

University of Denver

Digital Commons @ DU

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate Studies

8-1-2018

An Examination of the Impact of Racial Ideology and Conversations About Race on Relationship Processes Among African American Couples

Aleja M. Parsons
University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd>



Part of the [Clinical Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Parsons, Aleja M., "An Examination of the Impact of Racial Ideology and Conversations About Race on Relationship Processes Among African American Couples" (2018). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1510.

<https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/1510>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu, dig-commons@du.edu.

An Examination of the Impact of Racial Ideology and Conversations About Race on Relationship Processes Among African American Couples

Abstract

The current study aimed to explore how considering unique cultural factors and experiences may advance the fields knowledge on relationship dynamics among African American couples. In a sample of 172 self-identified African American adults who were in opposite sex relationships, the current study explored how individual's own and perception of partner's racial ideology are associated with romantic processes, if, when, and how African American couples talk about race within their relationship, and the association between "dyadic racial ideology" and relationship processes. Results indicated one's own racial ideology, conceptualized by individual subscales and cluster profiles, and discrepancy between one's own and perception of partner's ideological scores played an important role in understanding relationship outcomes. Findings also suggest that one's own and perception of partner's Afrocentricity are associated with higher quality romantic relationships. Results revealed some unexpected associations between frequency talking about race, ratings of supportive communication for race specific conversations, and dyadic racial identity with psychological aggression. In sum, the findings from the current study contribute to the field's understanding of African American relationships broadly as well as inform clinical interventions developed specifically for this population.

Document Type

Dissertation

Degree Name

Ph.D.

Department

Psychology

First Advisor

Howard Markman, Ph.D.

Second Advisor

Scott Stanley

Third Advisor

Omar Gudino

Keywords

African Americans, Racial ideology, Romantic relationships

Subject Categories

Clinical Psychology | Psychology

Publication Statement

Copyright is held by the author. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.

An Examination of the Impact of Racial Ideology and Conversations About Race on
Relationship Processes among African American Couples

A Dissertation

Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Aleja M. Parsons

August 2018

Advisor: Howard Markman, Ph.D.

©Copyright by Aleja M. Parsons 2018

All Rights Reserved

Author: Aleja M. Parsons

Title: An Examination of the Impact of Racial Ideology and Conversations About Race on Relationship Processes among African American Couples

Advisor: Howard Markman, Ph.D.

Degree Date: August 2018

Abstract

The current study aimed to explore how considering unique cultural factors and experiences may advance the fields knowledge on relationship dynamics among African American couples. In a sample of 172 self-identified African American adults who were in opposite sex relationships, the current study explored how individual's own and perception of partner's racial ideology are associated with romantic processes, if, when, and how African American couples talk about race within their relationship, and the association between "dyadic racial ideology" and relationship processes. Results indicated one's own racial ideology, conceptualized by individual subscales and cluster profiles, and discrepancy between one's own and perception of partner's ideological scores played an important role in understanding relationship outcomes. Findings also suggest that one's own and perception of partner's Afrocentricity are associated with higher quality romantic relationships. Results revealed some unexpected associations between frequency talking about race, ratings of supportive communication for race specific conversations, and dyadic racial identity with psychological aggression. In sum, the findings from the current study contribute to the field's understanding of African American relationships broadly as well as inform clinical interventions developed specifically for this population.

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this body of work to the Divine Spirit within us all and the Ancestors whose backs we stand upon. To my heart and eternal love, Kokayi Danladi, I thank you for teaching me how to live life unapologetically. Without you and your wisdom, I would not have made it. To our daughter, Zemora Nichols, you are the fire in my soul; thank you for choosing me. To my mother and father, Jacinta and Lekan Parsons, there are no words to describe my love and gratitude for all you have given me. Your love inspired my love for Black love. Thank you for being my inspiration. To my brother, Jalé Parsons, you have always been my protector. Thank you for being the silent warrior who never left my corner. Your presence gave me permission to live fearlessly. To my Uncle Brian, thank you for paving the way and modeling how to life fully in both good and bad times. I forgive you for lying about the weather in DC. To my family by love, Mama Talibah, Shimekia Nichols, Imari Alaji, Jumoke Alaji, Seven Nichols, Jai-Koa Nichols, and Syncere Williams, to choose family is a gift not bestowed on many. Thank you all for accepting me into your tribe. Your strength is unmatched. To my community, I serve you with eternal humility. My work is but a reflection of your beauty. To my pillars of support, Takiyah Harper-Shipman, King Salim Ajanku, Lisa Schlueter, Shelby and Brandi Scott, and Keisha Igbazua, thank you for teaching me the definition of true friendship. To my department, advisors, mentors and colleagues, thank you for your constant support and guidance.

To those I have not yet met who will surely touch my heart, thank you for being a part of my journey. Finally, to those not yet born, to whom I will serve with Ancestral guidance - stand proudly on my back; let my work not be in vain.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Overview of the Current Study.....	3
Historical and Contemporary Context.....	4
Coping with External Stressors: The Role of Racial Ideology and Conversations about Race.....	10
Current Study.....	15
Chapter Two: Method.....	18
Participants.....	18
Procedures.....	19
Measures.....	20
Data Analytic Plan.....	24
Chapter Three: Results.....	25
Preliminary Analyses.....	25
Research Question 1.....	26
Research Question 2.....	36
Research Question 3.....	40
Chapter Four: Discussion.....	41
Research Question 1: Racial Ideology, Afrocentricity and Relationship Processes.....	42
Research Question 2: Talking About Race and Relationship Processes.....	51
Research Question 3: Dyadic Racial Ideology and Relationship Processes.....	53
Chapter Five: Summary.....	56
Study Contributions.....	56
Clinical Implications.....	57
Limitations and Future Directions.....	58
References.....	61
Appendix A.....	69
Table 1. <i>Means and Standard Deviations</i>	69
Table 2. <i>Correlations between Relationship Processes</i>	70
Table 3. <i>Correlations between One's Own Afrocentricity, and Relationship Processes</i>	71
Table 4. <i>Correlations between Perception of Partner's Afrocentricity, and Relationship Processes</i>	72
Table 5. <i>Correlations between Afrocentricity Discrepancy, and Relationship Processes</i>	73
Table 6. <i>Correlations between One's Own Racial Ideology Subscales and Relationship Processes</i>	74

Table 7.	<i>Correlations between Perception of Partner's Racial Ideology Subscales and Relationship Processes</i>	75
Table 8.	<i>Correlations between Racial Ideology Subscales Discrepancy Scores and Relationship Processes</i>	76
Table 9.	<i>Regression Models of One's Own Racial Ideology Subscale on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs</i>	77
Table 10.	<i>Regression Models Perception of Partner Racial Ideology Subscale on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs</i>	78
Table 11.	<i>Regression Models Racial Ideology Subscale Discrepancy Scores on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs</i>	79
Table 12.	<i>Correlations between Frequency Talking About Race and Relationship Processes</i>	80
Table 13.	<i>Regression Models Supportive Conversations about Race and Negative Communication on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, and Psychological Aggression</i>	81
Appendix B.		82
Appendix C.		83

Chapter One: Introduction

The current study illuminated specific issues and dynamics of African American couples in several key ways. First, it explored how individual's own and perception of partner's racial ideology impacts romantic processes. Second, the current study examined if, when, and how African American couples talk about race within their relationship as well as how these conversations may impact relationship processes. Third, the current study examined the association between "dyadic racial ideology" and relationship processes. Racial ideology is an underexplored factor that may help us understand the experiences of African American relationships in the US. The current study aimed to advance our understanding of unique dynamics and processes that affect African American couples by building knowledge on this topic. While the study focused primarily on racial ideology, the following review discusses a broad overview of issues impacting African American couples.

Research demonstrates that African Americans marry at lower rates, divorce and separate at higher rates (Cherlin, Chase-Lansdale, & McRae, 1998), and report lower levels of marital satisfaction (Broman, 1993) than European Americans. Furthermore, African Americans are more likely to cohabit (Brown & Bulanda, 2008; Bumpass & Lu, 2000) yet are significantly less likely to transform their cohabiting union into marriage (Brown, 2000; Schoen & Cheng, 2006; Smock, 2000) than European Americans. These findings are concerning as relationship processes and outcomes are associated with

individual mental health, quality of life, and child outcomes. While these findings are important contributions to the field, the research tradition (cross-cultural comparisons) is problematic because it implies European couples are the normative experience, overlooks culturally unique strengths of African American couples, deemphasizes heterogeneity of experiences *within* the African American community, and stops short of suggesting solutions for enhancing the well-being of African-American couples (Bryant et al., 2010). By implying that European American romantic processes are the normative experience to which all other ethnic groups should be compared, cross cultural comparisons assume that deviations from these presumed norms are necessarily pathological. Further, this research tradition overlooks potential strengths of African American couples if they are not known predictors of positive outcomes in European American relationships. For example, many African American couples draw strength from extended family support networks (Taylor, Brown, Chatters, & Lincoln, 2012), a cultural characteristic of African American relationships that may not have been evident in research only focusing on factors associated with positive outcomes for European American couple and family systems. Moreover, the emphasis on *between* group differences undermines the importance of the diversity in experiences, predictors, and outcomes *within* groups. While previous literature has descriptively outlined the cultural context within which African American couples exist, there is limited understanding of how this context impacts relationship processes among African American couples. Thus, the overarching aim of the current study is to investigate the unique and distinctive relationship processes that are characteristic of African American couples, independent of a comparison to an

outside ethnic or racial group, and with intentional consideration of the sociohistorical context of the United States.

It is important to note poverty has a substantial effect on some of these patterns. Indeed, the intersectionality of oppressed identities (e.g. the impact of both race and economic disadvantage) often shifts the severity of marginalizing systems. Nevertheless, poverty alone does not fully account for disparities in outcomes among African American relationships. While the current study did not specifically recruit low income participants, it explored, how poverty and other contextualizing factors moderated the findings.

Overview of the Current Study

Researchers have targeted institutional and interpersonal racism (Boyd-Franklin, 2003) at a macro level and racial ideology, such as ratings of Afrocentricity (Kelly & Floyd, 2001) at a micro level, as some of the unique factors impacting outcomes for African American couples. As African American couples still experience challenges making it difficult for relationships to endure, it is important to expand on this preliminary work to better understand ways to improve these relationships in a culturally responsive way. To address this gap in the literature, one aim of the current study was to test hypotheses about the impact of African American's racial ideology on relationship processes. These hypotheses will consider the impact of one's racial ideology, perceptions of partner's racial ideology, and perceptions of a match in ideological perspectives with one's partner on relationship processes. The current study also tested hypotheses about how talking about race impacts relationships processes and outcomes. Finally, the current study tested hypotheses on the association between dyadic racial ideology and relationship processes. Dyadic racial identity was measured by original

items that assessed the extent to which individuals identify as an “African American Couple.” The current study is grounded in the awareness of the unique cultural context of African Americans in the United States. Specifically, historical factors (e.g. slavery and its aftermath) inform current environmental contextualizing factors (e.g. racism) which can be viewed as distinctive stressors for African American relationships. Racial ideology, talking about race with one’s partner, and the development of a dyadic racial ideology may be important means to cope with the impact of these stressors and directly influence relationship processes and outcomes. The proposed interconnected influence of both macro (cultural context) and micro (racial ideology) factors on relationship processes and outcomes aligns with the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model presented by Karney and Bradbury (1995). This model suggests that factors external to the couple and individual characteristics impact couple processes. Specifically, enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events from the environment are linked to adaptive processes which in sum, influence relationship quality and stability. The current study made a similar assertion that external stressors are linked to protective factors, which both contribute to relationship processes. The following section discusses contextualizing factors that may pose as external stressors for African American couples.

Historical and Contemporary Context

To provide a context for what follows, it is important to define the constructs of race, ethnicity, and culture as they will be referenced throughout the subsequent discussion of previous literature and used as a foundation for the current study. *Race* is a socially constructed category which uses physical characteristics to categorize individuals. *Ethnicity* is a social group which can be characterized by factors such as

geographic region, religion, nationality, and language (Jones & Chao, 1997). *Culture* is defined as the common practices, traditions, beliefs, and behaviors of a particular social group. The current study uses these terms as they have been used throughout research to distinguish between group differences in outcomes and experiences. This study focuses specifically on the cultural experience of African Americans, an ethnic group of individuals of African descent residing within the United States. This cultural experience is distinct from the racial group of Black people more broadly, (e.g. Black Caribbean, Black Latino). Although the study refers to African Americans using generalizations, the current study recognizes the vast heterogeneity that exists within this population. The following sections discuss the sociohistorical context, or social and historical history, of African Americans.

