential link between color-evasion and race curricula in White allyship behaviors by testing the following hypotheses (Figure 1 presents a conceptual model for the primary hypotheses):

1. Predicting Allyship Engagement
    - H1a. Color-evasion color-blindness will predict lower allyship engagement.
    - H1b. Fewer race curricula will predict lower allyship engagement.
2. Predicting Allyship Conceptualizations
    - H2a. Color-evasion color-blindness will predict less developed allyship conceptualizations.
    - H2b. Fewer race curricula completed will predict less developed allyship conceptualizations.
3. The Relationship between Color-blindness and Race Curricula
    - H3. Color-evasion color-blindness will predict fewer race curricula.
4. Comparing Incoming Freshmen to Graduating Seniors
    - H4a. Recently graduated White college seniors will be significantly less color-evasion color-blind than incoming White college freshmen.
    - H4b. Recently graduated White college seniors will have completed significantly more racial curricula than incoming White college freshmen.
    - H4c. Recently graduated White college seniors will have engaged in significantly more allyship behaviors than incoming White college freshmen.
    - H4d. Recently graduated White college seniors will list significantly more developed allyship conceptualizations.

Methodology

Participants

I surveyed 563 White college students from a large Midwestern university comprising of 199 recently graduated seniors and 364 first-semester incoming freshmen. For overall demographics information, refer to Table 3.

Recruitment

I recruited students using a recruitment email that was sent to the target population at the university (i.e., only recently graduated seniors or incoming freshmen). The email disclosed my information as a researcher at the university, information about the survey, description of compensation which was a 1 in 100 chance of winning a $100 Amazon.com gift card, and a link to the online survey. For recently graduated seniors, the recruitment email additionally described the survey as collecting information on "coursework and experiences during their time at [university name]." For incoming freshmen, the recruitment email described the survey as collecting information on "coursework and various experiences within recent years." The email also ensured the confidentiality of participants and the inability to trace anonymous responses back to their emails. All study elements were reviewed by the university's Institutional Review Boards (IRB).

Recently Graduated Seniors

The sample of White recently graduated seniors was an average of 22 years old (SD = 0.82) comprised of primarily women (48.74%) (men were 39.70%, non-binary was 1.51%, and 10.05% did not report their gender) (Table 4). The majority identified themselves as straight (76.88%), left-leaning in political orientation (53.27%), and religious (61.81%). The most common response for political affiliation was "Democrat" (49.25%) followed by "No party affiliation" (12.06%) and the most common response for religious affiliation was "Christianity" (i.e., Protestant or Catholic) (48.24%). The majority household income was within the $150,000 - $499,999 bracket (28.64%) followed by the $90,000 - $149,999 bracket (22.11%).

All participants attended the same university. However, some colleges within the university required their students to complete a race/ethnicity course as part of their degree plan.

Nearly half of the participants did not have a race/ethnicity course requirement (48.74%), while under half were required to complete a race/ethnicity course requirement (40.70%) (10.55% did not report their college).

Incoming Freshmen

The sample of White incoming freshmen was an average of 18 years old (SD = 0.41) (Table 4). The majority identified as women (50.82%), straight (67.58%), left-leaning (50.82%), and religious (51.10%). The most common response for political affiliation was "Democrat" (48.08%) followed by "Republican" (12.64%) and matching the senior sample, "Christianity" (i.e., Protestant or Catholic) (40.66%) was the most common response for religious affiliation. The majority household income was also within the $150,000 - $499,999 bracket (26.10%) followed by the $90,000 - $149,999 bracket (22.25%). Unlike recently graduated seniors, the majority reported that they would have to complete a race/ethnicity course requirement (56.87%).

Procedure

After consenting to the survey, participants received a prescreening question to ensure that they were either a recent graduate or an incoming freshman. If answered, "yes," they would be shown the survey items. The online survey was distributed using Qualtrics, a survey platform. The survey collected information on participants' race curricula, racial ideology, allyship behaviors, and demographics. The 10-15-minute survey ended with instructions on how to enter the raffle for compensation along with a general code. To enter the raffle, participants were instructed to email me with their information and general code. After every 100 participants entered, a winner was selected and compensated through an electronic gift card received via email. Data collection on recently graduated seniors occurred once during the two weeks

following commencement for the Winter 2019 semester, and again two weeks following commencement for the Summer 2019 semester. Both data collection periods occurred over the course of a month. For first-semester freshmen, data collection began two weeks following the first day of class in the Fall 2019 semester and all White participant data was collected within 12 days.

Measures

Racial Ideology

Racial ideology was captured in the Color in Context Racial Ideology (CCRI) measure, which assessed color-evasion color-blindness vs. color-consciousness in participants. The CCRI measure is a new scale I created based on previous findings from Study 1. In Study 1, I found that color-evasion seemed to limit allyship conceptualization to friendship and "helping" People of Color (refer to Chapter 2). In this second study, I was interested in testing this pattern further quantitatively. As previously discussed, current measures of racial ideology do not capture the type of color-evasion color-blindness and color-consciousness witnessed in interviews with White students. Thus, I developed the CCRI to address this gap in measurement.

Participants within the current study were first instructed, "Below are two statements that demonstrate two possible ways to view race. Please select the statement that best describes how you personally feel." After several discussions with the research team on patterns within interviews, I was most interested in the language students were using to discuss race. Borrowing participants' language (not verbatim), I developed the following statements. The first statement, which is meant to represent color-evasion color-blindness, was, "You believe that people should be judged as who they are as individuals, and you try not to treat people differently because of their race." As the color-consciousness option, the second statement read, "You believe that

people's race is important, and you try to think about how race might affect every context." Participants were given both options and required to choose only one of the options. Participants were then allowed space to write additional thoughts, "If none of the statements above describe how you feel about race, please provide your views below."

CCRI Rationale. I created an exploratory, binary, single-item measurement of color-evasion and color-consciousness directly based on participant interviews in Study 1. This was advantageous for several reasons. First, at the time of this study's distribution, I could not find a suitable color-evasion scale presented in the literature. Color-blindness as theorized by Neville et al. (2000) is a bidimensional construct consisting of power-evasion and color-evasion. Power-evasion is measured through CoBRAS but we do not yet have an accepted measure of color-evasion. Hence, a single item-measure paired with an open-ended question was utilized. Second, I created a single-item measure because I wanted the measure to be accessible and timely as the survey was marketed as a 10-minute survey. Third, I selected a binary single-item measure to see the effects of a force response for either color-evasion color-blindness or color-consciousness rather than a Likert scale spectrum. Previous research has shown that when participants are given a middle response choice, they are much more likely to select it (Moors, 2008) which in this case would allow an option for participants to not engage with a potentially challenging and controversial question (Johns, 2005; Krosnick, 2002). Additionally, single-item measures can avoid common-method variance and increase face validity (Hoeppner et al., 2011) which is a particularly important consideration for CCRI which does not have an easily discernable and socially desirable response or "right answer" to common audiences. In other words, introducing midpoint responses might not be easily interpretable in practice and may represent uncertainty in racial ideology rather than neutrality.

In this initial version of the newly formed CCRI measure, I was most interested in having participants choose between these two options with the freedom to describe any discrepancies in the open-ended follow-up question. I will adapt future usage of the scale once open-ended responses from participants are reviewed. Additionally, I do acknowledge that single-item measures lack the ability to compute an internal consistency reliability statistic and are more susceptible to random measurement errors than multiple-item measures. Future work may measure participants agreement towards each statement on two separate Likert scales or may choose to use one Likert-like scale with each statement on either end of the spectrum allowing participants to choose which one they agree with the most (or a "middle" option) after all.

Race Curricula

One of the main predictors was race curricula. Race curricula included all completed race-related coursework (i.e., traditional race courses, intergroup dialogue courses, and service-learning courses) and race-related co-curricular activities (i.e., membership in race-focused organizations).

Race-Related Coursework. I inquired all students about their prior race-related coursework. At the time of the survey distribution, some colleges at the university the participants attended enforced a race course requirement. Students required to take a race course needed to complete one 3-credit course from a verified list of courses that explicitly discussed race and racial inequity. Coursework options mainly included ethnic studies courses such as "Literature in African History," and "Native American Literature" as well as courses on race issues such as "Race and Identity." However, some courses included in the verified list arguably did not have a direct race focus such as a course on central European film.

Graduating Seniors: Race-Related Coursework. First, the survey showed the graduating senior sample a prompt explaining the race course requirement. Following the prompt, students were asked to share how many race courses they had completed; selection included six choices from "0" to "5+." Students were then asked to list the courses they had completed by typing in course information (e.g., name of the course, course number, or course description). Individual research assistants compared both answers to verify codes. If students listed more courses than selected, research assistants modified the data. Otherwise, responses remained and were counted according to the closed-ended response.

Next, the survey asked participants about any courses they had completed at the university that had "a focus on race and ethnicity" but were not listed as, or taken to fulfill, an race course requirement. Participants were given space to type in course information. All open-ended responses were coded by individual research assistants who counted the number of courses mentioned, transforming each open-ended response to count data. All coding was verified by a second coder and I settled any discrepancies. The number of race-related coursework was then added to the number of race courses taken to fulfill the university requirement to measure total race coursework completed. Finally, the survey asked participants to list any other race-related intergroup dialogue programs and service-learning programs they had completed in college.

Incoming Freshman: Intended Race-Related Coursework & Precollege Race-Related Coursework. Incoming freshmen were also asked about their race-related coursework. However, the phrasing shifted from courses completed to courses they intended to complete, "How many [race] courses (or courses related to race & ethnicity) do you plan to take during your time here at the [university name]?" Finally, unlike the recently graduated seniors, the incoming freshmen

survey asked participants about their prior race-related coursework before college. Specifically, the incoming freshmen survey inquired, “Before attending university, you may have taken courses related to race and ethnicity in high school. Please list such courses below.” Again, all open-ended responses were coded by individual research assistants who transformed each open-ended response to count data. All coding was verified by a second coder and I settled any discrepancies. For the first-semester freshmen, I measured coursework across two variables: (a) intended race-related coursework and (b) precollege race-related coursework. Finally, the survey asked participants to list any other race-related intergroup dialogue programs and service-learning programs they had completed in high school.

Race-Related Co-Curricular Activities. Understanding some students might not take coursework but may gain racial diversity experiences through other on-campus or high school activities, I also asked students to share information about race-related organizations they participated in as well. The survey asked college students only about their college involvement and asked incoming freshmen about their precollege involvement. All coded data was verified by a second coder and I settled any discrepancies. All open-ended responses were coded by individual research assistants who counted the number of organizations.

Allyship Behaviors

After gathering information on students’ racial ideology and race curricula, students were shown the following prompt, “There are many ways that communities have tried to resolve racial issues. One strategy is for White people to be allies to People of Color, or what we call, a White ally. Please share with us ways you have been an ally to People of Color. Please share as many

ways as you can recall." Directly underneath the prompt was a large textbox for participants to type in responses without a word limit.

Allyship Behavior Conceptualization. After reviewing 449 student responses across both samples, 13 allyship behavior conceptualizations emerged Table 5): *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive dialogue, political engagement, "shut up and show up," "helping" People of Color, personal and private actions, social media engagement, friendship with People of Color, social activism, anti-allyship, treating everyone equally, being inclusive,* and *could not name an allyship behavior.* I then collapsed these 13 conceptualizations into four categories using *a priori* theoretical clustering: *intrapersonal* behaviors, *transitional interpersonal* behaviors, *reciprocal interpersonal* behaviors, and *organizational* behaviors (see Figure 2). The processes for how I arrived at each of these conceptualizations and their overarching allyship clusters are described below.

Full allyship behaviors categories: The Process. In Study 1 of this dissertation, data-driven thematic analysis of 23 interviews with White college students revealed eight conceptualizations of allyship: *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive dialogue, political engagement, "shut up and show up," "helping" People of Color, personal and private actions, friendship with People of Color, and social activism.* For Study 2, the present study, I used these eight conceptualizations as *a priori* codes for an initial coding strategy. However, I did not limit myself to these eight conceptualizations, and updated existing codes or added new inductive codes as the data required. Responses were coded for each coding category as "1" if the response met criteria for the coding category and "0" if the response did not. Therefore, any response could be coded "1" for as many coding categories as was deemed present in the response. For instance, the response, "I also advocate for racial liberty through

voting and speaking up when there is injustice" was coded "1" for both political engagement and intervening in explicit racism.

I worked with a team of research assistants to code the data through an iterative process. Two research assistants were trained on the previously developed eight conceptualizations. As a team, we coded the first five responses within the freshman dataset. Following, the two coders independently coded the first 20 responses of the freshman dataset and verified codes with each other after. Any discrepancies were discussed as a team and settled. This initial round of coding was performed to ensure the two coders understood the eight conceptualizations in practice. Then, the two coders independently coded 100 responses within the freshman dataset taking notes on any codes requiring further discussion such as a potential new coding category. After these 100 responses were coded, I met with the two coders to finalize the codebook based on their collective notes and further discussion.

Full allyship behaviors categories: New Categories. I added five additional categories to the original eight conceptualizations: *social media engagement, anti-allyship, treating everyone equally, being inclusive,* and *could not name an allyship behavior. Social media engagement*— which was only mentioned once in Study 1's interviews—appeared many times in the current sample and was deemed by the research team to comprise its own category as well. Students in the current sample utilized social media to share race-related content, promote People of Color, and publicize support for People of Color and race movements. Likely due to the anonymity of this study, responses also newly produced the category of *anti-allyship*. Responses categorized as anti-allyship expressed having "no desire to be a White ally" or not believing that allyship was productive or necessary, "Ann Arbor is so liberal that there has hardly ever been a need to be an ally for persons of color. Does 'not being racist' count as being an ally?" Some students within

the present study, Study 2, stated that they could not recall an allyship behavior they personally performed. Four students in Study 1 also could not name an allyship behavior, however, unlike the present study, Study 1 also asked student about their definitions of allyship in addition to their personal examples of engaging in allyship behaviors. Therefore, even the students who could not recall their own behaviors in Study 1 were given the opportunity to contribute their conceptualizations of allyship. Hence, the present study required the category of *could not name an allyship behavior* to be added.

Additionally, some students expressed ideological statements without specific actions. In Study 1's interviews with 23 White college students, I was able to probe participants who responded with similar non-action ideological statements. However, the nature of the present study as an anonymous online survey did not allow for clarifications. Therefore, I also added *treating everyone equally* and *being inclusive* as categories. *Treating everyone equally* mimicked color-evasion color-blindness and included statements such as, "I don't view them differently…" and "I do know though that I try my hardest to treat every person the same no matter [their] race." *Being inclusive* was captured in participants who expressed statements such as "be inclusive" without specifying further behavior. Finally, some inductive changes were made to previously formed categories. For instance, personal and private action, which was defined as "any action that is personal and private performed without active participation from People of Color" appeared once again but with three clearly distinct subcategories: self-reflection, educating oneself, and supporting People of Color businesses. Based on this new coding system, the two coders independently re-coded the first 100 responses and continued to code the rest of the dataset. Using Cohen's kappa, they achieved 76.79% interrater reliability after coding the freshman dataset. I settled any final discrepancies between the two coders to create the final

codes. Next, one of the coders continued to code the graduating senior data alone. I reviewed the senior codes and any discrepancies between the original coder and I were settled by a third independent coder.

Four collapsed allyship conceptualization categories. To better analyze allyship conceptualization in statistical analyses, I collapsed the 13 categories into four conceptualization categories. The four conceptualization categories were based in part on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory model. The four categories include *intrapersonal* behaviors, *transitional interpersonal* behaviors, *reciprocal interpersonal* behaviors, and *organizational* behaviors (Figure 2). Matching many adaptations of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (e.g., Golden & Earp, 2012; McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988), the collapsed allyship conceptualization categories began at the intrapersonal level, progressed to the interpersonal level, and ended at the organizational level.

For the intrapersonal level, personal and private action was the only conceptualization included. Many of 13 allyship behaviors occurred at the interpersonal level whereby the actions taken occurred between people—whether other White people or People of Color. However, I determined a distinction was necessary between behaviors that were broad mindsets versus specific antiracist behaviors. Specifically, I labeled treating everyone equally, being inclusive, helping POC, and friendship with People of Color as transitional interpersonal behaviors. Participants who listed engaging in these types of behaviors had intentions of allyship, however, these conceptualizations reflect mindsets and intentions rather than specific behaviors. One can say that they treat everyone equally, are inclusive, help a Person of Color, or are friends with a Person of Color, but these actions are still focused on the self and do not necessarily indicate antiracist action. Moreover, most of these behaviors are in direct conflict with the Critical

Whiteness Studies literature. Treating everyone equally is a color-blind ideological strategy (Neville et al., 2013) and viewing friendship and "helping" People of Color as allyship has been argued to be paternalistic (Gillborn, 2006; Spanierman & Smith, 2017). Being inclusive is a term often associated with multicultural competency and antiracist resources, but was also placed within the transitional interpersonal category because no specific behaviors were listed and because some theory has spoken out against these types of statements as multicultural, but not antiracist (e.g., Helms, 2017). Next, reciprocal interpersonal behaviors comprised of intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive race dialogue, "shut up and show up," and social media engagement. I deemed these behaviors as reciprocal behaviors because they are not focused on the self, they instead focus on others by disrupting racism, engaging in dialogues, attending antiracist events, and promoting People of Color on social media. Though, it is important to state that social media engagement has also shown problematic potential; for instance, Cabrera, Matias, and Montoya (2017) call engaging only in social media as a form of antiracism "slacktivism." Nevertheless, I determined that social media engagement did not—nor any of the other behaviors listed as reciprocal behaviors—focus on one's mindset, but instead specific reciprocal actions. Lastly, organizational behaviors comprised of social activism and political engagement because these behaviors sought to act at the level of institutions and policies.

Allyship Behavior Engagement. In addition to coding and categorizing allyship behaviors into their respective categories, research assistants counted the number of allyship behaviors listed by students to quantify their level of allyship behavior engagement. The following behaviors were counted as allyship as according to CWS literature: intervening in explicit racism, engaging in productive dialogue, political engagement, "shut up and show up,"

personal and private actions, and social activism. Multiple occurrences of the same allyship behavior were not considered; behaviors were counted based on the number of categorizations listed. In other words, if a participant stated that they had intervened in explicit racism twice in their lives, it would still be counted as only one allyship behavior. To capture intended allyship, I measured all intended behaviors listed by the student (including behaviors typically considered as allyship by CWS and behaviors that were not) as a separate variable.

Academic Year

One of my key measures was academic year or whether a participant was an incoming freshman or graduating senior. For each survey collection, I confirmed participants' academic year at the beginning of the survey by directly asking if they were either incoming freshman in their first semester of college (Fall 2019) or a graduating senior who was had graduated that academic semester (Winter 2019 or Summer 2019).

Demographics Measures

At the end of the survey, participants provided demographic information, including their age, major, college, gender, sexual identity, household income, religious/spiritual affiliation, and political affiliation.

Central Research Hypotheses & Analyses

Can Racial Ideology and the Number of Race Curricula Predict Allyship Engagement? (H1a; H1b)

I hypothesized that regardless of demographic variables, racial ideology and race curricula would be able to significantly predict allyship engagement. Specifically, I hypothesized that students who were color-conscious as opposed to color-evasive and students who had completed more race curricula would both independently predict higher allyship engagement.

This hypothesis is based in the logic that since ideologies, which comprise of attitudes and beliefs, influence behavior (e.g., Ajzen, 1991; Ben-Akiva et al., 2002), racial ideologies would be likely to influence engagement in allyship behaviors as well. Hence, a color-conscious ideology which emphasizes race reflection would lead to more participation in allyship behaviors, while a color-blind ideology which avoids race reflection might minimize participation in allyship behaviors. Additionally, I predicted that completing more race curricula would predict higher allyship engagement based on a prior qualitative study completed by Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) which revealed race curricula as an important developmental factor in allyship engagement.