African American culture is informed by both US American traditions, customs, and experiences, and those of African lineage. For example, African traditions emphasize the importance of spirituality and extended family structures. In contrast, American traditions highlight the importance of the nuclear family and value individual achievement as compared to familial progression. Both of these traditions are present in African American relationship and family systems (Dixon, 2013). African American culture is also influenced by its unique historical context. Specifically, African American's ancestral lineage were involuntarily captured from their countries of origin, endured 250 years of chattel slavery, and, even after slavery formally ended, were subjected to institutionally maintained oppression and racism (e.g. Jim Crow laws). Further, modern day forms of racism, while less overt, continue today (e.g. microaggression; Sue et al., 2008). These less overt expressions of racism in conjunction

with more overt national events that have been prominent in the news (e.g. Ferguson, Baltimore riots) contribute to the continuation of racial tension in the US. It is important to understand the lasting impact of slavery and subsequent sustained racism on African Americans so as not to promote a deficit based perspective or a “blaming the victim” outlook when talking about negative relationship outcomes for African Americans. Instead this study is guided by the perspective that the African American community has demonstrated remarkable strength and resilience in light of external stressors and historical hardships. With this guiding framework, the current study examined cultural characteristics that may serve as protective factors used to combat the effects of external stressors, associated in part with a history of slavery and discrimination, commonly experienced by African Americans couples.

The following section describes the unique cultural context of African Americans in the United States by discussing racism, socioeconomic status, and gender role dynamics as some of the external stressors affecting African American relationships. The changing social, political, and economic systems in the United States affects African American culture broadly, and thus undoubtedly impacts romantic relationships and outcomes (Dixon, 2013; Cazenave, 1983). This review will be followed by an overview of unique cultural characteristics (e.g. racial ideology) that may serve as protective factors from these stressors and ultimately influence relationship processes.

Racism. Racism, the use of systemic power and racial prejudice to maintain the oppression of communities of color, impacts self-perception, relationship attitudes and behaviors, and partner selection. Thus, African American couples experience burdens rooted in racism that are unexperienced by European American couples with whom they

are often compared (Boyd-Franklin, 2003). Racism and discrimination may impact African American relationship success by contributing to negative and unsupportive behaviors within one's relationship (Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Kelly, 2003; Kelly & Floyd, 2001). For example, internalized racism, or the acceptance of self-inferiority, is associated with the acceptance of stereotypes and negatively impacts relationship trust and satisfaction (Kelly & Floyd, 2001). Further, research suggests that experiences of racism and discrimination are linked to verbal aggression, violence, and negative communication patterns (LaTaillade, 2006). Additionally, theorists suggest that racism and discrimination likely contributes to lower marriage rates and higher divorce rates among African Americans (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995). Although there are many studies that show that racism, in all its forms (e.g. institutional and interpersonal racism) is a stressor for African American relationships (Boyd-Franklin, 2003), there is a paucity of research that directly examines how couples cope with this negative external influence. Thus, one of the goals of the current study is to examine the extent to which partners discuss race or race related issues, and if they do, the impact on romantic processes among African American couples.

Socioeconomic status. Although being low income is not specific to the African American community, African Americans are disproportionately living in poverty and suffer from the effects of poverty related stress (see Wadsworth et. al, 2011 for a full discussion of the effects of poverty related stress on relationships). Research has also shown that economic strain may be related to an increased likelihood for divorce (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995). Similarly, being low income contributes to less stable trajectory patterns such as leading to cohabitation out of necessity, a risk factor for

relationship dissolution. Though recent work suggest cohabitation may be associated with an increase in positive attitudes toward marriage for African Americans, this study did not report a difference in actual behaviors, suggesting cohabitation may still present as a risk factor for African Americans (Barr & Simons, 2015).

Gender role dynamics. Some of the issues outlined above affect African American men and women differently. In regards to racism, African American men often face stereotypes of being violent while African American women are often hypersexualized and stereotyped as independent matriarchs with no need for a romantic partner (Schwing, Wong, & Fann, 2013; Stevens-Watkins et al., 2014). African American women are also often subjected to a Eurocentric standard of beauty which likely affects self-esteem and perception of desirability. The stress of these negative stereotypes permeating US society may lead to the displacement of anger and frustration onto one's partner in romantic relationships (LaTaillade, 2006). In regards to SES, African American men tend to support traditional gender roles, with expectations of being the main breadwinner, while African American women are more likely to have less traditional expectations for gender roles (Cowdery et al., 2009). This may be a source of conflict within the relationship as the discrepancy between men and women's expectations for gender roles is larger in the African American community than among other ethnic groups (Cowdery et al., 2009). Moreover, economically disadvantaged African American men may face particularly high barriers to fulfilling the stereotypically assigned gender role of provider because of systemic factors contributing to difficulties gaining and sustaining employment. This burden may lead to feelings of inadequacy that negatively impact one's romantic relationship. These dynamics may also impact partner

selection for African American women, particularly in terms of their ability and willingness to be empathetic to the barriers some African American men face.

This discrepancy in belief in traditional gender roles have roots in slavery as men were emasculated and removed from the family, enabling them from taking on the role of provider. The inability to fulfill the role of provider, largely influenced by racism, continued post slavery as African American women found work more easily than African American men during the great migration to the North. This phenomenon has been cited in past research as the issue of the “Black Matriarchy,” or the imbalance in control and influence between Black men and Black women (Blood & Wolfe, 1969; Bracey, Meier, & Rudwick, 1971; Moynihan, 1965; Staples, 1970). Some researchers go so far as to suggest that Black women contribute to the disempowerment of Black men and that Black men feel a sense of resentment for holding a lower social position than Black women, a perspective that would undoubtedly contribute to conflict within the relationship (Bond & Peery, 1969; Hare, 1971; Staples, 1970). The difference in experience across genders has led to the modern-day concern for heterosexual African American women of a declining pool of potential eligible mates. Differences in access to education attainment and income as well as the discrepancy in socially imposed consequences for criminal behavior in the African American community (e.g. incarceration rates) raise the question of whether or not there are proportionately enough African American men for African American women to marry. For these reasons, the current study examined gender as a moderator in order to assess the extent to which the associations between racial ideology and romantic process may be different for men and women.

Coping with External Stressors: The Role of Racial Ideology and Conversations about Race

Little research has explored potential coping mechanisms or strategies to counter the effects of these external stressors. The main focus of the current study is to examine if racial ideology (individual and dyadic) and discussing race and race related issues (including its impact on one's life) may serve as a protective factor and help improve relationship processes and outcomes within the African American community.

Given the historical context of African Americans in the United States, racial ideology is a particularly important and complex construct that may be of unique significance to African Americans. The study of racial ideology has primarily considered it to be a characteristic of the individual. As such, much of the research in this area has looked at individual outcomes related to one's racial ideology. This literature shows that racial ideology is a protective factor associated with a variety of outcomes including educational attainment, and positive self-regard (Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007; Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, & Smith, 1998). This literature is important because it suggests that one's racial ideology can be linked to other aspects of one's experience.

An overlooked area of an individual's experience is one's romantic relationship. Beyond Afrocentricity (Kelly & Floyd, 2001), little attention has been given to the exploration of the impact of racial ideologies on romantic processes, either on the individual or couple level. As ideology specifically reflects a behavioral component of racial identity - how one thinks African American's should act/interact with society- it follows that it may impact expectations and behaviors in romantic relationships as well. Perhaps, one's racial ideology, or belief system about how African Americans should act

in general, also influences behaviors and expectations in romantic relationships. Further, different racial ideologies between partners may be an unidentified source of conflict. As such, the current study considered the impact of one's racial ideology and perceptions of differences in racial ideology between partners on romantic processes.

The interpersonal aspect of relationships makes the exploration of the impact of racial ideology particularly interesting because it allows us to look at the impact of both individual and dyadic racial ideology. To this end, the current study explored perspectives on what it means to be an African American couple. Similar to individual racial ideology, couples may form a joint understanding of the best way to interact with one another and the larger society, as a couple. Perhaps the process of defining a dyadic racial identity by developing a consistent narrative about what it means to be an African American couple and best practices for interacting with the majority race is a characteristic of successful African American relationships. The process is likely to not only reduce conflict, but may also provide a shared identity as a buffer for the couple against societal stressors and barriers. The following section provides an in-depth definition of Afrocentricity and racial ideology.

Afrocentricity. Afrocentrism is defined in the current study as the extent to which individuals ascribe to the values of the *Nguzo Saba* (The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa) (Grills & Longshore, 1996). The *Nguzo Saba* reflects cultural characteristics of African Americans that are intentionally linked to their African ancestry. The seven key principles of the *Nguzo Saba* are defined as follows- 1) *Umoja* (Unity) is defined as the commitment to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race; 2) *Kujichagulia* (Self-determination) reflects the importance to define, name, create

for, and speak for ourselves, rather than being defined, named, created for, and spoken for by others; 3) *Ujima* (Collective work and responsibility) is defined as a commitment to build and maintaining our community together and to make our communities problems our problems to solve together; 4) *Ujamaa* (Cooperative economics) is defined as the importance of building and maintaining our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together; 5) *Nia* (Purpose) is defined as the responsibility of making our collective vocation the building and development of our community to restore our people to our original greatness; 6) *Kuumba* (Creativity) is defined as always doing as much as we can, to leave our community more beautiful than it came to us; and 7) *Imani* (Faith) is the belief in our people, our parents, our teachers, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle. These principles were developed as a value system intended to guide African Americans in building and maintain the longevity of their community (Karenga, 1980). The *Nguzo Saba* are intended to directly inform behaviors and relationships. As such, one's alignments with these principles, or discrepancy between one's own and perception of one's partner's views to the degree to which these principles should guide daily activities, community involvement, and ideological perspectives may impact romantic processes, and trajectories. For example, one's commitment to the *Nguzo Saba* may dictate the neighborhood she wants to live in, engagement in social movements, friendships she wants to maintain, or school settings she chooses for her children, all major factors driving the daily happenings in romantic relationships. As Afrocentrism is primarily value based, it is distinct from the contextual behavioral emphasis of racial ideology (reviewed below) and is thus examined as separate constructs in the current study.

Racial Ideology. Racial ideology is a component of racial *identity*, a broader construct reflecting one's racial self-concept. Research has historically primarily focused on developmental theories that describe the progression, growth, and change, of racial identity (Cross, 1991). Sellers et al., (1997) contributed a multi-faceted definition of racial identity that included measures of both significance and meaning. Racial ideology, the meaning component of racial *identity*, is defined as an individual's perspective on how African Americans should interact with society (Sellers, et al., 1997). As defined by Sellers, there are four different ideological perspectives – these four perspectives are not mutually exclusive, and in their conceptualization, were not intended to suggest a difference in “rightness.” The four categories are as follows – *Nationalism* is the perspective that it is important to focus on characteristics that are uniquely reflective of the African American experience and to separate or distinguish from Whites; *Oppressed Minority* is the perspective that all racially marginalized communities have a common experience of oppression and can unite together due to similar histories; *Assimilationist* is the perspective that it is better to look at the similarities between marginalized and majority racial groups rather than focusing on the differences. Further, assimilationist believe it's important to integrate into mainstream society with as little recognition as possible; *Humanist* is the perspective that rather than focusing on the racial divisions, it is important to recognize that all people share some commonalities as members of the same species and that differences should be defined at the individual level rather than the group level (e.g. race).

While an individual can be characterized as being mostly aligned with a particular perspective, it's important to note that one's racial ideology is not necessarily consistent

across development or across all situations. As Sellers and colleagues (1997) define racial ideology as including perspectives on political/economic issues, cultural/social activities, intergroup relations, and interactions with the dominant racial group, it is reasonable to assume that someone may have Nationalist beliefs about social activities while holding Oppressed Minority beliefs about politics. This makes it even more important to examine the ways in which partners come to understand one another's beliefs and how they may influence one's behaviors in their relationship. Without suggestion that one aspect of racial ideology is inherently superior to others, the current study examined the extent to which perceptions of partner matching on racial ideology is protective for African American romantic relationships. For example, in terms of couple functioning and mutual support, the current study explored if partners with aligned ideological beliefs have better outcomes than partners with misaligned beliefs. While this was a comparison of the general protective nature of various compositions, it is important to note that an association with positive outcomes likely depends on the environmental context. For example, it is reasonable to assume that an assimilationist perspective may be more advantageous in a predominately White environment than a Nationalist perspective. In terms of measurement, racial ideology has been assessed as both individual scores across all four subscales or as cluster profiles. The current study examined the impact of both conceptualizations as they are not mutually exclusive and each contribute unique insight on the ways in which racial ideology may be related to outcome variables. The clustering process is described in more detail below. Racial centrality, or the extent to which race is an important part of one's self-identity was included as a moderating variable.