Can Racial Ideology and the Number of Race Curricula Predict Allyship Conceptualization? (H2a; H2b)

Next, I investigated if racial ideology and race curricula could predict allyship conceptualizations, or how students were thinking about and defining allyship. Though exploratory, I presented some general predictions based on trends found in Study 1 and prior race theory. I hypothesized that students who are color-conscious and who had completed more race curricula would be significantly less likely to conceptualize allyship behaviors that I categorized as *transitional interpersonal* allyship behaviors including friendship with People of Color, "helping" People of Color, treating everyone equally, and being inclusive. Study 1 and a study completed by Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) show a link between critical reflection on racism and allyship behavior. Because race courses have been shown to increase critical reflection on racism (e.g., Ullucci & Battey, 2011), I hypothesized that those who have not completed as many race curricula would be more likely to conceptualize allyship as transitional interpersonal behaviors. Moreover, I hypothesized that students with color-evasion would also

conceptualize allyship as transitional interpersonal behaviors because Study 1's findings demonstrated that those possessed a color-evasion color-blind ideology were more likely to mentioned transitional interpersonal behaviors. Neville et al. (2013) also theorized that those who embrace color-evasion color-blindness are more likely to engage in racial microaggressions. Though not directly the same as conceptualizing allyship as "helping" People of Color, friendship with People of Color, treating everyone equally, or being inclusive, I hypothesized that those with less ability to perceive subtler forms of racism might also be more likely to conceptualize allyship as these less developed conceptualizations of allyship. For example, they might be more likely to misattribute People of Color as "needing" help from White students or viewing friendship as a form of antiracism, which some race scholars and People of Color may view as microaggressions in of themselves.

On the other hand, I hypothesized that possessing a color-conscious ideology and completing more race curricula could predict conceptualizing allyship as engagement in intrapersonal (personal and private actions), reciprocal interpersonal (engagement in productive dialogue, "shut up and show up," social media engagement) and organizational (political engagement and social activism) behaviors. These types of allyship conceptualizations go beyond cross-racial friendships or paternalistic views allyship and involve more developed and active actions combatting racism. Therefore, I hypothesized that these conceptualizations would be associated with color-consciousness and increased participation in race curricula.

Additional Research Hypotheses & Analyses

Is Racial Ideology Associated with Fewer Race Curricula Completed? (H3)

Because students often select their own coursework, I hypothesized that racial ideology could predict race curricula such that students who were color-conscious, as opposed to color-blind,

would be more likely to have completed race curricula. Though research on racial ideology and race curricula has primarily focused on power-evasion color-blindness, which has shown that race curricula can decrease power-evasion color-blindness in White students (e.g., Cole, Case, Rios, & Curtin, 2011; Neville et al., 2014), I predicted a similar pattern will appear for color-evasion color-blindness as well because color-evasion color-blindness has shown to consistently predict negative stereotypes against POC (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, & Graham, 2017; Denson, 2009; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007).

Comparing Racial Ideology, Race Curricula, Allyship Engagement, and Allyship Conceptualization between Incoming Freshman and Graduating Seniors. (H4a, H4b, H4c, H4d)

Lastly, I hypothesized that recently graduated seniors would be more likely than incoming freshman to be color-conscious, to complete race curricula, to engage in allyship behaviors, and to be less likely to conceptualize allyship as transitional interpersonal behaviors. This hypothesis is based on the research demonstrating the pivotal racial socialization experience the college context provides for many White students (e.g., Orfield, Frankenberg, & Lee, 2003; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005)—even for those who have precollege diversity experiences (Pascarella et al., 2012).

Results

Bivariate Correlations and Descriptive Results

Table 6 presents the bivariate correlations among the demographic variables and the core outcome variables: academic year, racial ideology, and race curricula. For academic year, graduating seniors were more likely to be older ($r = 0.95$; $p < .01$), more left-leaning in political orientation ($r = -0.11$; $p < .05$), and less likely to be required to complete a race course as part of

their degree plan ($r = 0.23$; $p < .01$). For racial ideology, students with a color-conscious ideology (as opposed to color-evasive ideology) were also more likely to be older ($r = 0.22$; $p < .05$) and left-leaning in political orientation ($r = -0.20$; $p < .01$). Finally, for race curricula, students who had completed more race curricula were more likely to be older ($r = 0.34$; $p < .01$), left-leaning in political orientation ($r = -0.15$; $p < .01$), religious ($r = 0.13$; $p < .01$), and less likely to be required to complete a race course as part of their degree plan ($r = 0.16$; $p < .01$). From the bivariate correlations results, key patterns have already emerged. Namely, color-consciousness and the number of race curricula completed were both positively associated with older students, who were also likely to be graduating seniors ($r = 0.95$; $p <0.01$). Thus far, our bivariate correlations already demonstrated potential differences between incoming freshman and graduating seniors on racial ideology and race curricula.

Though measured, I did not include the variable of age in any of the models. Graduating seniors can be expected to be older than incoming freshman and including the variable of age interfered with the strength of the models due to multicollinearity (the variance inflation factors for both age and academic year jumped above 10). However, I controlled for all other demographic variables in every model presented to determine the unique contributions of our predictor variables. Further descriptive statistics of the outcome variables are demonstrated in Table 7.

Hypotheses Testing

The overall findings for the central predictions tested are presented in Figure 3. Generally, the number of race curricula positively predicted White allyship engagement and White allyship conceptualization, while color-evasion color-blindness negatively predicted

White allyship engagement and White allyship conceptualizations. Further, the number of race curricula negatively predicted color-evasion color-blindness. The results are detailed below.

Can Racial Ideology and Race Curricula Completed Predict Allyship Engagement? (H1a; H1b)

I hypothesized that racial ideology and race curricula would predict allyship engagement—that is, that color-evasion would negatively predict, and the number of race curricula would positively predict, allyship engagement. To test these predictions, I applied a hierarchical regression model, treating allyship engagement as a continuous variable. I tested for multicollinearity which demonstrated variance inflation factors between 1.01 and 3.18 for all variables entered indicating an acceptable range. I entered variables gradually to determine their unique contribution to the explanatory power of the model.

Stage 1 of the hierarchical regression analysis included typical student characteristics such as gender and sexual orientation that were not deemed related to the research question and were entered as a single block. Gender correlated with key predictor variables which also influenced the choice to include it away from other student characteristics of interest. Stage 2 included the student characteristics of interest: income, political orientation, and religious affiliation. Stage 3 included the academic control variables related to the study including whether participants' degree plan required completing a race course and the academic year of the participants (incoming freshman or graduating seniors). For Stage 4, the final block, I entered the key predictor variables: racial ideology and race curricula. Additionally, because other regression models indicated a relationship between racial ideology and race curricula, I entered an interaction term for exploratory purposes at Stage 4 as well.

The hierarchical regression models were significant at Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4, $F(2, 397) = 30.87, p = .045$; $F(5, 394) = 20.44, p < .001$; $F(7, 392) = 16.85, p < .001$, $F(10, 389) = 16.47, p < .00$, respectively. Table 8 presents the coefficients for each model. The first model with gender and sexual orientation only explained 13.5% of the variance in allyship behavior engagement. Introducing the student characteristics of interest accounted for 20.6% with a significant $\Delta R2 = 0.07, p < .00$. The addition of the academic control variables significantly improved the model ($\Delta R2 = 0.03, p < .00$) to account for 23% of the variance. Finally, the addition of the key predictor variables—racial ideology and race curricula—and the interaction term in the final full model accounted for 30% of the variance in allyship behavior and significantly improved the model ($\Delta R2 = 0.07, p < .00$).

Confirming predictions that race ideology and race curricula would predict allyship engagement, I found that even when controlling for demographic variables—including gender, sexual orientation, political orientation, income, religion, academic year, and whether a student's degree plan included a requirement for taking a race course—both racial ideology ($\beta = 0.24$, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .00$) and race curricula ($\beta = 0.13$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = .05$) significantly predicted allyship engagement. Specifically, color-conscious students were more likely to engage in allyship behaviors than color-blind students and students who had completed more race curricula were more likely to engage in allyship behaviors. The interaction between racial ideology and race curricula was not significant ($p < .05$). Therefore, completing more race curricula predicted allyship engagement for both color-blind and color-conscious students. Results offer evidence for racial ideology's and race curricula's roles in allyship engagement and specifically demonstrates the importance of providing students pathways to foster their allyship development within higher education using race curricula.

Can Racial Ideology and Race Curricula Predict Allyship Conceptualization? (H2a; H2b)

Though exploratory, I hypothesized that racial ideology and race curricula would be able to significantly predict allyship conceptualizations. Specifically, I hypothesized that color-consciousness, as opposed to color-blindness, and the number of race curricula would be able to positively predict more developed allyship conceptualizations (i.e., intrapersonal behaviors, reciprocal interpersonal behaviors, and organizational behaviors) and negatively predict transitional interpersonal behaviors.

To test for these effects, I first utilized a series of binary logistic regressions for racial ideology and race curricula predicting each type of allyship behavior conceptualization, while controlling for demographic variables. Specific allyship behaviors were coded as either present (1) or not present (0) in a student's open-ended response. Table 9 and Table 10 demonstrate the coefficients for the binary logistic regressions applied to test if racial ideology and race curricula could predict specific allyship behavior conceptualizations, while controlling for demographic variables. For racial ideology, most allyship behaviors were not significant once demographic variables were controlled for which are delineated in the footnotes of Table 9. Nevertheless, racial ideology was negatively associated with treating everyone equally, indicating that color-blind students were more likely to conceptualize allyship as treating everyone equally ($\beta = 0.19$, SE = 0.35, p = .00). Alternatively, color-conscious students were more likely to conceptualize allyship as personal and private action ($\beta = 2.41$, SE = 0.27, p = .00), engagement in productive race dialogue ($\beta = 3.01$, se = 0.29, p = .00), and "shut up and show up" ($\beta = 6.07$, se = 0.58, p = .00). Likewise for race curricula, students who had completed more race curricula were less likely to conceptualize allyship as treating everyone equally ($\beta = 0.78$, se = 0.08, p = .00). Additionally, students who had completed more race curricula were more likely to conceptualize

allyship as personal and private action (β = 1.16, se = 0.06, p = .02), political engagement (β = 1.16, se = 0.15, p = .05), social activism (β = 1.24, se = 0.09, p = .01), and "shut up and show up" (β = 1.26, se = 0.10, p = .02).

Next, to manageably model allyship conceptualization, I collapsed the allyship conceptualization categories into four broader levels based in part on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory model: *Intrapersonal*, *transitional interpersonal*, *reciprocal interpersonal*, and *organizational* behaviors. Again, I utilized a series of binary logistic regressions to test these effects while controlling for demographic variables. Table 11 and Table 12 present the effects of racial ideology and race curricula on the collapsed allyship behavior conceptualizations. I found that racial ideology and race curricula predicted all behaviors ($p < .05$), even while controlling for demographic variables. Color-conscious students and students who had completed more race curricula positively predicted engagement in intrapersonal behaviors (β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02; β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02), reciprocal interpersonal behaviors (β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02; β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02), and organizational behaviors (β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02; β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02). In other words, color-conscious students and students who had completed more race curricula were more likely to engage in behaviors such as reflection and educating oneself (intrapersonal); to intervene in explicit racism, engage in productive race dialogues, intentionally avoid stifling People of Color's voices, and to engage in antiracism on social media (reciprocal interpersonal); and to take political action and assume leadership roles in antiracist organizations, committees, and movements (organizational). Conversely, color-blind students and students who had completed less race curricula positively predicted engagement in transitional interpersonal behaviors (β = 1.16, SE = 0.15, p = .05; β = 1.16, SE = 0.06, p = .02) such as "helping" People of Color,

friendship with People of Color, treating everyone equally, and being inclusive. Confirming predictions, color-consciousness and completing more race curricula both predicted more developed allyship behavior conceptualizations, while color-evasion color-blindness and completing less race curricula predicted less developed allyship conceptualizations.

Additional Hypothesis Testing

Can the Number of Race Curricula Predict Racial Ideology? (H3)

I hypothesized that racial ideology could predict race curricula such that students who were color-conscious, as opposed to color-blind, would be more likely to have completed race curricula. While controlling for demographic variables, I assessed racial ideology's effect on race curricula through a Poisson regression model, which provides more reliable estimates for count data (Coxe, West, & Aiken, 2009). Additionally, because race curricula qualitatively differ between incoming freshmen who are listing high school curriculars and graduating seniors who are listing college curriculars, I assessed the relationship between racial ideology and race curricula in two separate models for incoming freshman and graduating seniors, respectively. Finally, for exploratory purposes, I assessed the effects of racial ideology on each type of race curricula—race courses, service-learning courses, intergroup dialogue courses, and race organizations—in separate regression models.

Table 13 presents the results of the Poisson regression models utilized to predict the number of race curricula for students based on their racial ideology, while controlling for demographic variables. I applied simultaneous regression models to determine the unique contribution of racial ideology on race curricula while allowing for demographic variables to influence the results. Matching my first hypothesis, racial ideology significantly predicted the number of race curricula completed ($\beta = 1.73$, $SE = 0.08$, $p = .00$). Students with a color-

conscious racial ideology were 1.73 (95% CI, 1.47 to 2.04) times more likely to take race curricula than students with a color-blind ideology.

Because the quality of race curricula for incoming freshmen and graduating seniors may differ, I then analyzed the relationship for each academic year separately. For graduating seniors, racial ideology significantly predicted the number of race curricula completed ($\beta = 1.55$, $SE = 0.11$, $p = .00$); students with a color-conscious racial ideology were 1.55 (95% CI, 1.26 to 1.90) times more likely to take race curricula than students with a color-blind ideology. However, racial ideology did not significantly predict the number of race curricula for incoming freshman ($\beta = 1.19$, $SE = 0.16$, $p = .28$).

Table 13 also demonstrates the results for the series of Poisson regression models I used for exploratory analysis testing the relationship between racial ideology and specific types of race curricula. For graduating seniors, racial ideology predicted the number of race courses students completed in college in the predicted direction ($\beta = 1.73$, $SE = 0.12$, $p = .00$), but did not predict the number of service-learning, intergroup dialogue, or race organizations students participated in during college, $p < .05$. For incoming freshman, racial ideology did not predict the number of any specific race curricula completed, $p < .05$. Overall, racial ideology only acted as a significant predictor for race curricula in the graduating senior model, but not for the incoming freshman model indicating a potential qualitative difference between precollege race curricula and college race curricula.

Comparing Racial Ideology and Race Curricula Across Incoming Freshman and Graduating Seniors (H4a, H4b)

I hypothesized that graduating seniors would be significantly more likely than incoming freshman to be color-conscious and to complete race curricula. To test the effect of students'

academic year on the on the likelihood of students' racial ideology and race curricula completed while controlling for demographic variables, I applied a binary logistic regression and a series of Poisson regressions, respectively. The binary logistic regression model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(7) = 52.56$, $p < .00$. The model explained 16.2% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in racial ideology and correctly guessed 76.1% of all cases. Specifically, the model correctly guessed 97.5% of color-blindness in participants, but only 6.5% of color-consciousness. Table 14 presents the coefficients for the logistic regression; graduating seniors displayed 3.45 times (95% CI, 2.11 to 5.59) lower odds in exhibiting color-blindness than incoming freshman.

A series of Poisson regressions tested the effects of students' year on race curricula completed. Race curricula included race courses, service-learning courses, intergroup dialogue courses, and membership in race organizations; coefficients for each model is presented on Table 15. Controlling for demographic variables, the hypothesis that students' year would have a significant effect on race curricula overall was supported. The Poisson regression showed good fit with the data, $\chi^2(7) = 180.63$, $p < .00$; deviance, $\chi^2(453) = 783.71$, $\varphi = 1.92$ (using Pearson chi-square). Graduating seniors were 2.28 times (95% CI, 1.94 to 2.69) more likely to have completed race curricula than incoming freshman, $\beta = 2.28$, SE = 0.08, p = .00. However, when looking at individual effects, graduating seniors only positively predicted race courses, $\beta = 1.61$, SE = 0.13, p = .00; whereas graduating seniors negatively predicted service-learning courses, $\beta =$ 0.59, SE = 0.16, p = .00. Students' academic year did not significantly predict intergroup dialogue courses or membership in race organizations. When transforming the qualitative responses to quantitative data, I recognized that especially for service-learning courses and intergroup dialogue courses, the types of courses mentioned qualitatively differed from incoming freshman to graduating seniors. Incoming freshman included types of courses that we would not

consider a service-learning course nor intergroup dialogue. For example, after reviewing the open-ended responses, the team determined that many of the volunteer organizations and other service work mentioned by the incoming freshman likely did not meet the criteria for a service-learning course, which mixes traditional classroom settings with service work. Therefore, the interpretability of the effect of a student's academic year on these types of courses come with that limitation and may explain why I found that significantly more incoming freshman had reported participating in service-learning courses than graduating seniors.

Comparing Allyship Engagement Across Incoming Freshman and Graduating Seniors (H4c, H4d)

I hypothesized that graduating seniors would be significantly more likely than incoming freshman to engage in allyship behaviors. To test allyship engagement, I ran two separate Poisson regression models. The first Poisson model tested the effects of students' academic year on theoretically supported allyship engagement (which I labeled "allyship engagement") including: intervening in explicit racism, personal and private action, engagement in productive dialogue, political engagement, being inclusive, social activism, "shut up and show up", and social media. The second Poisson model tested effects on students' overall *intended* allyship engagement regardless of whether the literature considered their listed behaviors as allyship.

Supporting my hypothesis, graduating seniors were more likely to engage in theoretically supported allyship behaviors than incoming freshman (Table 16). The Poisson regression showed excellent fit with the data, $\chi^2(7) = 95.58$, $p < .00$; deviance, $\chi^2(392) = 374.48$, $\varphi = 0.82$ (using Pearson chi-square). Graduating seniors were 1.44 times (95% CI, 1.16 to 1.79) more likely to have engaged in allyship behaviors than incoming freshman, $\beta = 1.44$, $SE = 0.11$, $p = .00$. However, with *intended* allyship behaviors, students' academic year did not have an effect, $\beta =$

1.17, SE = 0.09, p = .08. Therefore, the role of college, as indicated by students' advanced academic year, shows evidence for positively influencing allyship engagement.

Comparing Allyship Conceptualization Across Incoming Freshman and Graduating Seniors

I hypothesized that graduating seniors would be significantly less likely to conceptualize allyship as transitional interpersonal behaviors than incoming freshman. I utilized two series of Poisson regressions controlling for demographic variables to test for the effects of students' academic year on allyship conceptualization. I ran a model for each allyship conceptualization for the first series of Poisson models and for the second series of Poisson regressions, I collapsed the allyship behaviors into four ecological levels—intrapersonal, transitional interpersonal, reciprocal interpersonal, and organizational—and treated each ecological level as a separate outcome.

Table 17 demonstrates the frequencies and percentages of each of the 13 allyship behaviors types across incoming freshman and graduating seniors. Large percentage differences can be seen for several allyship behaviors including a decrease in treating everyone equally and increases in personal and private action, engagement in productive race dialogue, political engagement, and social activism. However, when I ran Poisson regression controlling for demographic variables, students' academic year was only a significant predictor for two of the allyship behavior types: political engagement ($\beta = 3.14$, SE = 0.33, p = .00) and social activism ($\beta = 5.91$, SE = 0.44, p = .00). Graduating seniors were 3 times (95% CI, 1.65 to 5.98) more likely to engage in political engagement and nearly 6 times (95% CI, 2.47 to 14.11) more likely to engage in social activism than incoming freshman. Table 18 demonstrates the means and coefficients testing the effect of students' year, while controlling for demographic variables, on

each allyship behavior type apart from social media which only appeared in the incoming freshman sample.

Using *a priori* theoretical clustering, I collapsed the allyship behaviors into four ecological levels: intrapersonal, transitional interpersonal, reciprocal interpersonal, and organizational behaviors. Students' academic year only had a significant effect on the organizational level—which consisted of political engagement and social activism, $\beta = 3.96$, SE $= 0.26$, $p = .00$. The Poisson regression showed good fit with the data, $\chi^2(7) = 45.96$, $p < .00$; deviance, $\chi^2(392) = 204.87$, $\varphi = 1.02$ (using Pearson chi-square). Graduating seniors were nearly 4 times (95% CI, 2.38 to 6.62) more likely than incoming freshman to conceptualize allyship as organizational level-behaviors. Table 19 further presents the means and coefficients testing the effect of students' year, while controlling for demographic variables, on each allyship category. Altogether, graduating seniors were more likely to conceptualize allyship at the organizational level, providing evidence for the role of college in advancing students' understanding of allyship beyond intra- and interpersonal behaviors.