Current Study

This study is, to our knowledge, the first of its kind in that it examined the impact of Afrocentricity, racial ideology, discussions about race, and the development of a dyadic racial identity on romantic processes. This research attempted to explore factors unique to African Americans that may help the field understand differences in outcomes for this group. The current study is an important addition to the field because it asked as of yet, unexplored questions about how race may be affecting romantic relationships in the African American community. It is hoped that building such knowledge will help to inform future interventions to help African American and, perhaps, other minority couples. Some research suggests that minority couples benefit more from relationship education programs than White couples (Stanley et al., 2014). These existing approaches could be made even more effective based on better research on the dynamics of African American couples. For example, programs might encourage African American couples to discuss race within their relationship. Further, findings from the current study can be used to inform both bottom up and top down approaches toward intervention development. Top down approaches apply the core curriculum of a preexisting program to a specified community with adaptations (e.g. altering examples) intended to increase the relevance and efficacy of the program for the targeted group (e.g. CS-PREP; Beach et al., 2011). While there are some advantages to this approach, one important disadvantage is that the new program may contain unintentional racial bias or it may overlook important cultural considerations as it was not developed with the expressed intention of servicing this community. Finally, findings from this research may yield clinical implications, such as if, how, and why clinicians might encourage African American couples to discuss race

within their relationship. Findings can also guide clinician's understanding of potential risk and protective factors for African American couples.

The aim and corresponding research questions and hypotheses of the current study are as follows:

Overarching Aim: To investigate the impact of racial dynamics (individual and dyadic racial ideology and conversations about race) on relationship processes. While predictions are made about the impact of discrepancies in ideologies, there is not sufficient previous research to substantiate clear predictions on which ideological perspective will be associated with better or worse outcomes.

Research Question 1. What is the impact of racial ideologies on relationship process variables?

Hypothesis 1. Individuals with perceptions of more aligned racial ideology and Afrocentricity between partners (i.e. smaller discrepancy between one's own and perception of partners scores) will be associated with more positive communication, higher ratings of relationship adjustment and lower levels of conflict and aggression than those with perceptions of more discrepant racial ideology pairings between partners.

Research Question 2. What baseline descriptive statistics (e.g. measures of occurrence, frequency and timing) about race and race-related conversations are observed in African American relationships and how are these associated with relationship processes?

Hypothesis 2. Higher frequency of supportive conversations about race will be associated with higher levels of relationship functioning.

Research Question 3. What is the impact of dyadic racial identity on relationship process variables?

Hypotheses 3. Individuals with higher ratings of dyadic racial identity will be associated with more positive communication, higher ratings of relationship adjustment and lower levels of conflict and aggression than those with lower ratings of dyadic racial identity, controlling for the impact of general couple identity.

Chapter Two: Method

Participants

Participants were 172 English speaking, self-identified African American adults who were in opposite sex relationships with an African American partner lasting six months or longer at the time of data collection. During the recruitment process, one advertisement posted through an online forum was targeted by illegitimate participants who completed the survey although they failed to meet an eligibility criterion (including identifying as European American, and reporting being in a relationship for less than six months). Data recruitment was immediately paused when the threat was identified and the contaminated link was removed. Consistency checks identified 17 false participants from the link who were removed from analyses. Of the remaining 155 participants, 18 couples participated (i.e. both partners participated in the survey). Couples were identified using two tracking systems. First, couples were asked to have partner 1 complete the original survey. After completion, a link for a “partner participation survey” was e-mailed to partner 1 to forward to partner 2 for completion. Second, everyone was asked to provide his/her partner’s full name and couples were manually matched. Partner 1 of each couple was defined as the partner who completed the survey first. Partner 1s were included in the current analyses ($N = 18$) while partner 2s were removed to account for the assumption of independence of data. Thus, analyses for the current study used a sample of 137 participants.

Recruitment methods included posted advertisements through local African American focused venues, newsletters, and organizations. The research team also worked to establish connections with local community agencies (e.g. Colorado Black Health Collaborative) that already serve the population of interest. Recruitment relied on snowballing as participants were asked to advertise by word of mouth, facebook, etc.

Participants had a median income of \$50,000-59,999, and median education level of 17 years (graduate school). The average couple relationship length was 74.50 months (6.21 years) with a median relationship length of 48 months (4 years) – thus the length of the relationship variable was positively skewed. In terms of relationship status, 38.7% reported currently dating (living together or not), 6.6% reported being engaged, 50.4% reported being married and 4.4% of participants did not answer this item. Of those who were unmarried, 35.8% were currently cohabiting. Regardless of relationship status, 37.8% of participants indicating having at least one child from their current relationship. 13.1% of participants identify as male while 82.5% identify as female and 4.4% of participants did not respond to this item. While all participants self-identified as African American, when prompted to select all that apply, 1.5% of participants also identified as White, 1.5% of participants as Hispanic or Latino, 2.9% identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, and 2.2% as Asian.

Procedures

Before starting recruitment, a power analysis conducted in G*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) indicated a minimal sample size of $N = 131$ in order to achieve power = .80 and capture a medium effect size ($f = .25$). 137 individuals who

participated met eligibility criteria and completed the full online Qualtrics survey (sample determination described above). The survey took approximately one hour to complete and participants were provided a \$15 Amazon gift card.

After completing the online survey, participants were asked if they were willing to participate in a follow up phone interview. All interested participants were contacted in an attempt to find a mutually convenient time to conduct the phone interview. Prior the beginning of the interview, participants were asked for their verbal consent and informed that the call would be recorded for transcription purposes. In total, as of this writing, 12 30-minute phone interviews were completed. Data from these interviews were not analyzed for the current study. Participants who complete the phone interview were entered in a drawing for an Amazon gift certificate for compensation. Data from these interviews were not analyzed as part of the current study. The project was funded by the I.R.I.S.E Dissertation Research grant awarded to the author.

Measures

Afrocentricity. Africentrism is a 15-item scale that assess one's commitment to Afrocentric/African-centered values defined by one's ideological alignment with the *Nguzo Saba*. Example items include "I make it a point to shop at African American businesses and use African American owned services" and "The Unity of the African race is very important to me." Items were scored on a four point likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. Previous studies have reported reliability coefficients of .74 (Grills & Longshore, 1996).

Racial identity. Two components of racial identity pertinent to the current study, Racial Ideology and Racial Centrality, were assessed by the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers et al., 1997). The racial ideology scale of the MIBI includes 38 items designed to measure a person's philosophy about how African Americans should coexist with the larger society across four areas of functioning: political/economic issues, cultural/social activities, intergroup relations, and interaction with the dominant racial group. The racial ideology subscales assess four ideologies: nationalist, assimilationist, oppressed minority, and humanist philosophy. Example items include "It is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music, and literature" (Nationalist subscale) and "Because America is predominantly White, it is important that Blacks go to White schools so that they can gain experience interacting with Whites" (Assimilationist subscale). A seven point likert scale response set for each item ranges from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. While individual's perspectives likely vary across domains of functioning, participants will be categorized as *predominately* possessing one ideology. The racial centrality scale of the MIBI includes 8 items designed to measure the extent to which race is a central part of an individual's self-definition (as compared to other identities such as gender). Example items include "Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself" (reverse scored) and "Being Black is an important reflection of who I am". A seven point likert scale response set for each item ranges from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. Previous studies have shown this scale to have moderate to high interrater reliability ($\alpha = .66 - .82$) and acceptable construct validity (Seaton, Upton, Gilbert & Volpe, 2014).

Dyadic racial ideology. The meaning ascribed to being a Black couple will be assessed by 10 original items. The items were developed for the current study, discussed, edited, and revised through collaboration with colleagues and piloted with a small subset of eligible participants. Example items include “I have a clear belief about what it means to be an African American couple,” and “It is a unique experience to be in an African American relationship.” A seven point likert scale response for each item ranges from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. All participants answered these questions as part of the full Qualtrics survey.

Conversations about race. Original items were used to assess the occurrence, frequency, and timing of conversations about race. The items were developed for the current study, discussed, edited, and revised through collaboration with colleagues and piloted with a small subset of eligible participants. Example items include “In general, how often do you and your partner talk about race?” and “Have you thought about talking to your partner about race, even if you haven’t done so?”. Perceptions of supportiveness of these conversations were assessed by the item “When it’s really important to me to talk about race, my partner is available and supportive.” A seven point likert scale response for each item ranges from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*.

Relationship adjustment. Relationship adjustment was measured by a 4-item version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Sabourin, Valois, & Lussier, 2005; Spanier, 1976). This measure includes items about thoughts about dissolution, frequency of confiding in one’s partner, and how well the relationship is going. Items are ranked on a 6

point scale with items including “In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?”

Negative communication. The Communication Danger Signs Scale (Stanley & Markman, 1997) was used to measure communication. The measure assesses different aspects of communication with items such as “Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticisms, name-calling, or bringing up past hurts” and “I hold back from telling my partner what I really think and feel.” The measure is rated on a 3 point scale ranging from *Never or Almost Never* to *Frequently*. This scale has demonstrated adequate reliability and validity in previous research (Kline et al., 2004; Stanley, Markman, & Whitton, 2002).

Conflict and aggression. The revised conflict tactics scale (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) was used to assess conflict and aggression. The measure consists of assessments of psychological, physical, sexual, and injury related to aggressive patterns in the relationship. The CTS-2 has good internal reliability and construct validity (Straus et al., 1996).

Dedication. Dedication (or interpersonal commitment) to one’s relationship was assessed by the 14-item Dedication Scale from the Revised Commitment Inventory (Stanley & Markman, 1992). The measure includes items such as “I want this relationship to stay strong no matter what rough times we encounter” and “I like to think of my partner and me in terms of “us” and “we” than “me” and “her”. Items are rated from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Numerous studies have demonstrated the

scale's reliability and validity (e.g., Kline et al., 2004; Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2011).

Relationship confidence. Participants indicated the confidence they have of their relationship working in the future through the 5-item Confidence Scale. Example items include "I believe we can handle whatever conflicts will arise." We have the skills a couple needs to make a relationship last."

Data Analytic Plan

To complete data analyses, all couple data were removed resulting in an individual level dataset of 137 participants such that each row contained one's own scores and perception of partner's scores across all predictor variables (all outcome variables were solely individual). Discrepancy scores were calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between one's own and perception of partner's scores on racial ideology subscales. For analyses with continuous predictors, regression models were used to analyze the associations between respective independent variables and relationship processes. For analyses with categorical predictors, ANOVAs were used to tests the associations between distinct groups and relationship processes.

For cluster analyses, Ward's method (Lorr, 1986) was used which assesses the squared Euclidean distances to successively merge similar clusters until all data points form one single cluster. Following this approach, agglomeration coefficients were calculated and used to determine the point at which an ideal number of clusters was reached. These clusters were then used as groups in ANOVAs to test the association between categorical racial ideology and relationship processes.

Chapter Three: Results

Preliminary Analyses

Correlations between relationship outcomes can be found in Table 2. Several relationship outcomes had large correlations between each other, including relationship confidence and relationship adjustment ($r = .764$), and relationship confidence and dedication ($r = .772$) indicating that they were likely measuring very similar concepts. Further, the constructs of psychological aggression *towards* one's partner and *from* one's partner ($r = .90$) were highly correlated suggesting these constructs may be best conceptualized by creating a combined psychological aggression. Previous literature suggests conceptualizing the physical assault and injury subscales as a dichotomized measure of occurrence or not. However, as is common in previous literature, because the level of endorsement was so low in the current study, it was not used as an outcome variable.

Given the strong relationships between some outcome variables, the constructs of *relationship adjustment*, *dedication*, *negative communication*, and the combined *psychological aggression* were used for analyses that focused on relationship quality as the primary outcome. These constructs measure overall relationship quality, dedication to the relationship, as well as highly negative interaction patterns. These four outcomes were correlated with one another between $-.364$ to $.667$ suggesting that overall, these variables measured related yet distinctive qualities of relationship quality.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked about the impact of four racial ideologies (nationalist, assimilationist, humanist, oppressed minority), Afrocentricity, and the discrepancy between one's own and perception of partner ratings on racial ideologies and Afrocentricity on relationship processes.