Discussion

Study 2's results underscore the important roles that racial ideology and race curricula can play within midwestern White college students' allyship development. I found that even when controlling for demographic variables—gender, sexual orientation, political orientation, income, religion, academic year, and whether a student's degree plan included a requirement for taking a race course—racial ideology and race curricula significantly predicted allyship engagement and conceptualization. The primary goal of Study 2 was to build on Study 1's findings (refer to Chapter 2) and test how color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula affected White allyship behavior conceptualizations and engagement in 563 White incoming

freshmen and White graduating seniors. Matching trends found in Study 1, Study 2 showed that students who endorsed color-evasion color-blindness rather than color-consciousness were less likely to complete race curricula, less likely engage in allyship behaviors, and more likely to conceptualize allyship as *transitional interpersonal behaviors* including friendship with POC and helping POC. Figure 3 shows the relationship between key variables found within Study 2. Regardless of academic year, race curricula acted as a motivating factor for White allyship behavior, whereas color-evasion color-blindness acted as an independent impeding factor. No significant interaction between race curricula and color-evasion appeared indicating that race curricula may be beneficial for those who are color-blind and color-conscious. Lastly, though the significant effect of academic year disappeared after including color-evasion and race curricula as predictors of allyship behavior, other models in Study 2 still show important significant differences between incoming freshman and graduating seniors.

The secondary goal of Study 2 was to investigate the general role of the college context on White allyship development by comparing incoming freshman at the beginning of their college experience to graduating seniors who had just completed their college experience. Study 2 found that graduating seniors were more likely to be color-conscious, to take race curricula, and to engage in allyship behaviors, especially *organizational allyship behaviors*, such as social activism and political engagement. This suggested a potential moderating effect of academic year indicating the unique role college may be playing in White allyship development.

The Pivotal Role of College in Allyship Development

The research has long established that the college context can serve as an important racial socialization experience for many White students who will interact (perhaps for the first time) with People of Color as peers, roommates, friends, and instructors (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, &

Embrick, 2006; Orfield, Frankenberg, & Lee, 2003; Reardon & Yun, 2002; Sohoni & Saporito, 2009; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Accordingly, we see that college can result in many positive outcomes for White students such as a reduction in racial bias (Denson, 2009) and increased cognitive growth from interacting with diverse peers (Gurin et al., 2002). However, questions remain about what factors influence White students' critical growth in college. One strong area of research is analyzing the role of college diversity experiences, which is defined by Denson, Bowman, and Park (2017) as including (a) curricular and co-curricular diversity experiences such as diversity coursework, formal programs, and campus events and (b) cross-racial interaction experiences which "tend to occur outside of the curricular/co-curricular diversity context and include the frequency and quality of interactions with diversity peers that occur as a part of daily college life" (p. 2-3).

Study 2 showed that race curricula—which included race-focused lecture courses, intergroup dialogues, service-learning programs, and membership in race organizations—could collectively predict increased allyship engagement and more sophisticated understandings of allyship behavior. These findings align with prior research demonstrating that curricular/co-curricular diversity experiences can lead to positive outcomes like increased racial awareness (e.g., Case, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2002; Jayakumar, 2015; Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008a) and increased critical action (Case, 2012; Laird, Engberg, & Hurtado, 2005; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005). Additionally, research by Laird, Engberg, and Hurtado (2005) showed that participation in diversity courses led to placing more importance on social action and research by Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales' (2005) revealed race curricula as a key developmental factor in allyship engagement. Study 2's findings persisted even when controlling for academic year indicating that these changes occurred across the precollege and college

context. Though not as strongly investigated, a smaller amount of research has also been completed on the role of precollege diversity experiences which found related positive outcomes on democratic beliefs (Hurtado et al., 2002), interracial relationships, and college well-being (Bowman & Denson, 2012).

Nevertheless, in separate models, Study 2 also revealed that when compared to White incoming freshman, White graduating seniors were 2.28 times more likely to have completed race curricula, 3.45 times less likely to be color-blind, and 1.44 times more likely to engage in allyship behaviors overall. In terms of specific allyship behaviors, graduating seniors were also 3 times more likely to engage in political engagement and nearly 6 times more likely to engage in social activism (i.e., “creating spaces and events designed for People of Color and/or to combat racism” (refer to Chapter 2)). Thus, Study 2 exhibits some evidence for differences between the precollege and college experience, even if the only differences are (a) that the college experience seems to increase color-consciousness and participation in race curricula—which then will go on to predict increased White allyship development and (b) that the college experience seems to better prepare students for engagement in political engagement and social activism. Therefore, questions remain on what makes the college experience unique from the precollege experience.

From the literature, we see that students who have engaged in precollege diversity experiences are more likely to engage in college diversity experiences (Bowman & Denson, 2012; Damico & Scott, 1984; Milem & Umbach, 2003; Milem, Umbach, & Liang, 2004; Pascarella et al., 2012) which indicates that the precollege experience may be foundational to White allyship development as well. Certainly, Reason et al.’s (2005) findings on racial justice allyship supports this notion; their study found that precollege experiences such as structural diversity in high school, positive and intimate interactions with peers of Color, and “minority”

experiences supported allyship development. Still, there may be particular experiences more common within the college experience that may produce unique contributions to allyship development. For example, Milem and Umbach (2003) found that though structural diversity was an important motivating factor for participating in college diversity experiences, more than 75% of White students within their sample came from nearly all-White neighborhoods. More recent work does not show drastic desegregation within primary and secondary level schools (Taylor et al., 2019; Vasquez Heilig et al., 2019); therefore, perhaps not many White students will receive the opportunity to benefit from this type of precollege experience. Prior work establishes that one factor college can offer is exposure to racial diversity (e.g., Bonilla-Silva, Goar, & Embrick, 2006) which may be one of the key experiences unique to the college context.

Another unique experience is suggested in Hurtado et al.'s (2002) work in which they found that even precollege students with high levels of precollege diversity experiences and environments did not have the cognitive skill of perspective-taking yet developed. The researchers concluded that college may instead provide the context to build this key cognitive skill necessary for democratic outcomes and interacting in a diverse society. Pascarella et al. (2012) showed that both students with and without precollege diversity experiences benefited from college diversity experiences also suggesting that college may offer something unique for White allyship development. One of the ways that college seemed to differ from the precollege experience in Pascarella et al. (2012) was that college diversity experiences uniquely increased social and political activism, aligning with Study 2's findings which also found that White graduating seniors were 3 times more likely to engage in political engagement and 6 times more likely to engage in social activism than incoming freshman.

Perhaps another unique benefit from the college experience is that it provides a multitude of opportunity for students to engage with White allyship. From the critical consciousness (CC) literature, there is broad consensus that greater critical reflection will lead to greater critical action (Jemal, 2017). However, some CC scholars have theorized that a third component bridges together critical reflection and critical action. Some call this third component *critical motivation* which can be defined as the "expressed commitment to address societal inequalities and produce social change" (Jemal, 2017, p. 610) while others have called this *political efficacy* (i.e., believing that "change is possible") (Hatcher et al. 2010, p. 543; as cited in Jemal, 2017) or *participatory competence* (i.e., believing that one is capable of making social change) (Jemal, 2017; Kieffer, 1984). Thus, in addition to a high level of critical reflection on racism, high engagement in White allyship behavior may also depend on a White student's understanding that antiracist action can occur, an understanding that they can personally partake in this antiracist action, and a commitment to engaging in antiracist action. The literature supports that the college context may provide a unique space for White students and perhaps, the distinction between the precollege and college space is the opportunity to not only expand their critical knowledge, but also their critical capacity and commitment to apply this knowledge via several opportunities offered within the college context.

Study 1 found that students categorized as having a high level of critical reflection on racism maximized the college experience participating in many race courses, programs, organizations, and activities. For example, many of these students acted as facilitators in race-focused intergroup dialogue programs, served as student leaders in race-focused organizations, and participated in local marches and protests. Study 2 then showed that race curricula, especially college race curricula, predicted increased allyship engagement and more

sophisticated understandings of allyship behavior. Additionally, Reason et al. (2005) also found that their sample of ally/activist students utilized college experiences (e.g., leadership positions in student organizations) to engage in racial justice activism. The college context seems to provide White students multiple opportunities both formal and informal to learn, practice, engage, and advance in their White allyship behaviors. As Neville et al. (2014) concluded, "taking advantage of more diversity courses/activities while in college provides students opportunities for continued exploration of their racial beliefs" (Neville et al., 2014; p. 188).

The Counterproductive Effects of Color-Evasion in Allyship Development

In Study 1, I measured critical reflection on racism using five components including whether a student displayed a color-blind ideology. Though power-evasion color-blindness (i.e., the belief that racism is not a modern issue) was endorsed by at least one student, the primary dimension of color-blindness that appeared in Study 1 was color-evasion color-blindness (i.e., not "seeing" race). Color-evasion was predominately utilized by students categorized as low critical reflection on racism to justify their limited conceptualizations of allyship and low engagement in allyship behaviors (reference Chapter 2). Study 2 offers further quantitative evidence to support the negative relationship between color-evasion and allyship development. Students who endorsed color-evasion in Study 2 were associated with lower engagement in allyship behaviors and with conceptualizing allyship as the transitional interpersonal allyship behaviors: *friendship with POC, "helping" POC, treating everyone equally, and being inclusive.* Study 2's findings align with prior allyship research which have evidenced the strong role of attitudes on White allyship behavior (Case, 2012; Linder, 2015; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005). Further, within CC theory, critical reflection (which color-evasion was measured as a

component of) should lead to increased critical action (Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 1993; Watts et al., 2011).

Color-evasion color-blindness is defined by Frankenberg (1993) as “a mode of thinking about race organized around an effort to not ‘see,’ or at any rate not to acknowledge, race differences” (p. 142). Color-evasion, distinct from power-evasion, does not inherently deny racism, but rather is used as a strategy for antiracism. Nevertheless, the research has repeatedly shown its counterproductive effects in producing higher negative stereotypes and/or attitudes against People of Color (e.g., Aragón, Dovidio, & Graham, 2017; Denson, 2009; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007). Still, the research had yet to empirically demonstrate whether it directly affects antiracist action. Study 2 shows that color-evasion color-blindness negatively predicted allyship engagement. This finding provides evidence that though many who endorse color-evasion claim to be antiracist, it may not actually produce antiracist action. When paired with prior research showing that color-evasion is also linked with negative stereotyping of POC, we might interpret this finding through Frankenberg’s (1993) “cynical view” that color-evasive White students may be avoiding racism through a guise of color-evasive anti-racism and “selective engagement with difference” (p. 148; 143). Mathew et al. (2021) might further explain this finding through a “words and action paradox” in which allies claim allyship without demonstrating antiracist action. Within their study on White racial allies among diversity educators, one of their participants, Chris, warned,

> “harmful and dangerous allies are those who have no level of self-reflexivity about them, who merely appropriate social justice language and the work of social justice to advance their own pursuit of power. So, to appropriate and in the same respect dehumanize black and brown bodies, gendered bodies, to advance their own agenda for power” (p. 6).

Alternatively, we might also interpret this finding through Frankenberg's (1993) "generous interpretation" that perhaps color-evasion White students may have been confusing "'ought' with 'is'" (p. 148) in their attempt of color-blind allyship. In other words, their color-evasion allyship may be an attempt to treat the world as they think it ought to be: a world where color does not exist. Therefore, in this pursuit, they attempt to ignore color at all costs even if it limits their behaviors to not include directly counteracting racism. Unfortunately, with racism prevalent in all socioecological levels of society, directly counteracting racism seems to be the need and perhaps the bare minimum of engaging in allyship behaviors.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although Study 2 offered significant contributions and implications for understanding White allyship development in White college students, it also possesses some important limitations. First, Study 2 observed White allyship development in White, Midwestern, well-off college students attending a predominately White institution (PWI). I chose to focus on this population of White college students because the majority of influential universities in the United States are Predominately White Institutions. Further, PWIs can serve as "microcosms" for the predominately "larger, White-dominated society" (Cabrera, p. 77) which allows this present study to offer larger-scale implications for White allyship nationwide. Additionally, I chose to focus on this population because many Midwestern White college students come from racially segregated, homogenous hometowns with little to no prior engagement with their Whiteness (Spanierman et al., 2008b) matching the experience of many other places in the United States (Frey & Myers, 2005). Therefore, though Study 2 is limited to the midwestern college experience, it can offer insights into similar contexts. Nevertheless, future research should focus

on investigating White allyship across various demographic regions and especially with White populations from different socioeconomic statuses.

Additionally, Study 2 faced a few limitations within its study design. My sample consisted of three cohorts: I sampled students at the beginning of their college career in Fall 2019, another at the end of their college career in Winter 2019, and a final sample at the end of their college career in Summer 2019. Though, I did not find any demographic differences across these cohorts, there still may have been some important differences between each sample, especially between the incoming freshman and graduating senior samples. For example, during the graduating seniors' college experience, which is already a time of general increases in political engagement (e.g., Pascarella et al., 2012), the election of Trump occurred at the beginning of their sophomore year in college. The election of Trump in 2016 fueled political engagement across the United States (Sydell, 2017), which may have led to the sample differences in political engagement and social activism found within this study. Future research should study individual changes in White allyship behaviors throughout the college experience through longitudinal study designs such as in Neville et al. (2014).

Finally, Study 2 is derived from self-report and White perspectives on their own allyship behavior. The unique contribution of this study—along with the primary purpose of this dissertation—is to capture White perspectives on White allyship and how these perceptions may be shaped by White students' racial ideology and experience with race curricula. It is important for us understand White students' perspectives on White allyship to better address discrepancies between Whites and People of Color on antiracist approaches. Moreover, it is important to better understand how and why these discrepancies in understandings may form. Though White perceptions were analyzed through a critical lens (i.e., Critical Whiteness Studies and Critical

Consciousness), the ultimate goal for White allyship is that they are perceived as effective by Communities of Color. Therefore, future research should focus on People of Color's experiences with, and understandings, of effective White allyship behavior.

Figure 1

Conceptual model for regression hypotheses in Study 2: H1 – H3

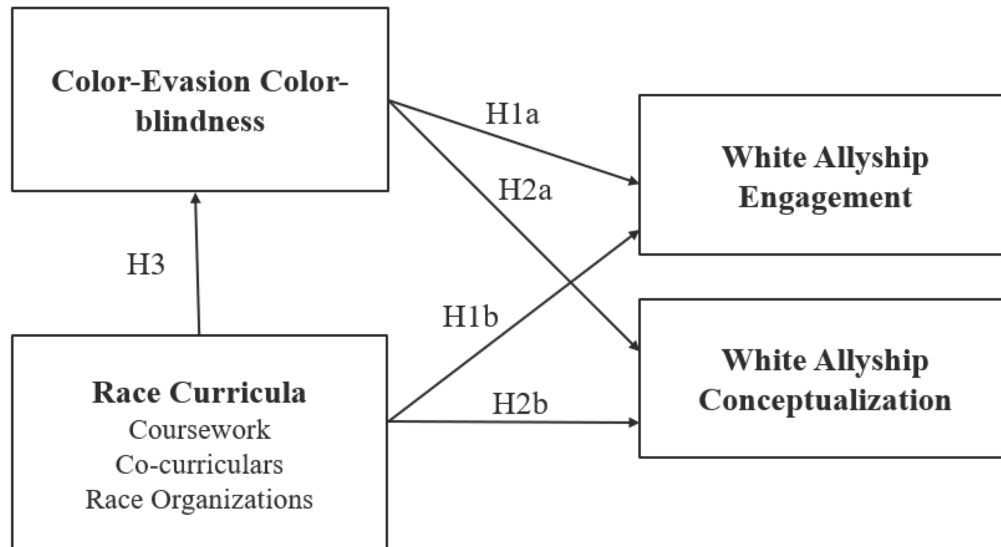

Table 3

Overall demographics for Study 2

	n	%
Condition		
Incoming Freshman	364	64.65
Graduating Seniors	199	35.35
Gender		
Men	187	33.21
Women	283	50.27
Non-Binary	9	1.60
Missing	84	14.92
Sexual Identity		
Straight	400	71.05
Queer	75	13.32
Prefer not to answer	3	0.53
Missing	85	15.10
Age		
17 or younger	25	4.44
18	251	44.58
19	27	4.80
20	4	0.71
21	59	10.48
22	101	17.94
23	10	1.78
24+	6	1.07
Missing	80	14.21
Income		
Less than $30k	39	6.93
$30k - $59,999k	47	8.35
$60k - $89,999k	69	12.26
$90k - $149.999k	125	22.20
$150k - $499,999k	152	27.00
$500k - $1,000,000	40	7.10
More than $1,000,000	11	1.95
Missing	80	14.21
Political Party		
Left leaning	292	51.87
Moderate/Center	81	14.39
Right leaning	65	11.55
No party affiliation	40	7.10

Missing	85	15.10
Religious		
Yes	310	55.06
No	164	29.13
Missing	83	14.74
R/E College		
R/E Course Required	289	51.33
R/E Course Not Required	191	33.93
Missing	83	14.74

Note. R/E College = Was a Race/Ethnicity course required for their college?

Table 4

Study 2 demographics split between incoming freshman and graduating seniors

	Incoming Freshman (n = 364)		Graduating Seniors (n = 199)		Total Sample (N = 563)	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Gender						
Men	108	29.67	79	39.70	187	33.21
Women	185	50.82	97	48.74	283	50.27
Non-Binary	6	1.65	3	1.51	9	1.60
Missing	65	17.86	20	10.05	84	14.92
Sexual Identity						
Straight	246	67.58	153	76.88	400	71.05
Queer	50	13.74	25	12.56	75	13.32
Prefer not to answer	3	0.82	0	0	3	0.53
Missing	65	17.86	21	10.55	85	15.10
Age						
17 or younger	24	6.59	0	0	25	4.44
18	250	68.68	0	0	251	44.58
19	27	7.42	0	0	27	4.80
20	0	0	4	2.01	4	0.71
21	0	0	59	29.65	59	10.48
22	0	0	101	50.75	101	17.94
23	0	0	10	5.03	10	1.78
24+	0	0	6	3.02	6	1.07
Missing	63	17.31	19	9.55	80	14.21
Income						
Less than $30k	23	6.32	16	8.04	39	6.93
$30k - $59,999k	32	8.79	15	7.54	47	8.35
$60k - $89,999k	41	11.26	27	13.57	69	12.26
$90k - $149.999k	81	22.25	44	22.11	125	22.20
$150k - $499,999k	95	26.10	57	28.64	152	27.00
$500k - $1,000,000	26	7.14	14	7.04	40	7.10
More than $1,000,000	3	0.82	8	4.02	11	1.95
Missing	63	17.31	18	9.05	80	14.21
Political Party						
Left leaning	185	50.82	106	53.27	292	51.87
Moderate/Center	32	8.79	49	24.62	81	14.39
Right leaning	47	12.91	18	9.05	65	11.55
No party affiliation	36	9.89	4	2.01	40	7.10
Missing	64	17.58	22	11.06	85	15.10

Religious						
Yes	186	51.10	123	61.81	310	55.06
No	110	30.22	54	27.14	164	29.13
Missing	68	18.68	22	11.06	83	14.74
R/E College						
R/E Course Required	207	56.87	81	40.70	289	51.33
R/E Course Not Required	94	25.82	97	48.74	191	33.93
Missing	63	17.31	21	10.55	83	14.74

Note. R/E College = Was a Race/Ethnicity course required for their college?