Afrocentricity. To explore the relationship between Afrocentricity and relationship process outcomes, mean scores were calculated for one's own and perception of partner's reports. A discrepancy score was calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between one's own and perception of partner's scores on the Afrocentricity scale. First, correlations were run between each of one's own scores and relationship outcomes (Table 3). Correlations were then run between perception of partners scores and relationship process outcomes (Table 4). Correlations were also run between discrepancy scores and relationship process outcomes (Table 5). Next regression models were run with one's own score and perception of partner scores entered together for each relationship process outcome. Results from these analyses are discussed below:

Own Afrocentricity rating. Higher levels of Afrocentricity are associated with higher levels of relationships satisfaction ($r = .200$), and dedication ($\beta = .219$). When entered in the same model with perception of partner's scores, these associations are no longer significant.

Perception of partner Afrocentricity. Similarly, higher levels of perception of partner Afrocentricity are associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction ($r =$

.197), and dedication ($r = .252$). When entered in the same model with participant's own scores, these associations are no longer significant.

Afrocentricity discrepancy scores. Discrepancy between individual and perception of partner's ratings on Afrocentricity were not associated with any relationship process outcome.

Racial ideology cluster profiles. To examine the impact of racial ideology on relationship process outcomes the four subscales were explored as separate subscales and as cluster profiles. The following section describes the analytic process for analyses conducted using cluster profiles. The process for analyses using separate subscales are detailed in the following section.

Hierarchical cluster analyses were used to identify the profiles of the four ideological subscales of the MIBI (nationalist, humanist, assimilationist, oppressed minority). A two-step clustering process was used to determine the best fit for cluster groups. The first step was used to evaluate the possible number of clusters that appropriately reflected the pattern of data. The second step evaluated the theoretical rational of each cluster. The result of this process results in the identification of significant subgroups that are conceptually sound and consistent with previous literature (Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007; Rowley et al., 1998).

Ward's method (Lorr, 1986) of clustering uses the squared Euclidean distances to successively merge similar clusters until all data points form one single cluster. Agglomeration coefficients produced by this method indicate the degree of similarity between merged clusters at each stage of the analyses. During the first step of analyses,

agglomeration coefficients were evaluated to determine the point at which a large jump in the degree of similarity occurred, an indication that the ideal number of clusters has been reached. During the second step, a range of possible clusters were evaluated to select the ideal number of clusters that made conceptual sense. To assess the conceptual value of the clusters, subscales were standardized as Z scores. This process allowed for an examination of the characteristics of each cluster in regards to how each ideology subscale score fell above or below the mean.

Own scores. This two-step process was first used for one's own scores on the four ideology subscales. Step one revealed a possible fit of 3-7 cluster groups. During step two, 4 clusters were determined to be ideal such that the groupings were significantly distinct and conceptually sound. Five or more clusters were less desirable because it did not increase the conceptual distinction between groups. One cluster in the four-cluster model was split to create the five-cluster solution but Z scores for both clusters were generally in the same direction. The main difference between the two was their magnitude. Three clusters were also deemed inappropriate as it merged clusters that were conceptually different. Reducing the number of clusters to three resulted in a cluster of lower scores being merged with high scores. The four-cluster breakdown illuminated the following profiles. Descriptions and corresponding Z scores of each ideological subscale are presented below:

Cluster 1 (n = 54). High on nationalism (.756), Low assimilationist (-.547) and humanist (-.576) and moderately low oppressed minority (-.338). People with this profile are best classified as *Separatist* – People who view race issues solely through the lens of

race as opposed to minority status and consider the African American community as distinctly separate from those of other groups.

Cluster 2 (n = 52). Low on nationalist (-.708), high on humanist (.565), and assimilationist (.410) and neutral on oppressed minority (-.023) People with this profile are best classified as *Integrationist* – People with goals of blending with mainstream and focusing on shared human qualities rather than perceiving race to be core ideological self-concept.

Cluster 3 (n = 7). Low nationalist (-1.88), assimilationist (-1.80), oppressed minority (-1.21) and neutral humanist (-.0769). People with this profile are best classified as *Undifferentiated* – People with no strong racial ideological leaning.

Cluster 4 (n = 23). High oppressed minority (1.22) and assimilationist (.91), moderately nationalist scores (.40) and neutral humanist (.0979). People with this profile are best classified as *Multiculturalist* – People who endorsed awareness of race and oppression in society but focused on commonalities between oppressed groups and supports blending with the mainstream rather than considering issues specific to the African American community.

One-way ANOVAS were then run to compare differences in mean scores for each relationship process outcome among one's own cluster profile. Results for these analyses are presented below:

There was an overall relationship between cluster profile and relationship satisfaction, $F(3,125) = 2.694, p < .05$ and dedication $F(3,125) = 6.487, p < .01$. LSD post hoc tests revealed the difference for each outcome existed such that one's own profiles

categorized as undifferentiated reported significantly lower ratings of relationship satisfaction, and dedication than all other cluster types.

Perception of partner scores. The two-step process described above was then conducted with perception of partners scores of the ideology subscales. Mirroring one's own scores, step one revealed a possible fit of 3-7 cluster groups. During step two, 4 clusters were determined to be ideal such that the groupings were significantly distinct and also conceptually sound. Five or more clusters were less desirable because it did not increase the conceptual distinction between groups. One cluster in the four-cluster model was split to create the five-cluster solution but Z scores for both clusters were generally in the same direction. The main difference between the two was their magnitude. Three clusters were also deemed inappropriate as it merged clusters that were conceptually different. Reducing the number of clusters to three resulted in a cluster of lower scores being merged with high scores. The four-cluster illuminated the same profiles as participant's self-ratings with some minor differences. Labels and corresponding Z scores of each ideological subscale are presented below. Full descriptions of each classification mirror those presented above.

Cluster 1 (n = 19). High Nationalist (.97), Assimilationist (.71), Oppressed minority (.69), and low humanist (-.89). People with this profile are best classified as *Multiculturalist*.

Cluster 2 (n = 48). High humanist (.91), assimilationist (.569), oppressed minority (.659), and low nationalist (-.364) People with this profile are best classified as *Integrationist*.

Cluster 3 (n = 56). Low assimilationist (-.56), Humanist (-.41), Oppressed minority (-.63), and moderate nationalist (.34) People with this profile are best classified as *Separatist*.

Cluster 4 (n = 11). Low assimilationist (-.87), Humanist (-.41), Oppressed minority (-.859), and nationalist (-1.845) People with this profile are best classified as *Undifferentiated*.

Univariate ANOVAS were then run to compare differences in mean scores for each relationship process outcome among perceptions of partner's clusters. Results for these analyses are presented below.

There was an overall relationship between cluster profile and dedication, $F(3,125) = 3.602, p < .01$. LSD post hoc tests revealed perception of partners scores categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of dedication to their partners than all other perception of partner clusters.

Discrepancy scores. To test for the impact of a discrepancy using the cluster method, a match vs. mismatch variable was created. One's own and perception of partner's scores that were categorized as the same profile were coded as matched while all other combinations were categorized as mismatched. This process resulted in two groups – matched clusters (N = 67) and mismatched clusters (N = 67). 2 (match) x 5 (group) ANOVAS were then run to test the main effect of match, main effect of cluster type, and the interaction term. This approach was used to illuminate if particular matches of clusters were differentially associated with relationship processes. Results for these analyses are presented below:

A significant main effect existed for cluster effect existed such that individual's categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of dedication than all other groups $F(3,125) = 6.086, p < .01$. A trend for main effect for cluster existed such that individuals categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of relationship satisfaction $F(3, 125) = 2.626, p = .053$ and such that individual's categorized as multiculturalist reported higher levels of psychological aggression than those categorized as integrationist $F(3,125) = 2.332, p = .077$. Additionally, a main effect for match existed such that mismatched couples reported lower levels of psychological aggression than matched couples $F(3,125) = 4.908, p < .05$.

Racial ideology separate subscales. For each participant, a mean score was calculated for one's own ratings and perception of partners rating on the four ideological subscales (nationalist, humanist, assimilationist, and oppressed minority). Next, discrepancy scores were calculated by computing the absolute value of the difference between one's own and perception of partner's ratings. This method elucidated the degree of difference (rather than direction) between one's own ideological beliefs and perception of their partner's beliefs within each subscale.

First, correlations were conducted between each participant's own scores and relationship outcomes (Table 6). Correlations were then run between perception of partners scores and relationship process outcomes (Table 7). Next, correlations were run between discrepancy scores and relationship process outcomes (Table 8). Regression models were run in the following sequence to determine the association between one's own and perception of partner's racial ideologies, discrepancy scores and relationship

processes. First, all four of one's own scores were entered into the model together for each relationship process outcome. Results from these analyses can be found in Table 9. All four perception of partner scores were then entered together for each relationship process outcome. Results from these analyses can be found in Table 10. All four discrepancy scores were entered in the model together for each relationship process outcome. These analyses revealed if any one specific subscale predicted variance in any outcome while controlling for all other subscales. Results from these analyses can be found in Table 11. While there were no specific predictions about the associations between one's own and perception of partner's particular racial ideologies and relationship processes, the current study hypothesized smaller discrepancies would be associated with more positive communication, higher ratings of relationship adjustment and lower levels of conflict and aggression than larger discrepancies between one's own and perception of partner's racial ideology. A description of the findings from these analyses are presented below.

Own racial ideology.

Own nationalist rating. There were no significant associations between scores on the nationalist subscale and any relationship process outcome. No associations emerge, even when holding all other ideologies constant in regression models.

Own humanist rating. There were no significant outcomes between scores on the humanist subscale and any relationship process outcome.

Own assimilationist rating. Individuals with higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale reported higher levels of dedication to their relationship ($r = .203$) and

psychological aggression ($r = .179$). When all ideologies are entered into the model together, higher scores on the assimilationist subscale are still significantly associated with dedication in their relationships ($\beta = .208$) and a trend emerges in its association with relationship satisfaction ($\beta = .246$). However, when entered together, the association between individual's assimilationist score and psychological aggression is no longer significant.

Own oppressed minority rating. Individuals with higher ratings on the oppressed minority subscale report higher levels of negative communication ($r = .296$) and psychological aggression ($r = .184$). When all four ideologies are entered in the regression model together, higher ratings on the oppressed minority subscale remain significantly associated with higher levels negative communication ($\beta = .114$) but are no longer associated with ratings of psychological aggression.

Perception of partner scores.

Perception of partner nationalist rating. There were no significant associations between perception of partner scores on the nationalist subscale and any relationship process outcome. Although the association between the two variables was not significant, when holding all other ideologies constant, there was a trend for an association between perceptions of partners scores on the nationalist subscale and relationship dedication ($\beta = .134$).

Perception of partner humanist rating. There were no associations between perceptions of partners scores on humanist subscale and any relationship process.

Perception of partner assimilationist rating. There were no associations between perceptions of partners scores on the assimilationist subscale and any relationship process. No associations emerge, even when holding all other ideologies constant in regression models.

Perception of partner oppressed minority rating. There were no associations between perception of partner scores on the oppressed minority subscale and any relationship process outcome. No associations emerge, even when holding all other ideologies constant in regression models.

Discrepancy Scores.

Nationalist. Higher discrepancy between one's own and perceptions of partners scores on nationalist subscales were significantly associated with lower levels of dedication ($r = -.173$). The association with dedication was no longer significant when all scores are entered into the model together.

Humanist. Higher discrepancy between one's own and perceptions of partners scores on humanist subscales were significantly associated with lower levels of dedication ($r = -.180$) and higher levels of negative communication ($r = .192$). The association with dedication was no longer significant when all scores are entered into the model together and the association with negative communication ($\beta = .081$) drops to a trend.

Assimilationist. Higher discrepancy between one's own and perceptions of partners scores on assimilationist subscales was associated with lower levels of dedication ($r = -.219$) and higher levels of negative communication ($r = .285$), and

psychological aggression ($r = .194$). The association with dedication and injury was no longer significant when all scores are entered into the model together but remains significant for negative communication ($\beta = .160$), and psychological aggression ($\beta = .341$).

Oppressed minority. Higher discrepancy between one's own and perception of partners scores on oppressed minority subscale was associated with lower levels of dedication ($r = -.104$). The associations with dedication was no longer significant when all scores are entered into the model together.

Racial ideology summary. Overall, for individual subscale analyses, substantial scatter existed across the four racial ideologies and outcomes. In contrast, findings for cluster analyses revealed one's own and perception of partners' scores categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of satisfaction and dedication than any other cluster profile. Further, while discrepancy scores were associated with poorer outcomes for subscale analyses, for cluster profiles, a *mismatch* in cluster type was associated with lower levels of psychological aggression.

Research Question 2

The second research question focused on providing descriptive statistics about race related questions in African American relationships. To test the association between frequency talking about race and relationship outcomes, correlations were run between these two variables. The current study predicted a positive association would exist, such that couples who talked about race more frequently would report higher ratings of relationship satisfaction. Results for these correlations are presented in Table 12. Next,

ratings of supportive conversations about race and overall ratings of negative communication (in general) were entered together in a regression model for relationship process outcomes. These analyses considered if the quality of race specific communication was uniquely important for relationship processes (above and beyond the overall impact of negative communication). The current study hypothesized higher ratings of supportive conversations about race would be associated with positive relationship processes. Results from these analyses can be found in Table 13.

Frequency of talking about race. Participants endorsed talking about race on average, once a week. Responses ranged from less than once every 6 months to daily. .8% of participants talk about race less than once every six months, 4.7% talk about race every few months, 7.8% talk about race once a month, 21.7% talk about race a few times a month, 14% talk about race once a week, 31% talk about race a few times a week, and 20.2% talk about race daily. Unexpectedly, higher frequency of talking about race was associated with higher ratings of psychological aggression ($r = .210$). Frequency of talking about race was not significantly associated with any other outcome.

Frequency satisfaction. In response to the item, “in general how satisfied are you with how often you and your partner talk about race,” participants responded on average that they talked neither too much or too little about race. 90.6% of respondents endorsed the neutral midpoint while 2.3% of participants indicated they wanted to talk about race less than they already do and 7% of participants indicated they wanted to talk about race more than they already do.

Conversation topics. On average, people report the majority of their conversations about race are about stories in the media (43.96%). 23.27% of conversations are about personal beliefs about race and 22.77% are about personal experiences related to race. Participants reported talking about how race affects their romantic relationship 6.67% of the time and 1.93% of conversations were reported as other (Figure 1).

Topics satisfaction. In response to the item, “how satisfied are you with the topics you and your partner discuss when talking about race,” 82.9% reported being at least “slightly satisfied,” 13.9% reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 2.2% reported being slightly dissatisfied.

First time talking about race. The majority of participants (58.3%) indicated they first started talking about race when they became a couple. 5.5% said their first conversation happened when they met each other’s friends and family. 10.2% said their first conversation about race happened when they started living together. 3.9% had their first conversation when they got married and 22% indicated they had their first conversation about race around another defining time in their relationship – the majority of whom indicated they started talking about race when they were friends/dating/prior to becoming a couple.

Relationship transitions.

Defining relationship. 81.0% of participants have had a define your relationship talk. Of those, 33.9% talked about race about the same as usual. 10.1% talked about race

more than usual and 56% of participants talked about race less than usual around this transition.

Meeting family and friends. 92% of participants have met each other's friends and family. Of those, 45.25% of participants talked about race about the same as usual. 4.8% talked about race more than usual and 50% of people talked about race less than usual.

Living together. 65.7% of the sample were living together at the time of data collection. Of those, 64.4% participants talked about race about the same as usual around this transition. 16.7% talked about race more than usual and 18.6% talked about race less than usual.

Engaged. 8.8% of the sample were engaged at the time of data collection. Of those, 83.3% of people talked about race about the same as usual around this transition. 8.3% talked about race more than usual and 8.3% talked about race less than usual.

Children. 40.1% of the sample have children together with their partner. Of those, 45.5% of participants talked about race about the same as usual when they had children. 41.8% of people talked about race more than usual when they had children and 12% talked about race less than usual when they had children.

Regression models were used to investigate the association between ratings of supportive conversations about race, negative communication, and relationship outcome measures. Surprisingly, when entered together, supportive race talk scores are associated with higher reports of psychological aggression ($\beta = .289$). Regression models revealed no other significant results.

Research Question 3

The third hypothesis tested if a dyadic racial identity is uniquely important for relationship processes (above and beyond the overall impact of general couple identity). Dyadic racial identity was measured by original items that assessed the extent to which individuals identify as an “African American Couple.” General couple identity was measured by a subscale of the Commitment Inventory and assessed individual’s inclination to identify as a unified “we” with his/her partner as opposed to an individual “I.” Individuals’ dyadic racial identity score and couple identity scores were entered in the same regression models to assess the unique importance of dyadic racial identity for relationship processes. In line with hypotheses, results revealed when entered in the model together, there was a trend for higher dyadic racial identity scores to be associated with higher reports of dedication ($\beta = .142$). Surprisingly, there was also a trend for higher dyadic racial identity scores to be associated with higher ratings of psychological aggression ($\beta = .297$).

Chapter Four: Discussion

The current study sought to highlight the cultural context of African American relationships and describe how unique cultural factors may impact relationship processes for this group. In brief, the results provided support for the importance of examining African American relationships without comparison to other ethnic groups. Results showed one's own racial ideology, conceptualized by individual subscales and cluster profiles, and discrepancy between one's own and perception of partner's ideological scores played an important role in understanding relationship dynamics. Findings also support the notion that one's own and perception of partner's Afrocentricity are associated with higher quality romantic relationships. The current study is the first to our knowledge that examined patterns in if, when, and, how couples talk about race in their relationship, and how these factors are related to relationship processes. The results revealed some unexpected associations between frequency talking about race, ratings of supportive communication for race specific conversations, and dyadic racial identity with psychological aggression. These findings contribute to the field's understanding of African American relationships broadly as well as inform clinical interventions geared specifically for this population. The sections below discuss the findings regarding each research question, followed by an overview of general contributions of this study, limitations, and future directions.

Research Question 1: Racial Ideology, Afrocentricity and Relationship Processes

While there were no predictions for differential associations of one's own, perception of partner racial ideology, or Afrocentricity scores, it was hypothesized that smaller discrepancies between one's own and perception of partner scores would be associated with higher rates of relationship satisfaction and lower levels of conflict than larger discrepancy scores. Descriptions and discussion of the findings are provided below.

Afrocentricity. When considering the impact of Afrocentricity on relationship processes, higher ratings of one's own and perception of partner scores were significantly associated with higher ratings of satisfaction, dedication, and lower levels of conflict. When entered in the same model, these scores were no longer significant suggesting neither one's own score or perception of partner's score uniquely explains this association. The findings align with previous research that links Afrocentricity with marital trust amongst a subset of African American husbands (Kelly & Floyd, 2006). Afrocentricity, as opposed to the nationalist subscale and separatist cluster, is reflective of pride and connection with the African American community. Thus, it appears that having higher levels of cultural pride and community identification are protective factors for relationship success. Consistent with this interpretation, previous research suggests that sharing a common racial heritage and attributing importance to a culturally based collective identity is protective against poor mental health and risk behaviors (Rowley et al., 1998; Sellers et al., 2003). Of note, this finding may also be explained by multicollinearity between the predictor variables.

Interestingly, *difference* scores for this construct were not important. As opposed to racial ideologies, perhaps the presence rather than the discrepancy between partners of Afrocentricity is fundamentally protective. For example, research has demonstrated that Afrocentricity provided a buffer against the negative impact of discrimination on mood (Jones, 1996). It follows that Afrocentricity in either partner would thus aid in the couple's overall functioning.

Racial ideology cluster analyses. Cluster analyses revealed those whose own scores were categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of relationship satisfaction. Additionally, both those whose own and whose perception of partner's scores were categorized as undifferentiated reported lower levels of dedication than any other cluster profile. Individuals with low ratings on all four racial ideology subscales, as is characteristic of the undifferentiated profile, may be disinterested in the concept of race and thus intentionally eschew all racially based worldviews. Alternatively, these people may not think in depth about race and thus while not opposed to a particular perspective, have not formalized an ideological stance. Whether intentionally against racial ideologies or just indifferent, these findings suggest it doesn't so much matter what racial ideological view an individual endorsed (e.g. separatist vs. integrationist) as long as a guiding racial ideology was prominent.

As undifferentiated is defined as individuals who do not conceptualize the world in terms of race, it overlaps to some degree with the concept of *color-blindness* (the minimization of the existence or impact of racism). Color-blindness posits that race and racism are antiquated constructs that are no longer important definitive concepts in

modern society (e.g. Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Carr, 1997). While much of the research on color-blindness has focused on its association with increased discrimination, disillusioned beliefs in justice, and increased racist beliefs among Whites, (e.g. Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000), theorists who have examined the impact of color-blindness among ethnic-minorities suggest it may function as a self-sabotaging trait (Neville, et al., 2001). Indeed, research has demonstrated an association between endorsement of color-blindness among African Americans and *psychological false consciousness* or the maintenance of false beliefs that work against one's own or communal interest (Neville, Coleman, Falconer & Holmes, 2005). In accordance with these findings, individuals classified as undifferentiated may report more negative relationship outcomes because they negate the reality of the influence of race on African American's lives in the United States (Appiah & Gutmann, 1996). This perspective contradicts evidences suggesting racial discrimination is a ubiquitous and fundamental component of the social experience of African Americans (Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1998; Jackson, Brown, Williams, Torres, Sellers, & Brown, 1996; Williams, Spencer, & Jackson, 1999). Thus, these individuals may be holding views that conflict with the reality of their experiences, ultimately straining their relationships.

Additionally, it is likely that individuals who have not formulated an ideological stance on race, may also not think deeply about other complex constructs affecting their lives. This trait based explanation suggests that these people, either by preference or ability, may be characteristically less introspective and self-aware. Thus, rather than the neutrality of their position on race being uniquely problematic, it may be the case that a

more pervasive ambivalence may make these individuals less equipped to contribute to a healthy relationship in general.

Racial ideologies subscale analyses.

Own ratings. Results indicated an association between higher levels of one's own oppressed minority scores and higher levels of psychological aggression and negative communication. The link between this subscale and psychological aggression was no longer significant when all other ideologies were entered in the model. Additionally, one's own rating on the oppressed minority subscale was still significantly associated with higher ratings of negative communication, even when controlling for the impact of all other ideologies. Thus, the oppressed minority ideological perspective, above and beyond all other subscales, was connected to increased negative processes in the relationship, mainly negative communication patterns such as escalation, withdrawal patterns, negative interpretations between partners, and mindreading.

In contrast to the associations between having higher scores on the oppressed minority subscale and poorer relationship outcomes found in the current study, previous research has found higher ratings on the oppressed minority scale, is predictive of higher grade performance in a sample of African American college students (Smalls, White, Chavous, & Sellers, 2007). These authors suggested that in the context of educational outcomes, the oppressed minority ideological perspective may be beneficial in providing a larger support network by connecting with peers from other racially minoritized backgrounds. However, findings from the current study, which showed that higher scores on the oppressed minority subscale were related to poorer relationship outcomes,

suggested the opposite may be true for the context of romantic relationships. This interpretation is grounded in the assumption that in an educational setting, racialized experiences may be more similar than distinct amongst students of color more broadly. For example, students of color often identify a similar need for culturally inclusive spaces on campus. In contrast, family dynamics and relationship trajectories are much more distinct between minority groups. For example, African American relationships exhibit higher rates of dissolution and negative relationship processes than both European Americans and other racial minority couples (Cherlin et al., 1998). Thus, while the oppressed minority perspective may be protective in the education system, it is detrimental within romantic relationships as it attempts to converge experiences across racial minorities that appear to be better conceptualized as distinct trajectories.

The oppressed minority subscale emphasizes a connection with the broader racial minority status rather than being African American specifically. Thus, as an additional interpretation to these findings, it may be true that those who prescribe to this viewpoint experience an “amplified impact” of racism because they identify with all racial minorities rather than just the African American community. For example, the impact racism within the Latino community intersects with citizenship status. Thus, the threat of deportation may be a more common fear among the Latino community than the African American community. Carrying the stress and concerns about threats more prevalent among other communities as well as those more specific to the African American experience (e.g. police brutality) may in a sense exponentially increase the stress imposed by racism.