Table 5

Hybrid (a priori and inductive) conceptualizations of White allyship behaviors from 449 White college students in Study 2

Ally Behavior	Definition	Example Quote [Verbatim]
Treating Everyone Equally	Participant expresses that they are an ally by simply treating everyone equally regardless of race. Oftentimes, this is qualified by statements of color-evasion color-blindness.	**"I don't view them differently…"** "I do know though that I try my hardest **to treat every person the same no matter [their] race."**
Intervening in Explicit Racism	Described as stepping in during a racist occurrence where the intended ally defends the Person of Color (POC) affected and/or corrects the perpetrator. Event can occur with or without POC present.	**"I have stood up for others in situations involving racism."** **"I always call out people when they use racist language** and I try to be as big of an ally as I can."
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	Described as dialogue between people (either with White people or POC) on race topics. The conversation, especially when with a POC, is that of listening and validation. When with a White person, the dialogue is didactic.	"My roommate here at umich is a person of color and it has been great **to discuss with each other our different upbringings and different ways we have been treated based on our race.** I love being in this more diverse and accepting community." "1) One way I have been an ally to people of color is by **acknowledging my privilege in difficult situations when I hang out with people of color. This opens a dialogue** and leads to mutual understanding."
Political Engagement	Participant describes political actions such as marches and protests as well as voting behavior.	**"…rallying for Black Lives Matter"** **"I also advocate for racial liberty through voting** and speaking up when there is injustice."

"Shut up and show up"	Attending People of Color events without stifling; also captured here is the concept of "passing the mic"	**"Reminding my white peers to not speak over the experiences of people of color."** "I try my best to listen with the willingness to change and **try to uplift marginalized voices instead of speaking over them/speaking for them."**
"Helping" People of Color	Participant explains the intended allyship behavior as "helping" a POC through a negative situation. The actions lean into a "White savior complex" in which the POC is perceived to be in a situation that requires a White person's help or support.	"In past I participated in a student exchange at a predominantly African-American school **where I helped different students and offered up new advice."**
Personal and Private Actions (Self-Reflection, Educating Oneself, Supporting POC businesses)	Any action that is personal and private performed without the active participation of People of Color. Examples can include reflecting on your own biases, thinking about your Whiteness or privilege daily, educating yourself by taking race-based courses, and supporting POC businesses.	**"I have taken time to learn about the history of the struggles of people of color to further understand race."** [Educating Oneself] **"I try to always think and be aware of how things may be perceived and stop myself from prejudice"** [Self-reflection] **"When I can, I choose to support businesses owned by people of color"** [Supporting POC businesses]
Social Media Engagement	Participant utilizes social media share race-related content, promote People of Color, and publicizing support for POC and/or race movements	**"I have shared information on social media related to supporting black debaters financially."** **"Politically supporting candidates and/or bills with anti-racist policies, vocalizing support for PoC movements (such as BLM) in person and on social media"**
Friendship with People of Color	Participant expresses that they are an ally by simply being friends with a POC (sometimes will not even clarify if POC, but "everyone").	**"Just being friends with people of color who I like** not treating anybody any differently and not letting anybody else treat someone differently because of their skin color"

		"Coming from a small town, there was little diversity. While here at U of M and in my Michigan Learning Community, **I have been able to become friends with many different people** and expand my personal views."
Social Activism	Participants create or work within a space for People of Color and/or allies.	**"So far in college, I joined PALMA which works to provide free tutoring for the Latino Community in Ypsi/Ann Arbor in order to close the divide between Latino education and White education levels."** **"As a theatre artist, I have specifically made it my mission to provide platforms for those who have not been given a platform. As a straight, white, cisgendered man, it is easy for me to find outlets to tell my stories. I have worked to fill those outlets and then alter them to allow those outlets to be shared with those needing equity."**
Being Inclusive	Participant expresses antiracist or multicultural statements such as inclusivity and the importance of tackling racism.	**"Be inclusive"** **"I have been sensitive to people from other races and hold a strong and fair view towards race."**
Could not name an allyship behavior	Participant could not recall an allyship behavior that they have done.	"In my country, there honestly isn't very many people of color, **so I haven't had the chance to display my alliance on this matter."** "I came from a high-school with an extremely small minority population and **therefore never had an opportunity to be an ally to people of color."**
Anti-Allyship	Participant expresses that they do not have a desire to be an ally and/or they express that allyship is not productive or necessary.	**"I have no desire to be a white ally."** **"Ann Arbor is so liberal that there has hardly ever been a need to be an ally for persons of color. Does 'not being racist' count as being an ally?"**

Figure 2
Theoretically clustered allyship conceptualizations

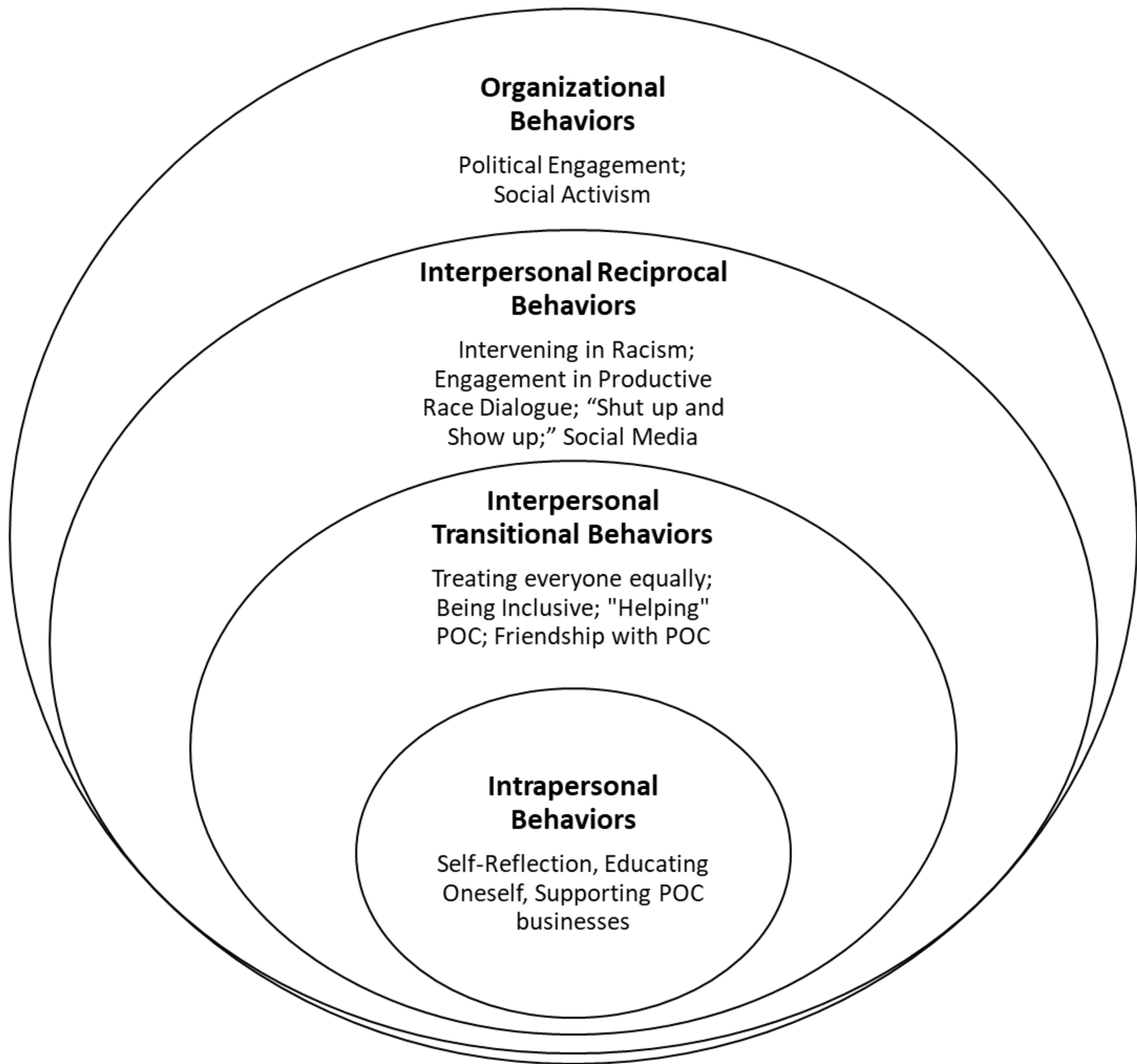

Table 6

Bivariate correlations among demographic variables and outcome variables in Study 2

Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Cond[a]	562	0.35	0.48	1									
2. RaceIdeo[b]	562	0.23	0.42	0.26**	1								
3. RaceCurr[c]	562	1.37	1.76	0.36**	0.23*	1							
4. Gender[d]	478	0.63	0.53	-0.06	0.08	0.06	1						
5. SexOrien[e]	477	0.40	1.08	-0.07	0.05	0.00	0.11*	1					
6. Age	482	3.40	1.90	0.95**	0.22*	0.34**	-0.09	-0.06	1				
7. Income	482	3.97	1.46	0.03	-0.07	-0.01	-0.00	-0.10*	0.04	1			
8. PolOrien[f]	477	0.69	1.00	-0.11*	-0.20**	-0.15**	-0.10*	-0.11*	-0.11*	0.02	1		
9. Religious[g]	473	0.65	0.48	0.07	-0.04	0.13**	0.06	-0.18**	0.04	0.13**	0.19**	1	
10. College	479	0.40	0.49	0.23**	0.03	0.16**	-0.05	-0.01	0.20**	0.02	0.02	0.04	1

Note. Cond = Study condition; RaceIdeo = Racial Ideology; RaceCurr = Race Curricula; SexOrien = Sexual orientation; PolOrien = Political orientation; Citizen = U.S. citizenship

a. 0 = Incoming freshman

b. 0 = Color-blindness

c. Sum Variable for Race Courses, Service-Learning Courses, Intergroup Dialogue Courses, and Race Organizations

d. 0 = Man, 1 = Woman

e. 0 = Straight

f. 0 = Left-leaning

g. 0 = Not religious/spiritual

h. 0 = College with Race & Ethnicity course requirement

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 7
Descriptive statistics of outcome variables in Study 2

Outcome Variables	Incoming Freshman			Graduating Seniors			Total Sample		
	n	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Racial Ideology[a]	363	0.15	0.35	199	0.37	0.49	562	0.23	0.82
Race Curricula[b]	363	0.90	2.34	199	2.22	2.09	562	1.37	1.76
Race Courses[c]							314	1.34	1.40
Courses Sum[d]	-	-	-	199	1.65	1.53			
R&E Courses	-	-	-	199	1.19	1.11			
Non R&E Courses	-	-	-	80	1.14	1.01			
Int R&E Courses	363	1.50	1.20	-	-	-			
HS Race Courses	115	0.81	0.95	-	-	-			
S-L Courses[e]							246	1.01	1.18
Coll S-L Courses	-	-	-	104	0.65	0.94			
HS S-L Courses	143	1.27	1.27	-	-	-			
IGR[f]							164	0.26	0.48
Coll IGR Course	-	-	-	78	0.24	0.49			
HS IGR Course	86	0.28	0.48	-	-	-			
Race Org[g]							162	0.35	0.57
Coll Race Org	76	0.14	0.35	78	0.33	0.62			
HS Race Org	85	0.38	0.53	-	-	-			

Note. R&E Courses = Race & Ethnicity Courses; Int R&E Courses = Intending to take R&E Courses in College; HS Race Courses = Race courses completed in high school; S-L Courses = Service-learning courses; Coll S-L Courses = Service-learning courses completed in college; HS S-L Courses = Service-learning courses completed in high school; IGR = Intergroup Dialogue Courses; Coll IGR Course = IGR courses completed in college; HS IGR Course = IGR courses completed in high school; Race Org = Race organizations; Coll Race Org = Race organizations participated in college; HS Race Org = Race organizations participated in high school; - = indicates that data was not collected.
a. 0 = Color-blindness

b. c. e. f. g. Data collected on incoming freshman and graduating seniors was merged into one variable and calculated as a count variable; however, data was collected on separate questions.
d. R&E Courses + Non R&E Courses

Figure 3
Study 2 findings for central predictions for regression hypotheses: H1 – H3

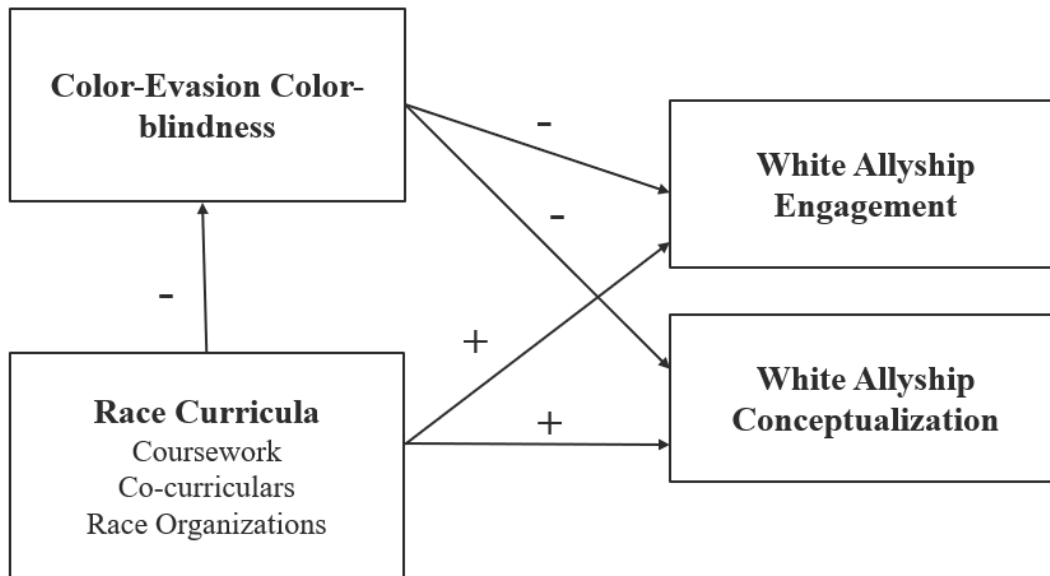

Table 8

Hierarchical regression analyses predicting allyship engagement from demographics, condition, racial ideology, and race curricula in Study 2

	Step 1 ($R^2 = 0.14$)**		Step 2 ($R^2 = 0.21$)**		Step 3 ($R^2 = 0.23$)**		Step 4 ($R^2 = 0.30$)**	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
Main Effects								
Gender[a]	0.21	4.47**	0.18	3.99**	0.17	4.10**	0.16	3.60**
Sexuality[b]	0.28	5.98**	0.25	5.27**	0.26	5.58**	0.25	5.73**
Income			-0.04	-0.92	-0.04	-0.97	-0.02	-0.52
Political[c]			-0.27	-5.89**	-0.25	-5.29**	-0.20	-4.35**
Religion[d]			0.06	1.38	0.06	1.20	0.04	0.91
CollReq[e]					-0.07	-1.41	-0.06	-1.26
Condition[f]					0.16	3.53**	0.05	1.01
RaceId[g]							0.24	4.11**
RaceCurr							0.13	1.99*
Interactions								
RaceId x RaceCurr							-0.02	-0.20

Note. Political = Political orientation; CollReg = College requirement for taking a race course; RaceId = Racial ideology; RaceCurr = Race curricula.

a. 0 = Man

b. 0 = Straight

c. 0 = Left-leaning

d. 0 = Religious

e. 0 = College did not require students to take a race course

f. 0 = Incoming freshman

g. 0 = Color-blindness

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 9

Racial ideology predicting allyship behavior conceptualizations in Study 2[ab]

Category	B	SE	β	95% CI		p
				LL	*UL*	
Treating Everyone Equally	-1.71	0.35	0.18	0.09	0.36	0.00**
Intervening in Explicit Racism	0.44	0.26	1.56	0.93	2.61	0.09[c]
Personal and Private Action	0.92	0.27	2.46	1.44	4.21	0.00**
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	1.17	0.29	3.23	1.80	5.80	0.00**
Friendship with POC	-0.37	0.40	0.69	0.32	1.51	0.35
Political Engagement	0.62	0.36	1.86	0.93	3.74	0.08[d]
Could not name an allyship behavior	-0.83	0.56	0.44	0.15	1.32	0.14
Being Inclusive	-0.19	0.47	0.83	0.33	2.06	0.69
Social Activism	0.71	0.43	2.03	0.87	4.72	0.10[e]
Anti-Allyship	0.11	0.68	1.11	0.30	4.20	0.88
Help POC	-0.01	0.54	0.99	0.34	2.87	0.99
"Shut up and show up"	1.80	0.58	6.07	1.94	19.01	0.00**
Social Media	0.08	1.20	1.08	0.10	11.35	0.95

a. Color-blindness = 0

b. Binary Logistic Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

c. When not controlling for demographic variables, $\beta = 1.77$, $p = 0.03$*

d. When not controlling for demographic variables, $\beta = 2.32$, $p = 0.01$*; when controlling, political orientation (left = 0) is $\beta = 0.46$, $p = 0.01$*

e. When not controlling for demographic variables, $\beta = 2.52$, $p = 0.03$; when controlling, gender (man = 0) is $\beta = 2.74$, $p = 0.05$*.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 10

Race curricula predicting allyship behavior conceptualizations in Study 2[ab]

Category	B	SE	β	95% CI		p
				LL	*UL*	
Treating Everyone Equally	-0.25	0.08	0.78	0.67	0.91	0.00**
Intervening in Explicit Racism	0.06	0.06	1.06	0.94	1.19	0.35
Personal and Private Action	0.15	0.06	1.16	1.03	1.31	0.02*
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	0.07	0.07	1.07	0.94	1.23	0.30
Friendship with POC	-0.09	0.09	0.91	0.76	1.09	0.31
Political Engagement	0.15	0.08	1.16	1.00	1.35	0.05*
Could not name an allyship behavior	0.01	0.10	1.01	0.84	1.22	0.89
Being Inclusive	-0.02	0.11	0.98	0.80	1.21	0.85
Social Activism	0.21	0.09	1.24	1.05	1.46	0.01*
Anti-Allyship	-0.03	0.15	0.97	0.72	1.31	0.84
Help POC	0.08	0.10	1.08	0.89	1.32	0.44
"Shut up and show up"	0.23	0.10	1.26	1.04	1.53	0.02*
Social Media	0.12	0.30	1.13	0.63	2.05	0.68

a. Color-blindness = 0

b. Binary Logistic Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 11

Racial ideology predicting a priori allyship conceptualizations in Study 2[a]

Level	B	SE	β	95% CI		p
				LL	*UL*	
Intrapersonal[b]	0.92	0.27	2.46	1.44	4.21	0.00**
Transitional Interpersonal[c]	-0.76	0.19	0.47	0.32	0.68	0.00**
Reciprocal Interpersonal[d]	0.72	0.14	2.06	1.55	2.73	0.00**
Organizational[e]	0.78	0.25	2.18	1.35	3.54	0.00*
Could not name an allyship behavior[f]	-0.83	0.56	0.44	0.15	1.32	0.14
Anti-Allyship[g]	0.11	0.68	1.11	0.30	4.20	0.88

a. 0 = Color-blindness

b. f. g. Binary logistic regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

c. d. e. Poisson regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 12

Race curricula predicting a priori allyship conceptualizations in Study 2

Level	B	SE	β	95% CI		p
				LL	*UL*	
Intrapersonal[a]	0.15	0.06	1.16	1.03	1.31	0.02*
Transitional Interpersonal[b]	-0.33	0.08	0.91	0.84	0.98	0.02*
Reciprocal Interpersonal[c]	0.08	0.03	1.08	1.02	1.15	0.01*
Organizational[d]	0.16	0.04	1.17	1.08	1.27	0.00**
Could not name an allyship behavior[e]	0.01	0.10	1.01	0.84	1.22	0.89
Anti-Allyship[f]	-0.03	0.15	0.97	0.72	1.31	0.84

a. e. f. Binary logistic regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation
b. c. d. Poisson regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation
* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 13
Poisson regression analyses for racial ideology predicting number of courses in Study 2[ab]