Results also revealed higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale were associated with both higher levels of dedication and higher levels of psychological aggression. Interestingly, it appears that while individuals with high scores on the assimilationist subscale have a tendency to exhibit some negative patterns, they are also more likely to report higher levels of commitment to the longevity of the relationship. When all four racial ideology subscales were entered in the model together, only higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale remained significantly associated with dedication, suggesting an assimilationist perspective in particular, may be uniquely connected with dedication. As the assimilationist perspective emphasizes blending in with the larger society, perhaps those with higher ratings on this construct show more dedication in their relationship in an attempt to counter separatist stereotypes highlighting instability in African American relationships. However, it appears the process of blending with the larger society also contributes to conflict in the relationship, likely because the belief that African Americans should behave in alignment with European standards (assimilation) is associated with overall emotional and behavioral distress (Smalls et al., 2007). Indeed, Smalls et al., (2007) found that higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale were associated with a range of poorer behavioral academic outcomes. In contrast, research on perception of self-efficacy and career opportunity revealed that higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale were associated with positive attitudes toward potential return from educational investments (e.g. utility of college degree for future career; Byars-Winston, 2006). These findings in relation to one another suggest endorsement of an assimilationist ideological perspective is connected to the potential of positive future

oriented outcomes but also correlated with poor present orientated behaviors. Mirroring this conclusion, the current study's findings adds to the literature by observing the same pattern in romantic relationships - assimilationist views were associated with a positive future oriented outcome (dedication) but also a present behavioral risk factor (psychological aggression). Perhaps this pattern existed because while assimilationists believe it is advantageous to integrate with Whites and to consider similarities rather than to focus on difference between races, the persistence of discrimination and racism in the larger society make this strategy difficult to sustain.

Perception of partner ratings. The current findings suggested that higher perception of partner ratings on the oppressed minority subscale were associated with *positive* relationship processes whereas higher ratings for one's own score on the same subscale were associated with *negative* relationship processes (discussed above). Otherwise, there were no significant associations between perception of partner's ideology scores and relationship outcomes suggesting the perception of partner's racial ideologies have little impact on individuals' ratings of satisfaction and conflict in their relationship. The following discusses a possible interpretation for these findings though it is important to note additional research with both partners participating is needed to fully understand these associations. While these findings must be interpreted with caution until further replicated, they may be explained by the overrepresentation of women in the current sample. Perhaps, higher ratings on the oppressed minority subscale, which emphasizes the connection with the broader minority status vs. the African American community specifically, is advantageous for men (perception of partners) but detrimental

for women (individual data). This may be the case because of the distinction in racial experiences between African American men and women. For example, African American men face stereotypes of being dangerous (Schwing et al., 2012; Stevens-Watkins et al., 2014). Thus, the connection with other racial minorities, as is supported by the oppressed minority perspective, may counter this violent image. As African American women are not stereotyped in the same way, this same strategy may not be useful for them. To help understand why no other significant associations emerged, it is important to note that while the current study collected data on perception of partner's racial ideologies, corresponding measures of partner's outcomes (relationship processes) were not included. Perhaps had the current study collected data on partner outcomes as well, significant associations would have emerged. These hypotheses would certainly need to be tested in future research.

Discrepancy scores.

Cluster discrepancy. Surprisingly, the main effect for match of discrepancy showed that couples with mismatched cluster profiles report *lower* levels of psychological aggression than couples with matched cluster profiles. This finding did not emerge on the other outcome measures. This is a surprising result because discrepancy among individual subscales were associated with *higher* ratings of psychological aggression (discussed below). In other words, these findings operate in the opposite direction and suggests that misalignment rather than overlap in cluster profiles may be beneficial for relationship processes. As no interaction terms were significant, it is unclear if particular matches in cluster types are driving this finding. Specifically, given

that analyses revealed that individuals with undifferentiated cluster profile reported the highest levels of psychological aggression, perhaps there's an additive effect such that when both partners are undifferentiated, the couple fares worse overall. Thus, the negative impact of partners matching as undifferentiated may drive this surprising result. For example, as an undifferentiated cluster profile is associated with increased psychological aggression, though a match exists, both partners identifying as undifferentiated may indeed be more harmful than a couple with mismatched ideologies. As discussed above, the undifferentiated cluster profile aligns with the construct of color-blindness which has been demonstrated as maladaptive for people in general, and specifically detrimental for African Americans (Neville et al., 2001). Perhaps in this case in particular, a mismatch in cluster profile is in fact beneficial, as one partner's views would serve to question or challenge the poorer outcomes associated with an undifferentiated profile. Future studies should explore this finding in more depth, with a larger sample size of undifferentiated participants to improve power.

Subscale discrepancy. Overall, as expected the pattern revealed by discrepancy scores showed that a larger degree of difference between one's own and perception of partner scores were associated with lower levels of dedication and higher reports of conflict. to further understand these findings, when all four discrepancy scores were put into the model together, the associations between discrepancy scores and dedication were no longer significant, but the association with discrepancy in assimilationist scores and negative communication and psychological aggression remained significant. These findings suggest that while no one discrepancy score was related to dedication scores,

discrepancy in assimilationist viewpoints were uniquely related to relationship conflict. Considered together, these findings suggest individuals with large discrepancies between one's own and perception of partners scores on racial ideologies likely disagree with her/his partner on key behavioral choices about their relationship. For example, conflict may likely arise regarding choices for social activities, friendship circles, community involvement, neighborhoods, and parenting, contributing to higher rates of negative communication and psychological aggression overall.

With regards to the specific importance of discrepancies on the assimilationist subscale, research shows discrepancy in assimilationist view in particular may contribute to conflict between partners on a culturally specific parenting practice known as *racial socialization*, or the direct and subtle messages parents pass on to their children about race relations (Neblett, Smalls, Ford, Nguyen, & Sellers, 2009). Further, research suggests individuals with higher ratings on the assimilationist subscale report poorer peer relations and higher behavioral concerns in an academic setting (Smalls et al., 2007) likely explaining the importance of discrepancy in this construct above and beyond all other racial ideologies.

Research Question 2: Talking About Race and Relationship Processes

The results indicated that talking about race is common in African American relationships and these conversations mostly center around topics in the media. Major relationship transitions (e.g. meeting friends and family) do not appear to increase or decrease the frequency of conversations about race. Surprisingly, results revealed higher frequency of talking about race was associated with higher ratings of psychological

aggression. While these conversations may have focused on discriminatory events happening to other people as covered by the media, it is likely that such incidence may spark conversations about personal experiences with racism. Indeed, research has demonstrated that increases in exposure to discriminatory events is related to poorer mental health (Harrell, 2000; Lazarus, 1999; Miller & Kaiser, 2001). Further, conversations about the prevalence of race related stories in the media evoke a frustration with the societal pattern of the racism/discrimination inflicted upon the African American community. Thus, media coverage and subsequent conversations about race may reflect a more general sentiment of despair with the racial climate in the United States, explaining, at least in part, higher ratings of psychological aggression overall.

Interestingly, when looking at the unique importance of supportive conversations about race another surprising pattern emerged. Participants with higher reports of supportive conversations about race also reported higher ratings of psychological aggression. Taken together with the findings about talking about race in general, it appears even when these conversations are perceived as going well, the larger social context (e.g. systemic racism) may be so draining that individuals are left with limited wherewithal to effectively resolve smaller tasks and demands in the relationship, thus contributing to higher rates of psychological conflict overall. To this end, research suggests that the weight and pervasiveness of racism and discrimination are deleterious to psychological health and overall wellbeing. Similarly, research examining a range of risk factors found that racial discrimination was the strongest predictor of violent behavior in a sample of African American young adults (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone,

Chavous, & Zimmerman, 2004). Specifically, perceived discrimination is linked to verbal aggression, violence, and negative communication patterns (LaTaillade, 2006). It follows that frustration with external experiences, and the effects of oppressive systems may carry over into the relationship and be displaced onto one's partner. This previous research also suggests that the social context, and specifically the defining race-related factors within this context, is important to consider in understanding conflictual and aggressive behaviors. Thus, it may be important to interpret the findings of the current study with the acknowledgment that data collection occurred in February 2017, a month after the inauguration of the racially polarizing Donald Trump. Perhaps this event and fear of consequences of its aftermath for racially minoritized people heightened many of the media based conversations about race and contributed to elevated ratings of psychological aggression. Overall, it appears that in African American romantic relationships, rather than being a place to gain support from one's partner as hypothesized by the current study, these conversations may be primarily focused on reflecting the racial tension in society and thus perhaps, provocative rather than protective.

Research Question 3: Dyadic Racial Ideology and Relationship Processes

Similar to the pattern found in research question 2, when entered in a model with general couple identity, dyadic racial identity (a tendency to identify as an African American couple) was associated with higher ratings of conflict but also higher ratings of dedication. It appears that while there are some benefits in developing a dyadic racial identity, in that it is associated with higher ratings of dedication to the relationship, it is also associated with an increased level of psychological aggression overall. The

association between dyadic racial ideology and dedication aligns with previous research suggesting a shared couple identity is related to a desire for a future together. In an attempt to understand the association between dyadic racial ideology and psychological aggression, it is important to note that while the intent of the current study was to assess *how* partners describe the experience of being an African American couple, the quantitative measurement analyzed in the current study captured the degree to which individuals *want* to define the unique experience of being an African American couple (example item: *I am willing to have or develop a strong sense of an identity as an African American couple with my partner*). Thus, it is possible the surprising direction of the findings is explained by an internal conflict between a desire to define the unique characteristics of African American relationships and the actual skills and societal support to do so. Specifically, there may be some form of cognitive dissonance when there is a desire to think of one's relationship positively within a societal context that represents African American relationships in a negative light. It may be the case that the sociohistorical context that drives some participant's desire to define African American relationships as a distinct experience also create barriers to successfully develop and integrate such an identity in a majority White society. Similar to the conclusion drawn from the negative impact of talking about race, perhaps frustration rooted in the *need* to have a dyadic racial identity helps explain the higher ratings of psychological aggression overall. Data from the qualitative interviews gathered more explicit information about how partners describe the experience of being an African American couple and will undoubtedly help contextualize these surprising findings.

Chapter Five: Summary

Study Contributions

The current study examined the impact of unique cultural factors in order to better contextualize the experience of African American relationships. Findings highlight the heterogeneity of racial ideologies within the African American community and the distinct importance of the impact of racial ideology on relationship outcomes. Methodologically, the current study advanced the literature by including an analytic approach that considered both a cluster profile and individual ideology subscales. Doing so revealed distinct and important contributions about the ways in which racial ideology are related to relationship processes considering these different conceptualizations.

Additionally, this study provided reason to further investigate the association between talking about race and relationship outcomes. This study is the first to describe basic descriptive statistics about if, when, and how often African American couples talk about race in their relationship. Further, it provides foundational knowledge about how these conversations and topics discussed may be related to relationship processes. As results indicate talking about race is common, but also linked to psychological aggression in the relationship, it will be important for providers and interventions to target this experience.

Last, this study was the first to our knowledge to explore the construct of a dyadic racial identity. While results suggest that it is associated with psychological aggression as

opposed to protective outcomes as expected, these findings still provide information on the importance of contextualizing the experience of African American relationships and better understanding how partners relate to one another and develop ideological perspectives about what it means to be an African American couple.

Clinical Implications

Taken together, findings from the current study offer important clinical implications. As most relationship interventions are based on research of predominately White couples, there is conflicting evidence of their appropriateness for African American couples. While more research is needed to explore how culturally adapted models, in both relationship education programs and therapy, may meet the needs of African American couples, results from the current study support the importance of interventions moving away from normalizing White relationships in efforts to recognize unique cultural factors. Findings from the current study offer the following key suggestions. First, given the association between the oppressed minority ideological perspective and negative relationship outcomes, interventions should consider emphasizing the distinct experiences of African American rather than converging the experiences of all racially minoritized populations. Next, the associations between discrepancy in ideologies and psychological aggression suggest it is important for interventions to provide strategies for partners to process differences in racial ideology. These strategies can either be used to promote understanding between partners or to focus on reducing discrepancies between partners. Results from the current study suggest it may be of particular importance for interventions to explore differences between partners

on assimilationist views. Last, given its protective nature, interventions should emphasize value based principles of Afrocentricity such as collective responsibility for community upliftment and the importance of reclaiming and celebrating African American history.

It is unclear if clinicians should indeed encourage conversations about race as higher rates of these conversations correspond with higher rates of psychological aggression. However, it may be the case that the interventions should focus on shifting the dialogue around race based discussions toward coping strategies and providing support for one's partner in a way that would be beneficially rather than negative for relationship outcomes. Further, interventions could use already established tools for effective communication (e.g. the speaker listener technique from PREP) to scaffold conversations about partner's beliefs about race in an attempt to offer empathy and understanding about differences in perspectives. With guided intervention, these conversations may either buffer against the negative outcomes found in the current study or reduce discrepancies by shifting each partner's views leading to greater alignment. In sum, it appears it may be important for interventions to develop tools and strategies for couples to process these race related topics in a way that does not increase overall aggression in the relationship.

Limitations and Future Directions

General limitations of this study include that all the data were cross-sectional, limiting the ability to make directional conclusions. Longitudinal research is necessary to evaluate how these processes work over time and in order to make causal inferences. Specifically, it may be useful to evaluate the development of dyadic racial identity over

time to explore the ways in which the construct may change throughout the relationship. Further, while the current study collected retrospective data about the timing and frequency of conversations about race, a prospective approach would certainly garner more accurate accounts of these constructs and potentially reveal important patterns about the relevance and impact of race related conversations at various stages in one's relationship. While the study collected data across the country, the sample is not representative of African Americans in the United as participants in the study were predominately middle class and highly educated, limiting interpretations for other demographic groups.

Regarding specific measurement limitations, the cluster groups profiles were very unevenly distributed, with very few participants identified as undifferentiated or multiculturalist. Thus, further research should attempt to replicate these findings with a more evenly distributed sample. Additionally, the satisfaction with conversations about race and dyadic racial identity scales were original scales developed for the current study. Though reliability measures were strong, the scales should be expanded and refined for future research.

Furthermore, more research is needed to evaluate findings of this study that were non-significant. As was described in the Methods section, power analyses indicated that with a full desired sample size of 131, we were only 80% likely to capture medium effect sizes of .25 or larger. Thus, more research, preferably with larger sample sizes and through longitudinal designs, are needed to evaluate null findings as well as replicate significant findings. Additionally, future studies should examine different patterns of

communication when partners talk about race in an attempt to isolate what factors may be driving the association between frequency talking about race and psychological aggression. Future studies should focus on conversations about race in the media and examine if perceived racism may help explain the pathway between conversations about race and psychological aggression overall. Videotaping and coding may contribute to the field's understanding of other ways aggression may be prominent in these conversations. Finally, future research is needed to evaluate underlying mechanism that explain the links between racial ideology and romantic relationship (e.g. attitudes and behaviors) to inform clinical interventions. In sum, findings from this study have the potential to make significant and meaningful contributions to the alleviation of family distress among African American couples and families.

References

- Appiah, K. A., & Gutmann, A. (1996). *Color conscious: The political morality of race*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Banks, K. H., & Kohn-Wood, L. P. (2007). The influence of racial identity profiles on the relationship between racial discrimination and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 33(3), 331–354. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798407302540>
- Barr, A. B., & Simons, R. L. (2018). Marital beliefs among African American emerging adults: The roles of community context, family background, and relationship experiences. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(2), 352-382.
- Beach, S. R. H., Hurt, T. R., Fincham, F. D., Franklin, K. J., McNair, L. M., & Stanley, S. M. (2011). Enhancing marital enrichment through spirituality: Efficacy data for prayer focused relationship enhancement. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 3(3), 201–216. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022207>
- Blood, R. O., & Wolfe, D. M. (1969). Negro-white differences in blue-collar marriages in a northern metropolis. *Social Forces*, 48(1), 59–64.
- Bond, J. C., & Peery, P. (1969). Has the black man been castrated? *Liberator*, 9, 4-8.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2001). *White supremacy and racism in the post-civil rights era*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Boyd-Franklin, N. (2003). Race, class, and poverty. In F. Walsh (Ed.), *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity* (pp. 260-279). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.
- Bracey, J. H., Meier, A., & Rudwick, E. (Eds.). (1971). *Black Matriarchy: Myth Or Reality?* Belmont, CA, US: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Broman, C. L. (1993). Race differences in marital well-being. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 55(3), 724–732.
- Brown, S. L. (2000). Union transitions among cohabitators: The significance of relationship assessments and expectations. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(3), 833-846.
- Brown, S. L., & Bulanda, J. R. (2008). Relationship violence in young adulthood: A comparison of daters, cohabitators, and marrieds. *Social Science Research*, 37(1), 73-87.
- Bryant, C. M., Wickrama, K. A. S., Bolland, J., Bryant, B. M., Cutrona, C. E., & Stanik, C. E. (2010). Race matters, even in marriage: Identifying factors linked to marital outcomes for African Americans. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 2(3), 157-174.
- Bumpass, L., & Lu, H.-H. (2000). Trends in cohabitation and implications for children's family contexts in the United States. *Population Studies*, 54(1), 29–41.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/713779060>

- Byars-Winston, A. M. (2006). Racial ideology in predicting social cognitive career variables for Black undergraduates. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69(1), 134-148.
- Caldwell, C. H., Kohn-Wood, L. P., Schmeelk-Cone, K. H., Chavous, T. M., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2004). Racial discrimination and racial identity as risk or protective factors for violent behaviors in African American young adults. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 33(1-2), 91-105.
- Carr, L. G. 1997. *"Colorblind" racism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Public.
- Cazenave, N. A. (1983). Black male-Black female relationships: The perceptions of 155 middle-class Black men. *Family Relations*, 32(3), 341-350.
- Cherlin, A. J., Chase-Lansdale, P. L., & McRae, C. (1998). Effects of parental divorce on mental health throughout the life course. *American Sociological Review*, 63(2), 239–249.
- Cowdery, R. S., Scarborough, N., Knudson-Martin, C., Sheshadri, G., Lewis, M. E., & Ranin Mahoney, A. (2009). Gendered power in cultural contexts: Part II: Middle class African American heterosexual couples with young children. *Family Process*, 48(1), 25–39.
- Cross, W. E., Jr. (1991). *Shades of black: Diversity in African-American identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Cross, W. E., Jr., Parham, T. A., & Helms, J. E. (1998). Nigrescence revisited: Theory and research. *African American identity development*, 4, 72.

- Dixon, P. (2017). *African American relationships, marriages, and families: An introduction*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A. G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G* Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, 39(2), 175-191.
- Grills, C., & Longshore, D. (1996). Africentrism: Psychometric analyses of a self-report measure. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 22(1), 86-106.
- Hare, N. (1971). Will the real black man please stand up? *The Black Scholar*, 2, 32-35.
- Harrell, S. P. (2000). A multidimensional conceptualization of racism-related stress: Implications for the well-being of people of color. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 70(1), 42-57.
- Jackson, J. S., Brown, T. N., Williams, D. R., Torres, M., Sellers, S. L., & Brown, K. (1996). Racism and the physical and mental health status of African Americans: A thirteen year national panel study. *Ethnicity & Disease*, 6(1-2), 132-147.
- Jones, A. C., & Chao, C. M. (1997). Racial, ethnic and cultural issues in couples therapy. In W. K. Halford & H. J. Markman (Eds.), *Clinical handbook of marriage and couples interventions* (pp. 157-176). Hoboken, NJ, US: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1995). Assessing longitudinal change in marriage: An introduction to the analysis of growth curves. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57(4), 1091-1108.
- Kelly, S. (2003). African-American couples: Their importance to the stability of African-American families and their mental health issues. In J. S. Mio & G. Y. Iwamasa,

- Culturally diverse mental health: Challenges of research and resistance* (pp. 141-158). New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Kelly, S., & Floyd, F. J. (2001). The effects of negative racial stereotypes and Afrocentricity on Black couple relationships. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15(1), 110–123. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.15.1.110>
- Kline, G. H., Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., St. Peters, M., Whitton, S. W., & Prado, L. M. (2004). Timing is everything: Pre-engagement cohabitation and increased risk for poor marital outcomes. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 18(2), 311–318. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.18.2.311>
- LaTaillade, J. J. (2006). Considerations for treatment of African American couple relationships. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 20(4), 341-358.
- Lazarus, N. (1999). *Nationalism and cultural practice in the postcolonial world*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lorr, M. (1986). *Interpersonal Style Inventory manual*. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.
- Owen, J., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2012). The revised commitment inventory: Psychometrics and use with unmarried couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, 32(6), 820–841. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X10385788>
- Miller, C. T., & Kaiser, C. R. (2001). A theoretical perspective on coping with stigma. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(1), 73-92.

- Moynihan, D. P. (1965). *The Negro family: The case for national action*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor.
- Neblett, E. W., Smalls, C. P., Ford, K. R., Nguyen, H. X., & Sellers, R. M. (2009). Racial socialization and racial identity: African American parents' messages about race as precursors to identity. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 38(2), 189-203.
- Neville, H. A., Coleman, M. N., Falconer, J. W., & Holmes, D. (2005). Color-blind racial ideology and psychological false consciousness among African Americans. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 31(1), 27-45.
- Neville, H. A., Lilly, R. L., Duran, G., Lee, R. M., & Browne, L. (2000). Construction and initial validation of the color-blind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAS). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47(1), 59.
- Rowley, S. J., Sellers, R. M., Chavous, T. M., & Smith, M. A. (1998). The relationship between racial identity and self-esteem in African American college and high school students. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(3), 715-724. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.3.715>
- Sabourin, S., Valois, P., & Lussier, Y. (2005). Development and validation of a brief version of the dyadic adjustment scale with a nonparametric item analysis model. *Psychological Assessment*, 17(1), 15-27. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.17.1.15>
- Schoen, R., & Cheng, Y. H. A. (2006). Partner choice and the differential retreat from marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(1), 1-10.

- Schwing, A. E., Wong, Y. J., & Fann, M. D. (2012). Development and validation of the African American Men's Gendered Racism Stress Inventory. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 14(1), 16–24. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028272>
- Seaton, E. K., Upton, R., Gilbert, A., & Volpe, V. (2014). A moderated mediation model: Racial discrimination, coping strategies, and racial identity among Black adolescents. *Child Development*, 85(3), 882-890.
- Sellers, R. M., Rowley, S. A. J., Chavous, T. M., Shelton, J. N., & Smith, M. A. (1997). Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity: A preliminary investigation of reliability and construct validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(4), 805–815. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.4.805>
- Smalls, C., White, R., Chavous, T., & Sellers, R. (2007). Racial ideological beliefs and racial discrimination experiences as predictors of academic engagement among African American adolescents. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 33(3), 299-330.
- Smock, P. J. (2000). Cohabitation in the United States: An appraisal of research themes, findings, and implications. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 1–20.
- Spanier, G. B. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 38(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.2307/350547>
- Stanley, S., & Markman, H. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 54(3), 595-608. [doi:10.2307/353245](https://doi.org/10.2307/353245)

- Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (1997). *Marriage in the 90s: A nationwide random phone survey*. Denver, Colorado: PREP.
- Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., & Whitton, S. W. (2002). Communication, conflict, and commitment: Insights on the foundations of relationship success from a national survey. *Family Process*, 41(4), 659–675. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2002.00659.x>
- Stanley, S. M., Rhoades, G. K., Loew, B. A., Allen, E. S., Carter, S., Osborne, L. J., ... Markman, H. J. (2014). A randomized controlled trial of relationship education in the U.S. Army: 2-year outcomes. *Family Relations*, 63(4), 484–95. doi:10.1111/fare.12083
- Staples, R. (1970). The myth of the black matriarchy. *The Black Scholar*, 1(3-4), 8-16.
- Stevens-Watkins, D., Perry, B., Pullen, E., Jewell, J., & Oser, C. B. (2014). Examining the associations of racism, sexism, and stressful life events on psychological distress among African American women. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 20(4), 561–569. <https://doi.org/10.1038/jid.2014.371>
- Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. B. (1996). The Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2): Development and preliminary psychometric data. *Journal of Family Issues*, 17(3), 283–316. <https://doi.org/0803973233>
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., & Holder, A. (2008). Racial microaggressions in the life experience of Black Americans. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(3), 329-336.

- Taylor, R., Brown, E., Chatters, L., & Lincoln, K. (2012). Extended family support and relationship satisfaction among married, cohabiting, and romantically involved African Americans and Black Caribbeans. *Journal of African American Studies, 16*(3), 373-389.
- Tucker, M. B., & Mitchell-Kernan, C. (Eds.). (1995). *The decline in marriage among African Americans: Causes, consequences, and policy implications*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Wadsworth, M. E., Raviv, T., Santiago, C. D., & Etter, E. M. (2011). Testing the adaptation to poverty-related stress model: Predicting psychopathology symptoms in families facing economic hardship. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, 40*(4), 646-657.
- Williams, D. R., Spencer, M. S., & Jackson, J. S. (1999). Race, stress, and physical health: The role of group identity. In R. J. Contrada & R. D. Ashmore (Eds.), *Rutgers series on self and social identity, Vol. 2. Self, social identity, and physical health: Interdisciplinary explorations* (pp. 71-100). New York: Oxford University Press.