DV's	B	SE	β	95% CI		p
				LL	*UL*	
Race Curricula[c]	0.55	0.08	1.73	1.47	2.04	0.00**
Coll Race Curricula	0.44	0.11	1.55	1.26	1.90	0.00**
HS Race Curricula	0.18	0.16	1.19	0.87	1.64	0.28
Race Courses						
Coll Race Courses[d]	0.55	0.12	1.73	1.36	2.21	0.00**
Int Race Courses	0.22	0.12	1.24	0.98	1.58	0.07
HS Race Courses	0.11	0.35	1.11	0.57	2.20	0.75
S-L Courses						
Coll S-L Courses	-0.17	0.28	0.84	0.49	1.44	0.53
HS S-L Courses	0.27	0.22	1.31	0.85	2.02	0.22
IGR						
Coll IGR Courses	0.29	0.48	1.34	0.53	3.41	0.54
HS IGR Courses	-0.71	0.78	0.49	0.11	2.26	0.36
Race Orgs						
Coll Race Orgs	-0.30	0.49	0.74	0.29	1.91	0.53
HS Race Orgs	0.31	0.46	1.37	0.56	3.35	0.49

Note. Coll = College; HS = High School; Int = Intended Race Courses; S-L = Service-Learning; IGR = Intergroup Dialogue; Orgs = Organizations
a. Controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation
b. Race Curricula includes both samples; College curricula include only graduating seniors sample; HS curricula and intended curricula include only incoming freshman sample
c. Race Curricula = Sum of all race courses, service-learning courses, and IGR courses complete and race organizations participated in
d. Coll Race Courses = Sum of both required R&E course and other race-related courses completed
*$p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 14
Logistic regression comparing racial ideology White incoming college freshman and recently graduated seniors in Study 2[a]

	Freshmen		Seniors		B	SE	β	95% CI		p
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				*LL*	*UL*	
Racial Ideology	0.85	0.35	0.63	0.48	-1.24	0.25	0.29[b]	0.18	0.47	0.00**[c]

a. Multinomial Logistic Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation
b. For clarity on interpretation, the odds ratio was inverted in the discussion of these results: 1/0.29 = 3.45.
c. The factor demonstrated are incoming freshman; 0 = Recently graduated seniors and 1 = Incoming freshman
* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 15

Comparing curricula among White incoming college freshman and recently graduated seniors in Study 2[ab]

	Incoming Freshmen		Graduated Seniors		B	SE	β	95% CI		p
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				*LL*	*UL*	
Race Curricula	0.91	1.34	2.22	2.09	0.83	0.83	2.28	1.94	2.69	0.00**
Race Courses	0.81	0.95	1.65	1.53	0.48	0.13	1.61	1.24	2.09	0.00**
S-L Courses	1.27	1.27	0.65	0.93	-0.53	0.16	0.59	0.43	0.81	0.00**
IGR	0.28	0.48	0.24	0.49	-0.07	0.36	0.94	0.46	1.89	0.85
Race Organizations	0.38	0.53	0.33	0.62	-0.30	0.32	0.74	0.40	1.39	0.36

Note. S-L Courses = Service-Learning Courses; IGR = Intergroup Relations Courses; Race Curricula = Sum of all race courses, service-learning courses, and IGR courses complete and race organizations participated in.

a. Poisson Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

b. The factor demonstrated are incoming freshman; 0 = Recently graduated seniors and 1 = Incoming freshman

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 16

Comparing allyship behavior engagement between freshman and seniors in Study 2[a]

Category	Freshman		Graduating Seniors		B	SE	β	95% CI		p
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				*LL*	*UL*	
Overall Engagement	0.89	0.95	1.21	1.17	0.37	0.11	1.44	1.16	1.79	0.00**
Overall Intended Engagement	1.48	0.82	1.69	1.13	0.16	0.09	1.17	0.98	1.40	0.08

Note. Each participant response was coded for as many categories as it reflected and not limited to one category.

a. Poisson Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 17

Frequencies of allyship behaviors between freshman and seniors in Study 2

Category	Freshman (N = 306)		Graduating Seniors (N = 124)		Total (N = 430)	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Treating Everyone Equally	123	40.20	36	29.03	159	36.98
Intervening in Explicit Racism	83	27.12	34	27.42	117	27.21
Personal and Private Action	64	20.92	33	26.61	97	22.56
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	50	16.34	27	21.77	77	17.91
Friendship with POC	45	14.71	13	10.48	58	13.49
Political Engagement	23	7.52	23	18.55	46	10.70
Could not name an allyship behavior	24	7.84	8	6.45	32	7.44
Being Inclusive	24	7.84	7	5.65	31	7.21
Social Activism	8	2.61	19	15.32	27	6.28
Anti-Allyship	17	5.56	6	4.84	23	5.35
Help POC	12	3.92	10	8.06	22	5.12
“Shut up and show up”	13	4.25	7	5.65	20	4.65
Social Media	7	2.29	0	0	7	1.63

Note. Each participant response was coded for as many categories as it reflected and not limited to one category.

Table 18

Comparing allyship behaviors between freshman and seniors[ab]

Category	Freshman		Graduating Seniors		B	SE	β	95% CI		p
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				*LL*	*UL*	
Treating Everyone Equally	0.40	0.49	0.29	0.46	-0.28	0.20	0.76	0.51	1.12	0.16
Intervening in Explicit Racism	0.27	0.45	0.27	0.45	0.04	0.22	1.04	0.68	1.58	0.86
Personal and Private Action	0.21	0.41	0.27	0.44	0.24	0.23	1.27	0.80	2.00	0.31
Engagement in Productive Dialogue	0.16	0.37	0.22	0.41	0.36	0.26	1.44	0.86	2.41	0.17
Friendship with POC	0.15	0.35	0.10	0.31	-0.39	0.33	0.68	0.36	1.30	0.24
Political Engagement	0.08	0.26	0.19	0.39	1.15	0.33	3.14	1.65	5.98	0.00**
Could not name an allyship behavior	0.08	0.27	0.06	0.25	-0.32	0.42	0.73	0.32	1.67	0.46
Being Inclusive	0.08	0.27	0.06	0.23	-0.39	0.46	0.68	0.28	1.66	0.39
Social Activism	0.03	0.16	0.15	0.36	1.78	0.44	5.91	2.47	14.11	0.00**
Anti-Allyship	0.06	0.27	0.05	0.22	-0.02	0.51	0.98	0.36	2.64	0.97
Help POC	0.04	0.19	0.08	0.27	0.58	0.45	1.78	0.74	4.28	0.20
"Shut up and show up"	0.04	0.20	0.06	0.23	0.41	0.56	1.50	0.50	4.52	0.47
Social Media	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. Each participant response was coded for as many categories as it reflected and not limited to one category; - indicates that data could not be analyzed because there was not a comparison group.

a. Poisson Regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

b. The factor demonstrated are incoming freshman; 0 = Recently graduated seniors and 1 = Incoming freshman

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 19

Comparing a priori allyship behaviors between freshman and seniors in Study 2

Level	Freshman (n = 306)		Seniors (n = 124)		B	SE	β	95% CI		p
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				*LL*	*UL*	
Intrapersonal[a]	0.21	0.41	0.27	0.44	0.24	0.23	1.27	0.80	2.00	0.31
Transitional Interpersonal[b]	0.67	0.65	0.53	0.64	-0.21	0.14	0.81	0.61	1.09	0.16
Reciprocal Interpersonal[c]	0.50	0.69	0.54	0.73	0.16	0.16	1.17	0.87	1.59	0.33
Organizational[d]	0.10	0.31	0.34	0.51	1.38	0.26	3.96	2.38	6.62	0.00**

a. Binary logistic regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation

b. c. d. Poisson regression controlling for gender, income, political orientation, college requirement, religion, sexual orientation.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

CHAPTER 4

General Discussion

My dissertation pursued two main goals: (a) to determine how White college students conceptualized White allyship behavior and (b) to understand which factors influenced how White college students perceived and attempted to engage in White allyship behavior (reference Appendix A for review of key terms). Across two studies, I employed a sequential methodological triangulation approach (Morse, 1991) which used the results of the first study to inform and develop the second study. In Study 1, a qualitative exploratory study, I interviewed 23 White college students on their conceptualizations of, and engagement in, White allyship behaviors. Study 1 revealed that White college students may conceptualize White allyship via eight conceptualization categories including *intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive race dialogue, political engagement, "shut up and show up," "helping" People of Color, personal and private actions, friendship with People of Color,* and *social activism*. These conceptualizations appeared to differ based on students' level of critical reflection on racism, which consisted of their understanding of race, racism, and Whiteness. The college experience, growing up in a home where allyship was encouraged or modeled, and having an accepting relationship with one's White identity all contributed to more nuanced understandings of White allyship behavior and increased allyship engagement. Color-evasion color-blindness, or choosing to ignore racial differences, appeared to negatively affect White allyship behavior conceptualization and engagement. Study 1 laid the groundwork for understanding the various

ways White students may view allyship behavior and potential factors influencing White allyship development.

Study 2 then used a mixed methods approach to expand on Study 1's findings. In Study 2, I administered an online survey to 563 White college students to (a) test the eight conceptualizations of White allyship discovered in Study 1 with a larger sample and (b) to quantitatively examine how color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula influenced White allyship development. Study 2 produced the same eight conceptualizations of White allyship behavior as Study 1, but it also broadened my understanding of White perceptions of White allyship behavior to include five new categories: *social media engagement, anti-allyship, treating everyone equally, being inclusive,* and *could not name an allyship behavior.* I employed an *a priori* theoretical clustering technique to collapse 11 of the 13 allyship behavior conceptualizations (excluding *anti-allyship* and *could not name an allyship behavior*) into four broader categories so that I could statistically examine how they might relate to other factors. The four categories were based on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory model and included *intrapersonal* behaviors, *transitional interpersonal* behaviors, *reciprocal interpersonal* behaviors, and *organizational* behaviors (see Appendix A). Study 2 revealed that even after adjusting for demographic characteristics, color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula significantly predicted allyship engagement and conceptualization. Students who endorsed color-evasion color-blindness rather than color-consciousness as well as students who completed less race curricula tended to engage in less allyship behaviors and to view allyship as *transitional interpersonal behaviors* (e.g., friendship and helping behaviors). When comparing incoming freshman to graduating seniors, Study 2 also found that graduating seniors were more likely to be color-conscious (rather than color-evasion color-blind), to take race curricula, and to engage in

allyship behaviors, especially *organizational* allyship behaviors such as social activism and political engagement. Study 2 indicated that color-evasion color-blindness may serve as a key impeding factor, while race curricula and other elements of the college experience may serve as an important motivating factor, for White allyship development. Overall, the triangulated findings revealed White college students engaged in and viewed White allyship in a variety of ways influenced by their level of critical reflection on racism and college experience. This last chapter summarizes the theoretical and practical contributions of this work, as well as important limitations to consider and suggestions for future research.

Theoretical Contributions to the Study of White College Students and White Allyship Development

Using Critical Consciousness and Critical Whiteness Studies to Investigate White Allyship Development

This investigation uniquely used both a Critical Consciousness (CC) and Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) framework to inform each study. Though CC researchers had yet to apply CC theory to White allyship, CC theory does provide a model for understanding White allyship development as a process of critical awareness and critical action. Supporting the CC model, CWS also consistently describes White allyship as having a critical awareness of Whiteness and engaging in White allyship behaviors (e.g., Spanierman & Smith, 2017). However, CWS' empirical models such as Helms' (1984) White identity model and Reason et al.'s (2005) racial justice ally development model confound critical awareness and action, failing to recognize them as distinct (but interrelated) components of White allyship development. This shortcoming of CWS' White allyship models can make understanding ambivalent or nonlinear experiences of White college students' White allyship development challenging. For example, if

critical reflection and action are obscured, we cannot model a White student who may have a higher engagement in allyship behaviors but a lower level of critical reflection on racism. Perhaps such a White student does not exist, but we cannot know unless we evaluate these components independently. Thus, one of this investigation's significant methodological contributions is its application of a CC framework to the CWS scholarship to assess critical reflection on racism and White allyship behaviors as separate components of White allyship development and to explore how they may interact.

The idea that White people, and other privileged identities, can undergo critical consciousness development had not been directly addressed by CC scholars because many academics believe that liberation can only be realized via oppressed groups' obtainment of critical reflection and action (Jemal, 2017). Therefore, the CC literature has long concentrated on factors influencing critical consciousness development within oppressed groups. Few CC scholars have examined White youth and for those who have, they have not specifically explored White allyship development; rather these studies either focused on class consciousness or a general critical consciousness that did not focus on any one domain or "-ism" (e.g., Diemer & Li, 2011; Oosterhoff et al., 2017). The absence of White critical analysis in the literature may perpetuate the invisibility and disinterest of Whiteness in achieving transformational change. Jemal (2017) argued that it is "imperative" for "those who may be privileged by the system of social injustice, unfair distribution of resources and opportunities, and inequity, [to] be able to recognize unjust processes and acquire the knowledge and skills needed for social change" (p. 618). Heberle et al. (2020) and others (e.g., Diemer et al., 2017) have also called for researchers to examine Critical Consciousness development in privileged groups with a specific interest in

White youth and CC models that "incorporate antiracist allyship" (p. 547). Perhaps most importantly, Freire (1993), the "father" of modern CC, recognized that the process of liberation must include the oppressors to work in solidarity with the oppressed.

This investigation sought to fill this gap in the CC literature by exploring if and how White college students experienced White allyship development through a Critical Consciousness framework. Both studies evidenced a link between White students' level of critical reflection on racism and their level of critical action against racism (i.e., White allyship behaviors) supporting the reciprocal and co-dependent nature of these CC components. Specifically, Study 1 interviewed three different types of White college students: those with a low critical reflection on racism, those with a medium critical reflection on racism, and those with a high critical reflection on racism. A pattern emerged in Study 1 between students' level of critical reflection on racism and not only their level of engagement in allyship behaviors, but also the types of behaviors students considered to be White allyship. Low critical reflection students tended to confine allyship behaviors to low-risk, interpersonal behaviors including friendship with People of Color and "helping" behaviors, which the CWS literature warned can be detrimental to allyship aims because they do not attempt to counteract systemic racism. These students also made less attempts to engage in allyship behaviors overall. White students categorized as having a high critical reflection on racism in Study 1 held more sophisticated conceptualizations of allyship behaviors that reflected behaviors across all socioecological levels, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational behaviors. High critical reflection students also attempted to engage in more allyship behaviors overall and were the only group to mention engaging in social activism, an action of creating antiracist events or spaces.

Study 2 then surveyed 563 White college students who reported themselves as either color-evasion color-blind or color-conscious using the Color in Context Racial Ideology (CCRI) measure (refer to Chapter 3). I developed the CCRI based on the low critical reflection students' statements of color-evasion color-blindness in Study 1. Therefore, some parallels between the low critical reflection students in Study 1 and the color-evasion color-blind students in Study 2 may be drawn. Accordingly, the color-blind students in Study 2 were also found to be more likely to conceptualize allyship as transitional interpersonal behaviors such as friendship and “helping” People of Color. Color-conscious students in Study 2, who may be comparable to the medium or high critical reflection students in Study 1, were similarly more likely than color-evasion color-blind students to conceptualize and engage in CWS-supported allyship behaviors including intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive dialogue, political engagement, “shut up and show up,” personal and private actions, and social activism.

Therefore, this investigation supported that White college students experience Critical Consciousness development following a traditional framework. Like Students of Color (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2011), critical reflection was found to be highly related to critical action. However, the development of Critical Consciousness within White college students inherently differed from that of Students of Color because of their Whiteness. The process of White allyship development could be absent, slower, and/or an inconsistent process because of the pervasiveness of color-blindness (Frankenberg, 1993) and the ability for White college students to view themselves as “normal” and/or without a racial identity (Dottolo & Stewart, 2013; Tatum, 1997) which could impede internal motivation for liberation from the oppressive structures that privileged them. Heberle et al.’s (2020) systematic review of

the CC literature found two studies (Diemer & Li, 2011; Godfrey & Grayman, 2014) on White critical consciousness development that further support this notion. Diemer and Li (2011) examined general (not race-specific) critical consciousness development in poor and working-class White youth and Godfrey and Grayman (2014) examined general critical consciousness in White youth. Both studies observed that White youth were less likely to develop the desired critical consciousness outcomes than Youth of Color. Heberle et al. (2020) attributed these findings to White youth's privilege and suggests that it may be more appropriate to enhance their "antiracist allyship" (p. 547). The present investigation legitimizes the examination and modeling of White allyship development in White college students using a CC framework. Though, because of privilege, this process of development involves awareness of Whiteness and engaging in White allyship behaviors to disrupt the systems that sustain Whiteness.

Further Evidence against the Color-blind Strategy in Higher Education: It May Limit Action

This investigation provided strong evidence against color-evasion color-blindness as an effective racial ideology for cultivating White allyship development in White college students. The Post-Civil Rights Era established color-blindness across educational, workplace, legal, and interpersonal domains as the dominant strategy to addressing racism (Apfelbaum et al., 2012; Holoien & Shelton, 2012). For example, in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District (2007),* U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts infamously argued against race-integration busing by stating, "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race" (Turner, 2015, p. 45). In other words, the way to stop racism is not through intentional desegregation efforts that would inherently acknowledge race, but instead through color-blind efforts. Because in this view, acknowledging race in of itself is

racist (Frankenberg, 1993). The following excerpt in Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech also has been (mis)attributed to justifying and promoting color-blindness as an American value, "I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" (King, 1963). For example, Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn) argued that Critical Race Theory (to which Critical Whiteness Studies, the guiding theoretical framework for this dissertation, is a part of) teaches kids "to judge a person by the color of their skin, not the content of their character" (Marsha Blackburn: U.S. Senator for Tennessee, 2021, June 8). Likewise, in reaction to Critical Race Theory, Senator Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) contended,

> "The Reverend Dr. King said, and he was right, that we should judge our fellow citizens by the content of their character and not the color of their skin. We need a strong nation with strong citizens that see each other as Americans and not as oppressors and oppressed" (Josh Hawley: U.S. Senator for Missouri, 2021, July 26).

Reflected in both Senators' statements is the belief that King, the leader of the Civil Rights Movement, understood antiracism as color-blindness. However, this interpretation of MLK has been widely criticized by many scholars (e.g., Sundstorm, 2018) and King's children who are directly referenced in this excerpt of his speech. His eldest son Martin Luther King III and his daughter Dr. Bernice King described these attempts as a "literal effort to whitewash history" (Zou, 2021) and "beyond insulting" (Folley, 2021). Indeed, King advocated for color-conscious and power-conscious policies including affirmative action (Sundstorm, 2018).

Nevertheless, color-blindness continues to be a prominent racial ideology and antiracist strategy. As discussed throughout this investigation, two dimensions of color-blindness comprise the color-blind racial ideology: power-evasion and color-evasion. Power-evasion, or "the denial of racism by emphasizing equal opportunities" (Neville et al., 2013, p. 455) has consistently been

studied through the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000) and linked to a range of negative cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes (Neville et al., 2013). Color-evasion, on the other hand, is defined by a "denial of racial differences by emphasizing sameness" (Neville et al., 2013, p. 455) and is largely tested against multiculturalism (instead of color-consciousness) to which I discuss the limitations of in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. Moreover, I was not able to find any studies that have attempted to explore the relationship between color-evasion color-blindness and allyship behaviors. Therefore, one of the major contributions of this investigation is that it provided strong evidence for color-evasion color-blindness as a hinderance to antiracism.

Endorsers of color-evasion color-blindness often claim to not "see" race. Apfelbaum et al. (2012) notes the cognitive impossibility of not "seeing" someone's race citing that perceptually differentiating between races occurs in "less than one-seventh of a second—and emerges as early as 6 months of age" (p. 205). One could certainly notice race and deliberately choose to ignore it which may be what some color-blind endorsers intend with this color-blind adage. Still, ignoring someone's race may also come with denying a Person of Color of their lived experiences including not only their experiences with racial discrimination and trauma (power-evasion), but also a denial of their racial identity and pride. Research has consistently demonstrated the contrary outcomes of color-evasion color-blindness in reducing bias (e.g., Aragón et al., 2017; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Ryan et al., 2007). Several studies have also shown that racial bias is related to discriminatory behaviors (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2002; McConnell & Leibold, 2001) and prior allyship research has evidenced the strong role of attitudes on White allyship behavior specifically (Case, 2012; Linder, 2015; Reason et al., 2005). However, how color-evasion color-blindness affects allyship behaviors has yet to be

explicitly investigated. For example, it is possible for a person who endorses color-evasion color-blindness to value antiracism—in fact, as already discussed, this same person may believe their color-evasion *is* antiracist—but this may not translate to allyship engagement. It remains unclear how color-evasion affects allyship engagement, and how a color-evasion color-blind person's attempted allyship behaviors differ from a color-conscious person's behaviors. This investigation provided insights to these questions by showing that color-evasion color-blindness might not produce effective nor many allyship behaviors.

In Study 1, I interviewed 23 White college students with varying levels of critical reflection on racism. Low critical reflection students who endorsed color-evasion color-blind ideas held limited conceptualizations of allyship, viewing allyship primarily as interpersonal behaviors including controversial conceptualizations such as friendship with People of Color and "helping" People of Color. Low critical reflection students also had lower engagement in allyship overall, with at least two students reporting that they had never attempted any allyship behavior. Likewise, in Study 2, a mixed methods study on 563 White college students, I found that color-evasion color-blind students were more likely to conceptualize allyship as *transitional interpersonal* behaviors including, again, friendship with People of Color and "helping People of Color." Color-evasion color-blind students were also less likely than students who endorsed color-consciousness to engage in allyship behaviors.

Both studies demonstrated that color-evasion color-blindness produces a limited understanding of allyship and low engagement in allyship behaviors. Not only were color-evasion color-blind students engaging in less productive behaviors, but also making less attempts at allyship behaviors overall. That is, regardless as to whether White students' conceptualizations of allyship were within the bounds of CWS's understanding of allyship or not, color-evasion

color-blind students still were less likely to attempt to engage in allyship behaviors. This is an important finding because counter to the intentions of some color-evasion endorsers, I found that color-evasion color-blindness may not motivate White students to counteract racism as much as color-consciousness. Instead, it shows that color-evasion color-blindness may even encourage inaction by limiting allyship only to interpersonal behaviors.

Thus, an important contribution of Study 2 is that it empirically demonstrated the deleterious effects of color-evasion on White allyship development. Color-evasion color-blindness predicted lower allyship engagement overall and less developed conceptualizations of White allyship behavior. These findings are especially significant because many students and people within the United States promote color-evasion color-blindness as an antiracist strategy (Chapter 2; Frankenberg, 1993). Frankenberg (1993) countered the color-evasion color-blind ideology with *race cognizance* (or what I call, color consciousness) which involves "recognizing difference, but with difference understood in historical, political, social, or cultural terms rather than essentialist ones" (p.157). Many color-evasion endorsers avoid discussing or acknowledging race out of fear that this will lead to stereotypical and essentialist thinking—therefore, leading to the logic that recognizing race is racism and recognizing similarity is antiracism. However, in failing to recognize race, color-evasion can also fail to recognize that race does "affect people's lives" and "is a significant factor in shaping contemporary U.S. society" (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 157). Therefore, color-consciousness instead calls for us to recognize race not as essentialist or biological difference, but rather within the realities of its sociopolitical and sociohistorical contexts.

Unpacking the Dangers of Transitional Interpersonal Behaviors. In both Studies 1 and 2 color-evasion color-blindness tended to restrict engagement to *transitional interpersonal*

allyship behaviors, which included friendship with People of Color, “helping” People of Color, treating everyone equally, and being inclusive. These behaviors were categorized as transitional interpersonal behavior because they reflected mindsets rather than actions that directly affected People of Color or inequitable systems. Though it must be noted that these behaviors are not all inherently harmful to People of Color. Of course, being friends with People of Color, wanting to help People of Color, treating everyone—including People of Color—equally, and being inclusive towards People of Color may all be important actions to progressing towards an equitable and just society. However, when these behaviors are the *only* behaviors conceptualized as antiracist and in fact, are viewed as the only *necessary* behaviors to be antiracist, is when their effects can be deleterious. In the next section, I discuss why these transitional interpersonal behaviors may be harmful to the goals of White allyship.

First, these behaviors only intended to counteract interpersonal racism rather than address the other levels of racism. Racism occurs across all socioecological levels; it occurs not only interpersonally, but also intrapersonally (within oneself) and systemically. However, when transitional interpersonal actions were mentioned in Study 1 and Study 2, they were frequently reported alone as the sole behavior students had engaged in. For example, students would describe their allyship behavior as only “treating everyone equally” with no other behaviors or specifications listed or “being inclusive” with no other behaviors or specifications listed. This could indicate that these students felt they were absolved from managing their White privilege (intrapersonal racism) or combatting systemic racism, or that they did not believe these other forms of racism existed.

Second, even when addressing interpersonal racism, these behaviors can produce unintended effects. For example, the implications of viewing friendship as an antiracist behavior

may imply that it is a deliberate choice to treat a Person of Color as a human being—"if I like them" as one participant in Study 1 conditionally added. Historically, friendship may have been a radical choice, but in present times may imply inaction. However, Brown (2015) displayed some evidence suggesting that People of Color do not typically have meaningful friendships with White people who they do not perceive as allies. This indicates that if an intergroup relationship exists, then it may be an indicator of allyship behavior. A large limitation of Brown's study was that their sample may have included Students of Color with low racial consciousnesses who may not have perceived a difference between allies and friends. Certainly Brown (2015) was surprised by his own findings originally theorizing that a conceptual difference between an ally and friend did exist. In a separate study, Ostrove and Brown (2018) were able to test differences between "allies" and "friends" explicitly and found that "allies" rated themselves as lower on prejudice and scored higher in their understanding of White privilege and activism than "friends." Importantly, People of Color within their study also rated the "allies" as higher on affirmation and informed action than their nominated "friends." Thus, friendship with People of Color may not necessarily indicate allyship. As Brown (2015) originally theorized this may happen when a White person chooses not to recognize racial identities (color-evasion) and how that plays a role within their intergroup friendship. In Study 1 and Study 2, friendship conceptualizations were associated with color-evasion color-blindness. White students shared in Study 1, "I am an ally to all of my friends" indicating that their allyship behavior was simply to treat People of Color as they would any other White person. This action did not inherently reflect a race-conscious friendship as Ostrove and Brown's (2018) findings support. Thus, considering friendship as an allyship behavior may indicate color-evasion color-blindness instead of meaningful race-conscious relationships with People of Color.

"Treating everyone equally" is not fundamentally a behavior to avoid. At face value, "treating everyone equally" is the desire for egalitarianism which is a common goal among People of Color as well (Hughes et al., 2006). However, this statement is often used to promote color-blindness and ignoring racial difference and racism (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011; Neville et al., 2013). Within Study 1, I found that color-evasion color-blindness often appeared via statements of "treating everyone equally" as scholars have stated (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011; Neville et al., 2013); for example, Stephen in Study 1 disclosed, "some people like really care what race you are, like, that means something to them...I don't, I can be around whoever." These statements in Study 1 inspired how I selected to measure color-evasion color-blindness in Study 2. In Study 2, I measured color-evasion color-blindness if students described their racial ideology as more closely resembling the following, "You believe that people should be judged as who they are as individuals, and you try not to treat people differently because of their race." Thus, color-evasion color-blindness in Study 2 was primarily captured by seeking to treat everyone equally. After directly asking students about their racial ideology, I asked students to list the allyship behaviors they have engaged in. Many of these students who had selected color-evasion color-blindness then chose to list their behavior as "treating everyone equally" restating information already included within the prompt. Therefore, not only does this behavior indicate color-evasion color-blindness, but may also indicate inaction or uncertainty of how to conceive specific allyship behaviors.

"Helping" People of Color is, again, not inherently a behavior to avoid; however, in the context of asking students to list their allyship behaviors, this conceptualization appeared most often with low critical reflection students. The literature views this type of allyship conceptualization as paternalistic and potentially as viewing White people as superior to People

of Color (Spanierman & Smith, 2017). The result of paternalistic allyship is that it may lead to White people stifling People of Color's voices and needs and can neglect transforming inequitable systems (Spanierman & Smith, 2917).

Lastly, "being inclusive" is perhaps the least controversial behavior included in the transitional interpersonal conceptualization category. However, because those who mentioned being inclusive did not mention any elaboration on how they were being inclusive, I decided to categorize it as a transitional behavior. The primary issue with these transitional behaviors is that when asked to list specific actions, these non-specific behaviors are what students listed which could indicate low engagement in allyship behaviors overall. Intending to engage in action by setting out to "be inclusive" without engaging in any specific actions such as listening or validating People of Color's racial experiences represents the concerns expressed by CWS scholars of appropriating social justice language (Mathew et al., 2021) and "slacktivism" (Cabrera et al., 2017).

Across two studies on White college students, color-evasion color-blind students were more likely to conceptualize and engage in transitional interpersonal behaviors, which may be harmful because they do not directly attempt to counteract racism. For as Martin Luther King III, the eldest son of Martin Luther King Jr., stated, "Yes, we should judge people by the content of the character and not the color of their skin — but that is when we have a true, just, humane society where there are no biases, where there is no racism, where there is no discrimination" (Zou, 2021).

The College Experience as a Promising Application of Intergroup Contact Theory and a Long-term Racial Socialization Intervention

This investigation provided consistent evidence for the importance of college as a vital developmental experience within White emerging adult's White allyship development. In Study 1, White college students described college as more diverse than their high schools and childhood neighborhoods aligning with prior research (e.g., Bonilla-Silva et al., 2006). Further, White students identified college (and especially, the college classroom) as the primary space in which they had engaged in productive race dialogues. Study 1 also indicated that White students with a high level of critical reflection on racism tended to be farther along in their college career suggesting that more time spent in college may lead to more critical reflection on racism. As one potential explanation for this association, Study 1 showed that while in college, these students with high critical reflection on racism had engaged in significantly more race curricula such as completing race courses and participating in intergroup dialogues and race-based organizations.

Aligning with Study 1's results, Study 2 then further explored these trends in a quantitative study. Study 2 examined race curricula as a predictor of White allyship behavior and allyship conceptualization. Findings revealed that students who had taken more race curricula were significantly more likely to be color-conscious (as opposed to color-blind) and to engage in White allyship behaviors. Moreover, they were more likely to describe their allyship behaviors as engaging in *intrapersonal* (e.g., reflection), *reciprocal interpersonal* (e.g., intervening against racism), and *organizational* (e.g., political engagement) allyship behaviors and were less likely to describe their engagement as *transitional interpersonal* behaviors (e.g., friendship) than those who had taken less or no race curricula. I also compared first-semester White college freshmen to recently graduated White college seniors. Similar to Study 1's findings, Study 2 found that

graduating seniors were 2.28 times more likely to have completed race curricula, 3.45 times less likely to be color-blind, and 1.44 times more likely to engage in allyship behaviors overall. Specifically, graduating seniors were three times more likely to engage in political engagement and nearly six times more likely to engage in social activism behaviors. Across both studies, a consistent pattern appeared with college playing a significant role in White students' White allyship development.

The present investigation and prior literature support that White people may experience their first major expansion in their White allyship development in college. I argue that this may be because the college context is more likely than other spaces to: (a) satisfy Allport's theorized conditions for reducing prejudice via intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998) and (b) serve as a comprehensive, long-term racial socialization "intervention" where students have multiple informal and formal opportunities to not only build their critical reflection on racism, but also prototype and expand their engagement in critical action.

Applying Intergroup Contact Theory. Gordon Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis argues that to reduce intergroup bias, intergroup contact must satisfy four specific conditions: intergroup cooperation, equal status between groups, meaningful intergroup relationships, and institutional support (Pettigrew, 1998). The college context can serve as a satisfactory setting for intergroup contact as it offers opportunity for cooperation (which may happen via group projects, for example), equal status as college students, opportunities for friendship, and institutional support for positive intergroup interactions. The present investigation did not meaningfully explore intergroup contact, though many students in Study 1 mentioned shifting from nearly all-White environments to a predominately White, but comparatively diverse, college environment. Both Study 1 and prior research (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2006; Orfield et al., 2003; Reardon & Yun,

2002; Sohoni & Saporito, 2009; Stearns et al., 2009) have established that college may serve as the first setting in which many White people are interacting meaningfully with People of Color as peers, roommates, friends, and instructors. Additionally, students in Study 1 with a higher level of critical reflection on racism also appeared to engage with Students of Color more often than those with lower levels of critical reflection on racism.

Decades of research have established positive intergroup contact as an important factor in reducing prejudice. In a comprehensive meta-analytic study, Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) analyzed 713 independent samples from 515 studies and concluded that intergroup contact reduces intergroup prejudice. Most of the studies reviewed specifically focused on racial prejudice. Other studies have shown that intergroup contact can increase White students' understandings of race and racism (Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015; Fischer, 2011; Martin et al., 2010). Additionally, for some White students, and particularly those within my samples, college is an all-encompassing experience that creates many opportunities for informal cross-racial interactions as well. Many students live, study for classes, and spend their evenings and weekends on campus. Pike (2002) examined 502 first-time college students' living arrangement at a large midwestern university and found that students who lived on campus, and were hence, interacting with diverse peers, were significantly more open to diversity than students living off campus. Therefore, cross-racial intergroup contact, both formal and informal, may play a significant role in increasing critical reflection on racism. Through meaningful engagements with their Peers of Color, White students may be more likely to reduce their stereotypical thinking and engage meaningfully with their Whiteness.

As for allyship engagement, some research has demonstrated positive intergroup contact to increase collective action in advantaged groups, but this phenomenon has not been well

addressed within a U.S. racial context (MacInnis & Hodson, 2019). Instead, this investigation evidenced that intergroup contact may not always indicate allyship growth; when paired with color-blind thinking, intergroup contact may thwart meaningful racial engagement with People of Color to hinder White allyship engagement. Other research has also shown that intergroup contact may not be enough to advance allyship development. For example, Park and Chang (2015) showed that even students who experienced precollege structural diversity did not necessarily engage meaningfully with race. Hurtado et al. (2002) found that precollege engagement—such as participating in race discussions, difficult dialogues, student clubs, volunteer work, and studying with diverse groups—better predicted democratic outcomes than demographic and environmental variables. Finally, Neville et al. (2014) concluded that there was an "association between the college context and White students' racial beliefs over time" (p. 187), but this association appeared to be most consistently predicted by engagement in race curricula rather than intergroup interaction, which yielded mixed findings (p. 187).

College as a Long-Term Racial Socialization Intervention. Not only can the college context provide ideal conditions for reducing racial prejudice, but perhaps more uniquely, the college context can serve as a long-term racial socialization intervention as well. In Study 1, White students with a high critical reflection on racism tended to be farther along in their college career. Then, Study 2 found that graduating seniors were more likely to have completed race curricula, more likely to engage in allyship behaviors, and less likely to be color-blind. Both studies suggested that longer exposure to college may produce positive White allyship outcomes. Psychologists and organizations have constructed several interventions to combat racism including race-based or multicultural diversity trainings (e.g., Dawson et al., 2010; Kalinoski et al., 2013; Xiao et al., 2015), bias-reduction trainings (e.g., Calanchini & Sherman, 2013;

Kawakami et al., 2000; Lebrecht et al., 2009), and multicultural diversity courses (e.g., Chrobot-Mason & Leslie, 2012; Krings et al., 2015). However, one of the major limitations to most interventions is that they are often short-term lasting anywhere from an hour to a couple of days. Long-term interventions are often not as practical due to their higher cost and prolonged commitment. However, most students attend college for an average of four years (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). The college experience not only offers opportunity for intergroup contact as some primary and secondary schools may, but also can uniquely provide White students multiple formal and informal opportunities to learn, practice, and engage in White allyship. Thus, the college experience may be framed as a viable long-term intervention for racial exposure and experiential learning for White emerging adults.

Colleges and universities have increasingly committed to hiring diverse faculty and staff; expanding their curricula to include race courses; establishing areas of study (e.g., minors, majors) with a race-focus; and funding race-focused student groups, spaces, and events. Some universities such as the University of Michigan and the University of California system now even require their students to take race courses as part of their degree plan. This investigation demonstrated consistent evidence that the college experience can cultivate White allyship development by offering a range of racial diversity experiences for White students to meaningfully engage with race and racism. Study 1 and 2 indicated that formal race curricula, such as coursework and membership in race organizations, may be especially important for White allyship behavior engagement. White students could take courses to learn about race and then join race-focused organizations to directly apply their knowledge to combat racism within their university or local area. In these ways, college may serve as a time of major expansion for

White emerging adults because of its long-term exposure to multiple levels of racial socialization.

Applications in Research and Practice

Using White Conceptualizations of Allyship Behaviors to Assess and Foster White Allyship Development

In this dissertation, I mapped the various conceptualizations of White allyship behaviors across 472 White college students (23 in Study 1 and 449 in Study 2). In total, I found 13 allyship conceptualization categories (refer to Table 3 in Chapter 3), which can serve as a tool for researchers and instructors to identify how White students are labeling allyship. As both studies demonstrated, White students labeled many types of behaviors as allyship, primarily viewing allyship as intervening when explicit racism occurred (as exhibited in Study 1 and Study 2) and treating everyone equally (as exhibited in Study 2). Perhaps unique to this generation, many students also valued open engagement in race dialogue as a form of allyship, countering previous generations who perceived discussing race as poor etiquette. Many White students also conceptualized allyship as political engagement, which aligns with what previous generations might have conceptualized as well, especially those who grew up during the Civil Rights era (Dottolo & Stewart, 2013). However, like Brown's (2015) findings which showed that Students of Color viewed allyship beyond political engagement/activism, White students could also view allyship as a mix of behaviors. Still, there was a prevalence of color-blindness in several students, and specifically color-evasion color-blindness, which tended to limit their allyship to less advanced ideas of allyship such as friendship with People of Color.

In Study 2, I further collapsed the allyship conceptualizations into four overarching categories to better analyze them in a statistical model. The four categories included

intrapersonal behaviors, *transitional interpersonal* behaviors, *reciprocal interpersonal* behaviors, and *organizational* behaviors (refer to Figure 2 in Chapter 3). A major limitation to these categories, which will be discussed further in the limitations section of this chapter, is that I collapsed these categories using theoretical clustering rather through statistical clustering techniques. Nevertheless, I do believe that using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socioecological levels to frame allyship behaviors may be important and useful for research practice and antiracist instruction. Just as Study 1 and Study 2 demonstrated, there were differences between the types of behaviors White students engaged in. Students who were higher in their critical reflection, those who were color-conscious, and those who had completed more race courses tended to engage in more advanced allyship behaviors including organizational behaviors that attempted to combat systemic racism. Therefore, it may be useful for researchers and instructors to frame allyship via their socioecological impact to ensure that White students are engaging in antiracism to combat all types of racism, even those that might be perceived as more difficult or impermeable such as those that counteract systemic racism.

A few studies by Joan Ostrove and Kendrick Brown (Brown, 2015; Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018) empirically investigated the characteristics and dimensions of White allyship but mapping specific allyship behaviors was not the goal of their work. Though some scales have been adapted to antiracist activism (e.g., Szymanski's Involvement in Feminist Activism Scale (2004, 2012)), no measure currently exists to capture specific White allyship behaviors. Therefore, future researchers and instructors can utilize these conceptualizations and/or their organization within socioecological levels (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, or systemic) to investigate how students are thinking about or engaging in allyship behaviors. These allyship conceptualizations may also serve as a data-driven launching point for the future

development of scales intending to measure White allyship behaviors, ideas on allyship behaviors, or both. For example, many behaviors listed by White students were insufficient or unaligned with what most People of Color would consider allyship—especially those who mentioned friendship with People of Color and "helping" People of Color. These categories can therefore illuminate gaps in allyship and can help us better align students to effective allyship. Finally, these categories can serve as a reflective tool for White students to detect which behaviors they are confident in displaying and which behaviors they lack.

Supporting White Allyship Development in White College Students: A Preliminary Model

One of this dissertation's primary contributions was to model the process of White allyship development using a Critical Consciousness framework. Study 1 and Study 2 demonstrated that White college students' critical reflection on racism positively corresponded to their allyship behaviors. Based on these findings, I developed a preliminary model for White allyship development in White college students (Figure 4). This preliminary model describes three types of allyship—constrained allyship, emerging allyship, and White allyship in progress—and provides strategies for supporting each type of allyship in their development. The model aims to help psychology and higher education to form specific strategies for engaging White college students in more effective allyship behaviors catered to their levels of critical reflection on racism and critical action.

The first type of allyship is *constrained allyship*. As exhibited in Study 1 and 2, lower levels of critical reflection on racism produced, at best, a *constrained allyship*, marked by little to no allyship engagement. Students often possessed a color-blind ideology and a lack of examination on their Whiteness which restricted how they perceived the role of a White person

to low-risk, transitional interpersonal behaviors which often did not align with the race literature's threshold for antiracist action. These findings correspond to the work of Reason et al. (2005) who found that students with lower critical reflection on Whiteness often engaged in actions only at the individual level. Further, these findings suggest that White college students may need a certain level of critical reflection to engage in sustained and effective critical action. Thus, identifying the points of growth within White college students' critical reflection is an important undertaking for psychology and higher education. For example, it may be useful for White college students who want to combat racism but possess color-evasion ideologies, to introduce *race cognizance* (Frankenberg, 1993) which recognizes racial difference "understood in historical, political, social or cultural terms" (p. 157) instead of as inherent differences as many of these White students feared. Likewise, to avoid the misconceptualization of allyship as simply helping People of Color or as limited to only interpersonal behaviors, it's important for White college students to understand that allyship is not about assimilation to White cultures and systems but about transforming racialized systems to be "equitable, fair, and just" as Spanierman and Smith (2017) clarify (p. 610).

The second type of allyship is *emerging allyship*, which mostly appeared among students who possessed a medium critical reflection on racism. This type of allyship displayed ambivalent race beliefs and low to moderate engagement in allyship behaviors. These students claimed to want to engage in more behaviors but feared inappropriate allyship engagement. Additionally, their engagement often lacked sustained antiracist action at the organizational level. The CC literature supports that critical reflection alone is not enough, "Resistance is key because analysis without action does not produce tangible change'' (Watts et al., 2003, p. 186). Study 1's findings revealed that medium critical reflection students may have yet to secure the capacity or

motivation to engage in allyship behaviors. The CC literature does offer us constructs for capturing this missing link between critical reflection and critical action called *critical motivation,* one's perceived ability to "effect social and political change" (Diemer & Li, 2011, p. 609; Jemal, 2017). However, this work is often not theorized or applied for White populations in the CC literature (Jemal, 2017). Nevertheless, White college students may have never reflected on the ways in which they perceive antiracist action therefore negating a sense of critical motivation. Study 2 shows that college can serve as an important experiential learning opportunity for White students' allyship engagement, especially for organizational behaviors such as political engagement and social activism. As such, higher education might focus on providing these opportunities explicitly for students to foster critical motivation and hence, White allyship development. Tatum (1994) suggested highlighting narratives of White allies, such as White Civil Rights activists, to provide White college students with further representations of antiracist behaviors. White college students also may find the 13 White allyship conceptualizations found within this investigation useful in evaluating their understanding of White allyship against other White college students across the critical reflection spectrum.

The third type of allyship is *White allyship in progress*, which appeared most often with students who had a high critical reflection on racism. White allies in progress displayed an advanced grasp of allyship and high engagement in allyship behaviors. CC scholars argue that critical consciousness is a "process rather than an outcome" (Jemal, 2017, p.611). I argue that White allyship, as a component of CC, is also an ongoing process rather than something to be accomplished. Therefore, I label these White college students as White allies in progress who unlike other students, were able to show sustained action at all socioecological levels. These

findings support prior literature demonstrating that high critical reflection can produce high engagement in critical action (Diemer et al., 2017). Both Study 1 and Study 2 further demonstrated that higher engagement in White allyship behaviors was linked to engagement in race curricula, such as completing race coursework and taking on leadership roles in antiracist organizations and movements (social activism). Therefore, these findings, again, suggest that the experiential learning provided by race curricula may build the critical motivation absent in other students within this investigation. Some research already supports this notion such as the work completed by Denson et al. (2017) and Reason et al. (2005) who found that college diversity experiences influenced White college students' future informed citizenship and allyship development, respectively. Thus, this dissertation's findings contribute to psychology's and higher education's research and practice by emphasizing the importance of building self-efficacy in White college students through community action opportunities.

Finally, students in Study 1 who displayed White allyship in progress described White allyship—that is, both critical reflection on racism and engagement in White allyship behaviors—as an ongoing, continual process. They were also those who seemed to struggle most with overwhelming feelings of perceived insufficient or ineffective action likely because of their awareness that White allyship is not something to be "achieved" and that antiracism will not be fully reached by their actions alone. These findings suggest that psychology and higher education may need to find ways to sustain motivation for White college students who display White allyship in progress as they undertake the lifelong process of critical reflection and action. One idea represented in the literature is the importance of peer support and White affinity groups and caucuses. For example, Case (2012) qualitatively explored the critical reflection and action of

White Women Challenging Racism (WWCR) members who cited the group as a space "to re-energize for their continuing work" and "as an opportunity for growth and rejuvenation" (p. 92).

Using Higher Education to Create Opportunity for Allyship

This dissertation underscored not only the importance of the college experience on White allyship development, but also the importance of recognizing institutions of higher education as facilitators for White allyship development in White college students. Following the murder of George Floyd, many institutions of higher education "rushed to publicly declare their commitment to inclusion and racial justice" with some even implementing new diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Anderson, 2020). Some critics have attributed many of these displays as performative lip-service at the sake of saving face. Nevertheless, institutions of higher education can play a vital role in supporting White students, who will influence our nation's future workforce, politics, and cultural values, in their White allyship development. Based on this investigation's findings, I provided five practices for institutions of higher education to foster White allyship development in White college students.

Providing Opportunity for Productive Race Dialogues in the Classroom. Study 1 evidenced the importance of the college classroom for producing productive race dialogues, which sometimes were the only setting in which White students experienced productive dialogues. Consistent with previous research, Study 1 showed that college was the most diverse setting many White students had experienced. Yet whether due to racial bias, discomfort with students outside one's race, or for "self-preservation" on the part of Students of Color, segregation can occur on college campuses (Kim et al., 2015; Levin et al., 2006). Thus, even though many White students are in a comparatively more racially diverse settings, we cannot assume that Students of Color and White students will interact; we also cannot assume that they

will discuss racial issues when they do interact. The college classroom can create these opportunities, which likely explains my findings discussed in Theme 2 of Study 1 which displayed the college classroom as the most common site of productive race dialogue. Using the classroom setting appropriately is also clearly important. White students offered insight on what works from their perspective, suggesting facilitated discussion with a smaller class size, along with an environment that provided a frank, non-judgmental, and open-minded space. Nevertheless, many scholars have shared concerns of predominately White classrooms using Students of Color as experiential tools for the sake of White students' learning (e.g., Niemann, 2016). It may be important to remember that many Students of Color may have more sophisticated racial identities than White students (Tatum, 1997), which may cause overreliance on Students of Color in the classroom to educate White students. In fact, Study 1 found that White students were most comfortable speaking about race with those who were like them such as other White students. Additionally, students who were higher in their critical reflection on racism attributed productive intergroup dialogues to their own understanding of their Whiteness, suggesting that White students may need to have a good grasp of their own Whiteness before engaging in productive intergroup dialogues. Therefore, in addition to intergroup dialogues, environments that include intragroup race dialogue among White students might be useful.

As demonstrated within Theme 3 of Study 1, participants engaged in productive race dialogues with college peers more than their families, confirming the college setting as an important racial socialization experience. Students described their families as closed to discussing race issues or as discussing them in ways students viewed as racist. Reason et al. (2005) also elucidated that family experiences can act as either a developmental mechanism or barrier to racial justice allyship. Thus, it might help students if in classrooms, the difficulty of

dialogues with family members was recognized explicitly. Many dialogue courses provide tools for how to talk to strangers and peers in facilitated settings (e.g., Sue et al., 2009), but not how to use these tools with family. Goodman (1995) does suggest teaching students how to "make the distinction between behavior and person" when accepting family members who possess prejudicial attitudes and behaviors. However, translating this mindset to influence positive change has yet to be outlined. Finally, as Tatum (1994, 1997) suggested, using narratives of White allies in the classroom, such as reading works on White Civil Rights activists (e.g., Stewart, 1999), can provide students with alternative and healthy role models of antiracist behaviors.

Offering Race Courses. Both studies demonstrated consistent support for the importance of race curricula, and specifically "traditional" race courses, in positively affecting White allyship development. "Traditional" race courses typically use a lecture pedagogy (i.e., not service-learning/community-based or structured intergroup dialogue pedagogies, see Appendix A), primarily focus on race topics, and offer students many opportunities to reflect and engage in dialogue on these topics. They utilize a common college classroom structure so are more cost-effective, allow flexibility in classroom size, and are more accommodating for remote learning than other types of race curricula (i.e., intergroup dialogue courses, service-learning courses, and membership in race organizations). Moreover, race courses can be offered, regulated, and evaluated easily within a university context. Many universities have already instituted diversity course requirements. However, the research on the effectiveness of these requirements is not well-developed likely because they widely differ to cover a large range of topics such as gender, class, race, religion, or culture. Cole et al. (2011) evaluated the Race and Ethnicity course requirement at the University of Michigan and found that taking a required Race and Ethnicity

course increased understanding of White privilege, blatant racism, and intersectional consciousness along with a decrease in meritocratic beliefs. In another study on a public university in the Northeast, Chang (2002) learned that students who completed a diversity course requirement were less prejudice against the Black community. Therefore, it may be important for universities to consider mandating a race course requirement that can introduce concepts like color-consciousness and power to support more effective White allyship behaviors.

However, Study 2 did account for a race requirement and did not find any significant differences in allyship engagement nor color-evasion color-blindness between students who were required to take a race course and students who were not. This may indicate less the ineffectiveness of race course requirements and instead reflect the range of courses available to students including courses on international and more ethnic/cultural topics. For universities implementing diversity course requirements, it might be useful to exercise due diligence in verifying that offered courses utilize power-conscious, intersectional frameworks (Crenshaw, 1991; Dill & Zambrana, 2009) that go beyond multiculturalism to maximize effective White allyship development.

Providing Both Informal and Formal Opportunities. Study 1 and Study 2 showed that the college experience might serve as an important setting for White allyship development because it uniquely provides multiple formal and informal experiences to meaningfully engage with race. Specifically, both studies indicated that the college context can expand critical reflection on racism through race coursework and can expand critical motivation and action by providing a multitude of co-curricular and informal experiential learning opportunities. These findings underscore the importance of higher education's diversity efforts. Many universities have increasingly committed to inclusive campuses by providing students with multicultural

competence programming (Kalinoski et al., 2013), intergroup dialogue programs (Gurin et al., 2011), and multicultural diversity courses (Krings et al., 2015). These efforts have largely been associated with positive outcomes and should continue to be used and refined. Until recently, many of these efforts relied on broad awareness-building strategies that typically did not engage participants with Whiteness. A recent shift in higher education has led to more antiracist, transformative programming focused on how to be a White ally or how to navigate one's White identity and privilege. My results suggested that college serves as an important learning experience for White students' antiracism so intentionally focusing on providing White students with transformative programming on antiracist strategies may be useful in furthering White allyship development within college contexts. Further, it is important for universities to continue providing opportunities for students to engage in antiracism by supporting race courses and race-focused co-curriculars like intergroup dialogue programs, service-learning programs, and race organizations.

Fostering Organizational Allyship Behaviors. Both studies also revealed that the college experience increased organizational allyship behaviors—that is, social activism and political engagement—within White students. College campuses have long produced student activism and civic engagement (Carlton, 2020) likely because college often exposes students to diverse people and diverse viewpoints. Moreover, some universities offer service-learning programs and opportunities to participate in student government or related organizations that can also cultivate civic skillsets within students. However, some White students may be unaware of antiracist co-curricular opportunities (Von George, 2014) or of co-curricular opportunities that can, at the very least, "break this cycle of lack of experience with diversity" by providing White students informal cross-racial interactions (Von George, 2014). Thus, it is important for higher

education institutions to provide and promote as many opportunities for students to have experiential co-curricular opportunities as possible, especially those with an antiracist focus.

It may also be valuable for universities who want to increase organizational-level antiracism to explicitly acknowledge the college context as a space for cultivating civic engagement and social activism. For many universities and colleges, students are often able to be "more radical and visible when faculty and staff cannot" which has led to successful student-faculty/staff collaborations and has also demonstrated the unique role students can provide in enacting change at the university level (Kezar, 2010, p. 474). Students are vital participants within the college context and helping them to recognize their potential role in collaborations and enacting positive social change may be useful to not only progress institutions of higher education forward, but also to cultivating organizational level allyship within students.

Additionally, Linder (2019) suggests that in order to develop more action-oriented allyship and activism among students, curricula should focus not only on helping White students to continuously interrogate their privilege, but also to better understand university bureaucracies and how to effectively communicate with administration so that these students may be prepared to make systemic change. It may also be helpful to follow the call by Lantz et al. (2016) and the Grad Students Talk (GST) student collective for "faculty, staff, and administrators" to "create an activist-friendly environment, and engage in advocacy work themselves for purposes of modeling, education, and to signal support and safety to students" (p. 303).

Holding Institutions of Higher Education Accountable. Finally, understanding the college context as a setting for long-term racial socialization may be important to instilling accountability within institutions of higher education for either fostering or neglecting White allyship development. Universities are capable of "intervening" across multiple levels.

Universities may implement organizational strategies such as improving structural diversity, effecting anti-racist policies, and increasing funding for anti-racist research and programs. Additionally, universities may also choose to intervene in the classroom by offering anti-racist curricula or at the intrapersonal level by providing students anti-racist trainings and workshops. This investigation demonstrated the need for institutions of higher education to recognize the vital role they can play in fostering White allyship development. These initiatives can also have a favorable academic impact as well. Denson et al.'s (2009) work shows that when students experienced an environment in which diversity engagement was high among their peers, it had a significant positive affect on students' academic skills and racial-cultural engagement.

Limitations and Future Directions

White Allyship Behavior Conceptualizations

This investigation contributed 13 White allyship behavior categories and served as one of the first empirical attempts to map the spectrum of ideas that White college students have on White allyship behaviors. These conceptualization categories can serve as a measure for assessing the types of behaviors White students engage in or are identifying as allyship. They may also be used in the classroom as a reflective tool for White students to understand how their ideas of allyship compare to others across the critical reflection spectrum. However, there are several limitations to these behavior categories. Firstly, and most obviously, these White conceptualizations of allyship behaviors are derived from White people and not from People of Color. Therefore, these allyship behavior categories do not and should not represent effective or sufficient allyship behaviors. Instead, they represent how White college students think about allyship behaviors and thus, should only be used to that end. Future research should investigate how these behavior conceptualizations compare to conceptualizations of People of Color to

better understand what effective allyship behaviors look like. Some research already completed includes the work of Brown and Ostrove (2013) who developed an allyship scale based on People of Color's perceptions of allyship behavior. Perceptions clustered to form two subscales: (a) *informed action* which included items such as addressing racism and acknowledging racial difference and (b) *affirmation* which included items such as "create[ing] a feeling of connection with" a Person of Color and being nonjudgmental. However, their study limited allyship to mainly interpersonal behaviors and did not include any organizational/systemic allyship behaviors.

Secondly, in my analysis of allyship behavior, I provided theoretical and evidence-based rationales for why I considered particular behaviors as harmful—namely, the transitional interpersonal allyship behaviors: friendship with People of Color, treating everyone equally, being inclusive, and "helping" People of Color. As I have stated prior, the potential for these behavior conceptualizations to be problematic largely relies on whether students name these types of behaviors as the *only* allyship behaviors necessary. It is fair to reconsider the behaviors that I have categorized as carrying problematic potential. Moreover, I did not measure People of Color's perceptions of harm associated with these behaviors. Future work should investigate how People of Color perceive sufficient allyship behavior and how this may or may not be influenced by their own level of color-blindness and racial consciousness.

Thirdly, some may argue that though exploring the problematic potential of each type of behavior is important, another crucial consideration is to examine whether a student is engaging in various types of allyship behaviors across the socioecological levels (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational). This investigation found that the most common forms of allyship listed was to counteract interpersonal racism, and specifically, explicit forms of racism.

For the last few decades research has consistently demonstrated that most people no longer self-report endorsement of explicit racism (e.g., Devine, 1989; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; Saucier et al., 2005); instead, color-blindness (Neville et al., 2013) and more aversive forms of racism tend to dominate lower critical reflection individuals' race beliefs (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991). In other words, it is currently the most socially acceptable to be against explicit forms of racism and presumably, to engage in counteracting these explicit forms of racism. However, engaging in exclusively interpersonal behavior would allow for other forms of racism to persist highlighting the importance of engaging in behaviors across all socioecological levels. Future research and theory should explore the importance of students engaging in various types of allyship behaviors and how this may or may not be related to critical reflection on racism. For example, if some White students only engaged in organizational behaviors, such as political engagement, but did not engage in interpersonal behaviors or did not have any friends of Color, would we see this related to possessing a lower critical reflection on racism? Study 1 did show that those with higher levels of critical reflection on racism tended to engage in various behaviors including intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational behaviors. However, I did not explore if this pattern emerged in Study 2 with a larger sample. Instead, I measured the amount of allyship behaviors a student engaged in with no consideration as to whether these behaviors varied across different socioecological levels. A White student who engaged in two types of interpersonal behaviors would be assigned the same level of engagement as a White student who engaged in one type of interpersonal and one type of organizational behavior. Thus, future research is needed to better understand how critical reflection on racism is related to engagement in a diverse set of allyship behaviors.

Fourthly, an assumption I make within this investigation is that racism occurs across all socioecological levels and thus, allyship behaviors seem to include any behaviors that effectively counteract any of these forms of racism. However, it is possible for a White person to perform an allyship behavior, but this engagement not necessarily reflect that person's racial attitudes or good intent. I define White allyship development as both the process of developing a critical reflection on racism and engaging in White allyship behaviors. Thus, I argue that behavior alone does not (and perhaps should not) reflect White allyship. What is not well captured in either critical reflection nor engagement is intent. Future research might explore the motivations of White college students and how this interacts with reflection and action within White allyship development. Edwards (2006) completed a comprehensive exploration on the motivations for social justice allyship, which can be applied to White allyship development. He discovered three types of motivations for engaging in allyship—self-interest, altruism (which maps onto White saviorship), and social justice—all which carried different characteristics for how each viewed systems, privilege, power, and justice. Edwards' (2006) findings shed light on how intentions might play a role in White allyship development. His findings might indicate that effective White allyship derives from a desire to work with People of Color to "escape, impede, amend, redefine" or "destroy" the system (p. 47). Whereas an "aspiring ally for altruism" might be motivated by a desire to work "for" People of Color to "help" People of Color, while viewing themselves as the "exception from the system" while "ultimately perpetuat[ing]" it (p. 47). An "aspiring ally for self-interest" might be motivated to work "over" People of Color, largely focusing on people who they know or care for while taking "no interest in the system—just stopping the bad people" (p. 47). These motivations do not cleanly map onto my ally types—the constrained ally, emerging ally, and White ally in progress—but they do offer some clarity. For instance, Edwards

(2006) motivations may explain why constrained allies tend to focus on interpersonal behaviors limited to friendship or “helping” behaviors via self-interest or altruism, respectively. Research should continue to investigate what role motivations play within White college students’ White allyship development.

Lastly, there are likely many other White conceptualizations of allyship behavior not included or well-captured in these allyship behavior categories. This investigation examined White conceptualizations from White students attending a large PWI located within a predominately White and affluent city. As discussed in the limitations section of Study 1, perhaps other behaviors would have appeared with samples from non-PWI’s schools or more racially diverse locations. For example, perhaps with more opportunity, White students’ interpersonal behaviors would be described in these samples to include more complex and specific behavior such as how they ensure they bring authenticity into their interactions or how they discuss and navigate their privilege. Future research should be completed with more diverse White college samples to refine and expand the allyship behavior conceptualizations discovered.

What about Power-Evasion Color-blindness?

Throughout this investigation, I explored the effects of color-evasion color-blindness, an ideology that tries to minimize racism by choosing to ignore racial difference (Frankenberg, 1993). The decision to focus on color-evasion color-blindness, instead of power-evasion color-blindness which reflects an ideology that tries to minimize racism by choosing to ignore systemic racism (Frankenberg, 1993), was based on results from Study 1. Study 1 showed that students with low critical reflection on racism utilized color-evasion color-blindness as their primary framework for understanding race. However, a student’s ability to talk about systemic racism was one of the indicators I used to categorize students as either higher or lower in their critical

reflection on racism. Students placed in the high critical reflection group discussed systemic racism, demonstrating lower power-evasion color-blindness. Therefore, we might consider high critical reflection students to be low in both color-evasion and power-evasion color-blindness. However, I was not as easily able to detect power-evasion or power-consciousness (refer to Appendix A) from those not placed in the high critical reflection group because noticeably absent from their interviews was an explicit discussion of systemic racism. Apart from one low critical reflection student, Lauren, it was less so that students denied the existence of systemic racism (power-evasion) and rather that it was just not discussed. Thus, students in Study 1 may have shared more color-evasion statements than power-evasion statements simply because I did not ask them to describe the various ways that racism persisted in the United States, nor did I ask them how they felt about modern race issues such as the criminal justice system. Therefore, results of Study 1 did not produce power-evasion as a theme and was not further explored in Study 2.

However, power-evasion color-blindness may be able to explain key findings within this investigation. For example, Study 2 found that color-evasion color-blindness and race curricula independently predicted allyship engagement and more advanced conceptualizations of allyship, even when controlling for demographic factors. Critical Consciousness theory understands that critical reflection should lead to critical action (e.g., Campbell & MacPhail, 2002; Diemer et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2011). With color-evasion serving as an indicator of one's level of critical reflection (i.e., endorsing color-evasion is indicative of lower critical reflection on racism), it is reasonable to expect that color-evasion color-blindness might mediate the effects that race curricula has on White allyship engagement. In other words, using CC theory, we might predict that because race curricula increases critical reflection on racism, this then leads to critical

action. However, I did not find that color-evasion color-blindness mediated race curricula. Color-evasion and race curricula also did not significantly interact, finding that completing more race curricula served to benefit both color-evasion color-blind and color-conscious students. Altogether, my analyses demonstrated that race curricula and color-evasion were predicting White allyship engagement via different mechanisms. One possibility is that instead of reducing color-evasion color-blindness, race curricula might be reducing power-evasion color-blindness. Race curricula, especially race courses, often dedicate their coursework to teaching students about systemic racism. Some research supports this notion finding that race coursework can reduce power-evasion color-blindness (e.g., Case, 2007; Spanierman et al., 2008). However, these studies only measure power-evasion color-blindness and do not measure color-evasion color-blindness so do not provide definitive support. Future research should further examine how power-evasion color-blindness impacts White allyship development, and especially how power-evasion might differentially impact White allyship engagement and conceptualization from color-evasion color-blindness. Currently, no measure exists to assess both color-evasion and power-evasion together. As discussed in Chapter 1, power-evasion is captured through the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000) but no measure exists to assess color-evasion color-blindness as envisioned and theorized by Frankenberg (1993) and Neville et al. (2013). Thus, future research should also consider expanding the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale to also capture color-evasion color-blindness so that we may compare their effects on White allyship development.

Applicability to Other Institutions of Higher Education

This investigation used a sample from a large, well-resourced Predominately White Institution (PWI) known for leading diversity initiatives in higher education. I found that the

university experience could play a vital role in increasing students' critical reflection on racism and their capacity for engaging in White allyship behaviors. The applicability of this work to other types of universities may be limited. Future research should replicate Study 1 and Study 2 to see how different college experiences or life experiences may impact White peoples' White allyship development. For instance, for students who attend commuter colleges, college may not serve as an important setting for allyship growth and instead, the workplace may serve as their key setting for growth. Or perhaps, without a setting with as many opportunities for White allyship development as college, White people may not experience significant growth within their lives.

Nevertheless, this investigation and others (e.g., Bowman & Brandenberger, 2012; Hurtado et al., 2002; Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008) demonstrated the importance of the college experience which establishes a need for institutions of higher education to be held accountable for fostering White allyship development within their White students. Future research should also examine the ways that institutional support affects White allyship behavior and growth in their student body. Intergroup contact theory (Pettigrew, 1998) posits that institutional support is one of the necessary conditions to reducing prejudice between groups. Some promising research has been completed regarding marginalized students' perceptions of institutional support finding that more positive perceptions increased their sense of belonging (Means & Pyne, 2017) and engagement in the college experience (Lundberg, 2014). However, more comprehensive work is needed to assess how institutional strategies, inclusive of increasing funding to multicultural centers or race organizations, publicly championing antiracist coalitions and programs, and efforts to model antiracism at the institutional level, affect White students' White allyship development.

Whiteness and Intersectionality

Lastly, this investigation focused on White college students but did not examine the effects of other social identities on White allyship development presenting a major limitation to this work. Reviewing demographic data from Studies 1 and 2 revealed that White students in my sample possessed both privileged and marginalized identities. Prior research has shown that White allies with marginalized identities use their experiences of marginalization to motivate their White allyship development and better understand racism (Case, 2012; Nnawulezi et al., 2020). Studies 1 and 2 exhibited partial evidence for this pattern. In Study 1, all students who identified as White cis men possessed a low critical reflection on racism, whereas all but one woman and all nonbinary students possessed a medium or high critical reflection on racism. This pattern indicated support for experiences of gender marginalization facilitating White allyship growth. Case (2012) found that White women who identified as antiracist allies used their experiences with sexism to motivate their antiracist behaviors. They viewed antiracist behaviors as countering hegemonic social norms of silence that not only perpetuate racism but also sexism. Nnawulezi et al. (2020) also found that many White women in their sample used understandings of their marginalized social identities to understand racism.

However, within Study 1, among the White men who possessed a low critical reflection on racism, two of the five identified as gay or questioning suggesting that some experiences of marginalization, or perhaps experiences of sexual marginalization specifically, might not support White allyship growth. Diemer et al. (2015) argued that possessing a high critical consciousness in one identity may not translate to having a high critical consciousness in another. However, in Study 2, I found that gender and sexuality significantly predicted engagement in allyship behaviors, even while controlling for other demographic factors (i.e., income, political

affiliation, religious affiliation, whether a student's degree plan required they complete a race course, academic year) and the key predictors of interest (i.e., color-evasion color-blindness or number of race curricula completed). Specifically, women and queer/non-straight students were more likely to engage in allyship behaviors than men or straight students (see Table 8 in Chapter 3). Data on income was not collected in Study 1 so patterns of class marginalization could not be examined, and Study 2 did not find that class marginalization impacted White allyship development. Therefore, this investigation exhibited partial support for experiences of marginalization to facilitate White allyship development.

Future research should further explore how White college students experience critical consciousness development across various domains including race, gender, sex, class, sexuality, disability, and other social identities. Heberle et al. (2020) speculated that critical consciousness may shift in salience depending on the developmental period of a student; for example, gender identity may become most salient when students are experiencing puberty. Additionally, I argue that both marginalized and privileged identities may be more or less salient throughout various social contexts. Future research should explore how critical consciousness develops across various identities and how development is affected by experiences of privilege or marginalization, salience, and other considerations. Future research should also consider how these identities may not all follow a linear pathway, especially if future research examines intersectional identities in tandem.

Conclusion

White allyship, and more specifically, engaging in White allyship behaviors, is one of the most important—yet understudied—avenues to progressing racial equity. Within this investigation, I sought to understand how White college students were attempting to engage in

White allyship behaviors. I demonstrated that White college students viewed allyship behaviors via 13 various behaviors. I intend for these allyship behavior conceptualization categories to serve as a tool for researchers and instructors to examine White allyship engagement and development among White college students. Moreover, through my conversations with White college students, I also assessed how critical reflection on racism shaped their conceptualization and engagement in White allyship behaviors. Specifically, I observed that White allyship development followed a Critical Consciousness pattern; White allyship involved advancing critical reflection on racism, which was related to increased White allyship behaviors. I hope my findings will help fill the gap in the Critical Consciousness literature and legitimize the examination of White critical consciousness and other privileged identities. I also explored the various factors in White allyship development finding that race curricula and color-consciousness may positively affect White allyship engagement and support more advanced understandings of allyship behaviors. Across two studies, my investigation provided insight into White college students' White allyship development and how we might better examine, model, and foster effective allyship within White college students.

Figure 4

Preliminary model for evidence-based approaches to fostering allyship development in White college students

Constrained Allyship	Emerging Allyship	White Allyship in Progress
Constrained by ideology which limits allyship conceptualization and engagement	Emerging, but ambivalent, race beliefs with developed allyship conceptualizations, but low to moderate engagement	Ongoing allyship development with sophisticated allyship conceptualizations and sustained high allyship engagement
Prioritize: • Raising critical reflection on racism and Whiteness; critical motivation; and critical action	**Prioritize:** • Raising critical reflection on racism and Whiteness; critical motivation; and critical action	**Prioritize:** • Sustaining critical reflection on racism and Whiteness; critical motivation; and critical action
Unique Suggestions: • Introducing race cognizance over color-evasion color-blindness • Teaching systemic racism • Navigating family conflict	**Unique Suggestions:** • Experiential learning for systemic antiracism • Sharing narratives of White allies • Navigating family conflict	**Unique Suggestions:** • White peer support groups, affinity groups, and caucuses for White allyship

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Antiracism – Antiracism refers to the process of engaging in actions that counteract the various forms of racism alongside People of Color. Though dialogue should continue on distinguishing these terms, within the present investigation, I utilize the terms "antiracism" and "allyship" interchangeably.

Color-blindness/The Color-Blind Racial Ideology (CBRI) - First theorized by Frankenberg (1993) and expanded by Neville et al. (2000; 2013), the Color-Blind Racial Ideology is argued to include two distinct, but often interrelated domains: *color-evasion* and *power-evasion.* Together, the CBRI represents someone who denies the importance or existence of race and racism.

> ***Color-evasion Color-blindness -*** Color-evasion color-blindness is the "denial of racial differences by emphasizing sameness," such as someone who believes that they do not "see" color (Neville, 2013; p. 455). Color-evasion color-blindness is often seen as the opposite of multiculturalism. However, in this investigation, I theorize that for race, the opposite of color-evasion is color-consciousness.
>
> ***Power-evasion Color-blindness -*** Power-evasion color-blindness is the "denial of racism by emphasizing equal opportunities," such as someone who denies systemic racism and instead, blames People of Color for not working harder (Neville, 2013; p. 455). Back in 2000, Neville and colleagues released the widely used Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000) which still dominates as the most prominent measure for color-blindness.

Color-consciousness - Color-consciousness, which Frankenberg (1993) also labeled *race-cognizance*, recognizes the significant role that race plays in every person's everyday lives due to racism. Therefore, whereas color-evasion color-blindness ignores racial differences, color-consciousness acknowledges racial differences situated within an understanding of racism.

Critical Consciousness (CC) - Critical consciousness refers to the process through which individuals become aware of oppression and become liberated through building their critical knowledge on their social conditions and taking sociopolitical action (Freire, 1993). Generally, there are thought to be two reciprocal components to critical consciousness: critical reflection and critical action (Jemal, 2017).

> ***Critical Action*** - Critical action consists of behaviors taken to generate social change. Within this dissertation, I apply CC to White allyship development; therefore, narrowing the focus to critical action against racism (i.e., *White allyship behaviors/engagement*). Critical action against racism consists of behaviors taken to generate social change against racism, specifically.
>
> ***Critical Reflection*** - Critical reflection refers to the understanding of inequality. Within this dissertation, I apply CC to White allyship development; therefore, narrowing the focus to critical reflection on racism which refers to the understanding of racism, Whiteness/White privilege, and power.

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) - Critical Whiteness Studies, a subset of Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), aims to examine and unpack the social

constructions of race and Whiteness. Assumptions within CWS include that race and Whiteness are social constructs, that racism persists in our modern world through systemic racism and other forms of racism, and that the experiences of Whites as a racial group are inherently bound within these social contexts.

Multiculturalism - Multiculturalism is often defined as accepting and valuing each other's differences—or more specifically, accepting and valuing cultural differences.

Power-consciousness – Whereas color-consciousness specifically recognizes the importance of race and racial differences and thus serves as the direct opposite to color-evasion color-blindness, power-consciousness explicitly recognizes how systems of power perpetuate racial disparities and White supremacy. In this way, power-consciousness serves as the direct opposite to power-evasion color-blindness. Within this dissertation, I did not explore power-consciousness which is a major limitation to this investigation (discussed in Chapter 4's limitations section).

Race Curricula – Within this dissertation**,** race curricula included all completed race-related coursework (i.e., traditional race courses, intergroup dialogue courses, and service-learning courses) and race-related co-curricular activities (i.e., membership in race-focused organizations).

> ***Intergroup Dialogue Courses*** – Courses taken where students engage in facilitated dialogue across groups (e.g., gay and straight students; Israeli and Palestinian students) with the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and cooperation.
>
> ***Race-Related Co-curricular Activities*** – Membership in any race-focused or multicultural organizations or programs.
>
> ***Service-Learning Courses*** – (also called community-based courses) Courses that mix a traditional pedagogy to community engagement. In addition to learning about communities within the classroom, these courses also require students to engage in service with community-based organizations.
>
> ***Traditional Race Courses –*** Courses that involve a typical classroom structure (i.e., not service-learning or intergroup dialogue) that have a focus on race topics.

Current Forms of Racism – Current forms of racism manifest interpersonally, systemically, culturally, and implicitly within oneself (intrapersonally).

> ***Culture of Racism –*** A culture of racism refers to racism embedded within our American culture evidenced, for example, within People of Color's negative media portrayals which perpetuate racial stereotypes within our society.
>
> ***Implicit Racism –*** Implicit racism refers to the racial biases that we possess against People of Color. These biases can be intentional or unintentional, can be experienced by all races with the ability for implicit biases to form against one's own race, and can exist without our conscious knowledge.
>
> ***Interpersonal Racism*** – Racism that occurs at the interpersonal level between people. This type of racism has been understood through two general forms: explicit racism and microaggressions. Explicit racism includes overt displays and communications of racism such as using the "N-word." Microaggressions indicate inexplicit negative communications towards People of Color such as implying to a Person of Color that they

were a "diversity hire" and not hired because of skillset or telling a Person of Color that they are "too sensitive" about race.
Systemic Racism – Modern racism also occurs systemically where racism affects established systems and institutions, such as the education, healthcare, housing, and criminal justice systems.

White Ally/Allyship - The process of engaging in actions that counteract the various forms of racism alongside People of Color. Though dialogue should continue on distinguishing these terms, within the present investigation, I utilize the terms "antiracism" and "allyship" interchangeably.

White Allyship Conceptualization – White allyship conceptualization refers to how someone understands White allyship. Within this dissertation, I specifically seek to understand White allyship behavior conceptualizations, or the specific behaviors White college students understand as White allyship behavior.

White Allyship Development - White allyship development can be regarded as a participatory process of *critical reflection on racism* and *critical action against racism* (i.e., *White allyship behaviors*). Some scholars may also refer to this process as "White critical consciousness development" or "White racial consciousness development."
Critical Reflection on Racism – A critical understanding and knowledge of racism, Whiteness/White privilege, and power. Within this investigation, a high critical reflection on racism might be associated with color-consciousness, while a low critical reflection on racism might be associated with color-blindness.
White Allyship Behaviors/Engagement – White allyship behaviors/engagement refers to taking critical action against the various forms of racism.
White Allyship Behavior Categories – Illustrations of the various White allyship behavior categories are provided in Table 3 and Figure 2 in Chapter 3.
Full Allyship Behavior Categories:
Anti-Allyship - Participant expresses that they do not have a desire to be an ally and/or they express that allyship is not productive or necessary.
Being Inclusive - Participant expresses antiracist or multicultural statements such as inclusivity and the importance of tackling racism.
Could Not Name an Allyship Behavior - Participant could not recall an allyship behavior that they have done.
Engagement in Productive Dialogue - Described as dialogue between people (either with White people or POC) on race topics. The conversation, especially when with a POC, is that of listening and validation. When with a White person, the dialogue is didactic.
Friendship with People of Color - Participant expresses that they are an ally by simply being friends with a POC (sometimes will not even clarify if POC, but "everyone").
"Helping" People of Color - Participant explains the intended allyship behavior as "helping" a POC through a negative situation. The actions

lean into a "White savior complex" in which the POC is perceived to be in a situation that requires a White person's help or support.

Intervening in Explicit Racism - Described as stepping in during a racist occurrence where the intended ally defends the Person of Color (POC) affected and/or corrects the perpetrator. Event can occur with or without POC present.

Personal and Private Actions (Self-Reflection, Educating Oneself, Supporting POC businesses) - Any action that is personal and private performed without the active participation of People of Color. Examples can include reflecting on your own biases, thinking about your Whiteness or privilege daily, educating yourself by taking race-based courses, and supporting POC businesses.

Political Engagement - Participant describes political actions such as marches and protests as well as voting behavior.

Social Activism - Participants create or work within a space for People of Color and/or allies.

"Shut up and show up" - Attending People of Color events without stifling; also captured here is the concept of "passing the mic."

Social Media Engagement - Participant utilizes social media share race-related content, promote People of Color, and publicizing support for POC and/or race movements.

Treating Everyone Equally - Participant expresses that they are an ally by simply treating everyone equally regardless of race. Oftentimes, this is qualified by statements of color-evasion color-blindness.

Collapsed Allyship Behaviors:

Intrapersonal Behaviors – Behaviors that reflect antiracist actions occurring within oneself; captured through the behavior category: personal and private action.

Organizational Behaviors – Behaviors that engage in antiracism at the organizational and/or systemic level such as social activism and political engagement.

Reciprocal Interpersonal Behaviors – Behaviors that engage in antiracism at the interpersonal level such as intervening in explicit racism, engagement in productive race dialogue, "shut up and show up," and social media engagement.

Transitional Interpersonal Behaviors – Behaviors that may have intentions of interpersonal allyship but reflect mindsets instead of specific behaviors that counteract modern forms of racism. Behaviors mentioned included treating everyone equally, being inclusive, helping POC, and friendship with People of Color.

White Ally Types – The types of White allyship theorized to have emerged within my two samples within this dissertation. They include three types: a constrained allyship, emerging allyship, and White allyship in progress.

Constrained Allyship – An allyship that is constrained by ideology which limits allyship to less advanced conceptualizations of behavior (e.g., friendship and "helping" People of Color) and lower levels of engagement in allyship overall.
Emerging Allyship – An allyship marked by emerging, but ambivalent, race beliefs with developed allyship conceptualizations, but low to moderate engagement.
White Allyship in Progress – An allyship process that involves ongoing allyship development with sophisticated allyship conceptualizations and sustained high allyship engagement.

White Identity - A White person's relationship to their Whiteness or being White.

White People - I define "White" as a racial group typically designated for people who are assumed to be of European ancestry with socially shifting ethnic and phenotypic norms.

White Privilege – The term was popularized by Peggy McIntosh (1988) in her famous work, "White Privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack." McIntosh likens White privilege to "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 30) which allow Whites to experience both social advantages, as well as a lack of social disadvantages, due to their Whiteness.

Whiteness – Whiteness is the sociopolitical phenomenon where legitimized power (i.e., the mechanism through which one can access resources (Frankenberg, 1993; Parsons, 1963)) is possessed by people who socially and/or systemically are considered White. Within the United States, Whiteness is legitimized through racist systems and culture that disproportionately advantage White people over People of Color which is often referred to as "White privilege."

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