Appendix A

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Own Afrocentricity	3.268	0.367
Perception of Partner Afrocentricity	3.041	0.467
Afrocentricity Discrepancy	0.330	0.294
Own Nationalist	5.410	1.013
Perception of Partner Nationalist	5.167	1.360
Nationalism Discrepancy	0.927	0.953
Own Assimilationist	5.211	1.266
Perception of Partner Assimilationist	5.177	1.271
Assimilationist Discrepancy	0.860	0.908
Own Humanist	3.527	1.279
Perception of Partner Humanist	3.795	1.485
Humanist Discrepancy	1.099	0.967
Own Oppressed Minority	4.497	1.287
Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	4.431	1.427
Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	0.863	0.840
Relationship Satisfaction	16.007	3.056
Communication Danger Signs	1.645	0.477
Dedication	6.281	0.975
Psychological Aggression	3.196	1.573

Note. *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation

Table 2

Correlations Between Relationship Processes

Measure	2	3	4
1. Relationship Adjustment	.667*	-.260*	-.505*
2. Dedication	--	-.188*	-.364*
3. Psy. Agg.	--	--	.593*
4. Danger Signs	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 3

Correlations between One's Own Afrocentricity, and Relationship Processes

Measure	2	3	4	5
1. Own Afrocentricity	.200*	.219*	-.008	.078
2. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
3. Dedication	--	--	--	--
4. Psy. Aggr.	--	--	--	--
5. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 4

Correlations between Perception of Partner's Afrocentricity, and Relationship Processes

Measure	2	3	4	5
1. Perception of Partner Afrocentricity	.197*	.252*	-.005	-.021
2. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
3. Dedication	--	--	--	--
4. Psy. Aggr.	--	--	--	--
5. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 5

Correlations between Afrocentricity Discrepancy, and Relationship Processes

Measure	2	3	4	5
1. Afrocentricity Discrepancy	.049	-.100	-.002	.105
2. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
3. Dedication	--	--	--	--
4. Psy. Aggr.	--	--	--	--
5. Danger Signs	--	--	--	----

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 6

Correlations between One's Own Racial Ideology Subscales and Relationship Processes

Measure	5	6	7	8
1. Own Nationalist	-.066	.048	.078	.132
2. Own Humanist	-.069	.002	.113	.044
3. Own Oppressed Minority	-.031	.009	.184*	.296*
4. Own Assimilationist	.102	.203*	.179*	.057
5. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
6. Dedication	--	--	--	--
7. Psy. Agg.	--	--	--	--
8. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 7

Correlations between Perception of Partner's Racial Ideology Subscales and Relationship Processes

Measure	5	6	7	8
1. Perception of Partner Nationalist	.129	.155	-.078	-.054
2. Perception of Partner Humanist	-.047	.061	-.010	-.019
3. Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	.036	.052	-.082	.066
4. Perception of Partner Assimilationist	.104	.148	.048	-.054
5. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
6. Dedication	--	--	--	--
7. Psy. Agg.	--	--	--	--
8. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 8

Correlations between Racial Ideology Subscales Discrepancy Scores and Relationship Processes

Measure	5	6	7	8
1. Nationalist Discrepancy	-.013	-.173*	.048	.108
2. Humanist Discrepancy	-.024	-.180*	.050	.192*
3. Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	.001	-.194*	.094	.044
4. Assimilationist Discrepancy	-.082	-.219*	.194*	.285*
5. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
6. Dedication	--	--	--	--
7. Psy. Agg.	--	--	--	--
8. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 9

Regression Models of One's Own Racial Ideology Subscale on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs

Predictors	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Relationship Adjustment					
Own Nationalist	0.296	0.278	.098	1.064	.289
Own Assimilationist	0.419	0.246	.172	1.705	.091
Own Oppressed Minority	-0.174	0.224	-.072	-0.775	.440
Own Humanist	-0.226	0.247	-.094	-0.916	.362
Dedication					
Own Nationalist	0.027	0.088	.027	0.302	.763
Own Assimilationist	0.208	0.078	.268	2.679	.008
Own Oppressed Minority	-0.054	0.071	-.071	-0.762	.447
Own Humanist	-0.067	0.078	-.087	-0.858	.392
Psychological Aggression					
Own Nationalist	0.161	0.141	.104	1.139	.257
Own Assimilationist	0.130	0.125	.104	1.045	.298
Own Oppressed Minority	0.157	0.115	.127	1.363	.175
Own Humanist	0.086	0.127	.068	0.672	.503
Danger Signs					
Own Nationalist	0.069	0.042	.146	1.653	.101
Own Assimilationist	-0.026	0.036	-.070	-.721	.472
Own Oppressed Minority	0.114	0.033	.307	3.469	.001
Own Humanist	0.020	0.037	.055	.557	.579

Table 10

Regression Models Perception of Partner Racial Ideology Subscale on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs

Predictors	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Relationship Adjustment					
Perception of Partner Nationalist	0.229	0.213	.102	1.073	.285
Perception of Partner Assimilationist	0.295	0.238	.123	1.240	.217
Perception of Partner Humanist	-0.143	0.220	-.069	-0.650	.517
Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	0.025	0.218	.012	0.117	.907
Dedication					
Perception of Partner Nationalist	0.134	0.068	.185	1.972	.051
Perception of Partner Assimilationist	0.101	0.076	.131	1.339	.183
Perception of Partner Humanist	0.061	0.070	.092	0.875	.383
Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	-0.027	0.069	-.040	-0.396	.693
Psychological Aggression					
Perception of Partner Nationalist	-0.106	0.110	-.092	-0.960	.339
Perception of Partner Assimilationist	0.142	0.124	.114	1.140	.256
Perception of Partner Humanist	-0.132	0.114	-.119	-1.164	.247
Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	-0.036	0.112	-.034	-0.322	.748
Danger Signs					
Perception of Partner Nationalist	-0.026	0.034	-.074	-0.772	.442
Perception of Partner Assimilationist	-0.033	0.037	-.088	-0.883	.379
Perception of Partner Humanist	-0.018	0.034	-.056	-0.531	.596
Perception of Partner Oppressed Minority	0.042	0.034	.125	1.243	.216

Table 11

Regression Models Racial Ideology Subscale Discrepancy Scores on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, Psychological Aggression, and Danger Signs

Predictors	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Relationship Adjustment					
Nationalist Discrepancy	0.072	0.340	.023	0.212	.832
Assimilationist Discrepancy	-0.358	0.346	-.105	-1.035	.303
Humanist Discrepancy	-0.024	0.311	-.007	-0.076	.940
Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	0.134	0.371	.037	0.361	.718
Dedication					
Nationalist Discrepancy	-0.035	0.106	-.034	-0.329	.743
Assimilationist Discrepancy	-0.156	0.108	-.142	-1.453	.149
Humanist Discrepancy	-0.098	0.097	-.097	-1.011	.314
Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	-0.107	0.115	-.092	-0.930	.354
Psychological Aggression					
Nationalist Discrepancy	-0.077	0.173	-.047	-0.448	.655
Assimilationist Discrepancy	0.022	0.158	.014	0.142	.887
Humanist Discrepancy	0.060	0.188	.032	0.321	.749
Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	0.341	0.170	.196	2.005	.047
Danger Signs					
Nationalist Discrepancy	-0.019	0.050	-.038	-0.374	.709
Assimilationist Discrepancy	0.160	0.050	.303	3.224	.002
Humanist Discrepancy	0.081	0.046	.163	1.749	.083
Oppressed Minority Discrepancy	-0.062	0.055	-.109	-1.136	.258

Table 12

Correlations between Frequency Talking About Race and Relationship Processes

Measure	2	3	4	5
1. Frequency	.036	.012	.210*	.111
2. Relationship Adjustment	--	--	--	--
3. Dedication	--	--	--	--
4. Psy. Aggr.	--	--	--	--
5. Danger Signs	--	--	--	--

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 13

Regression Models Supportive Conversations about Race and Negative Communication on Relationship Adjustment, Dedication, and Psychological Aggression

Predictors	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Relationship Adjustment					
Conversations About Race	0.106	0.295	.029	0.359	.720
Negative Communication	-3.415	0.515	-.527	-6.627	.000
Dedication					
Conversations About Race	0.154	0.099	.136	1.549	.124
Negative Communication	-0.606	0.173	-.306	-3.496	.001
Psychological Aggression					
Conversations About Race	0.289	0.143	.154	2.025	.045
Negative Communication	2.051	0.248	.628	8.281	.000

Appendix B

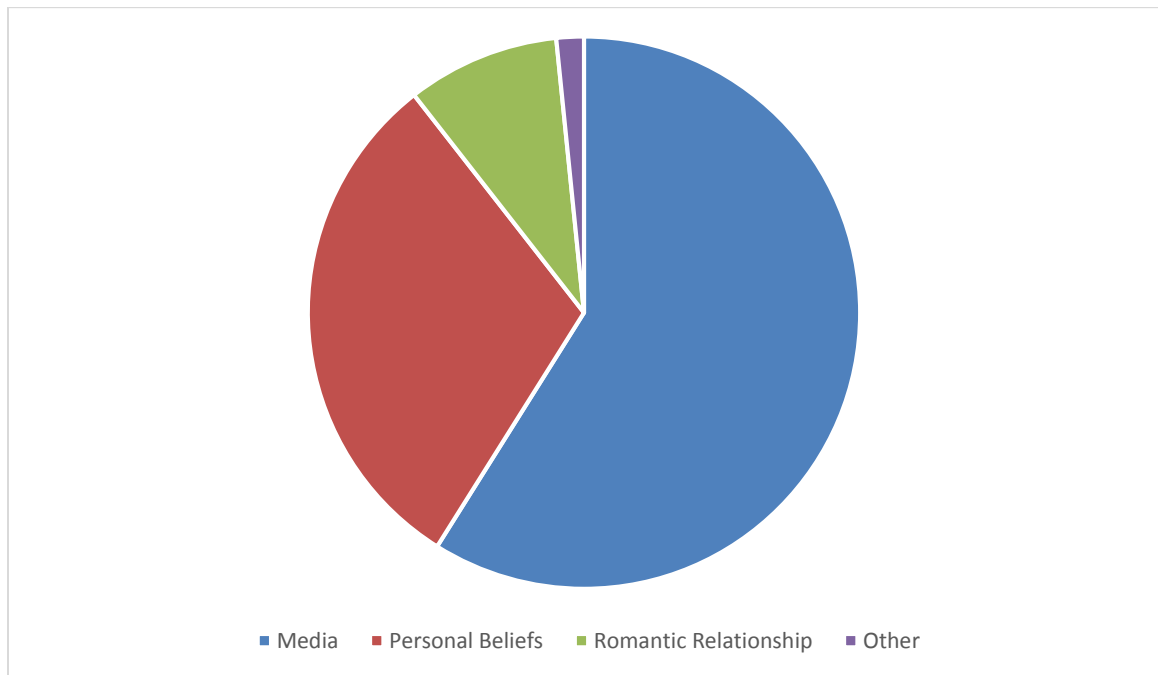


Figure 1. Percentage of conversations about race by topic.

Appendix C

Study Questionnaire

Q117 Thank you for your interest in our study! Before beginning, please answer the following questions to confirm you qualify for participation.

Q119 Do you and your partner BOTH identify as African American?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q120 Have you and your partner been in a relationship for at least 6 months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q121 Do you and your partner both identify as heterosexual? (That is, are you in an opposite-sex relationship?)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q122 Are you 18 years or older?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q107

DU IRB Approval Date:

1/4/2017

Valid for Use Through:

12/15/2017 University of Denver Consent Form for Participation in Research Title of Research Study: The Association between Individual and Dyadic Racial Identity and Relationship Processes Among African American Couples Researcher(s): Aleja Parsons, MA, University of Denver, Howard Markman, PhD, University of Denver Study Site: University of Denver Purpose You are being asked to participate in a research study about people who are in African American romantic relationships. The purpose of this study is provide an in depth cultural context for African American romantic relationships and investigate the unique culture characteristics on relationship processes. Procedures If you participate in this research study, you will be invited to participate in an online survey that asks questions about your racial ideology and your relationship, such as your happiness and relationship satisfaction. Although you and your partner may participate in the study, each person will fill out the survey individually, without talking about your answers with your partner. This online survey will take approximately 1 hour of your time and can be done at home on your own computer. You

will also be given the option to participate in a phone interview. Agreeing to participate in the online survey does not require you to participate in the phone interview. If you agree, phone interviews will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. You do not have to agree to have your interview audio recorded to participate. The optional phone interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time and can be scheduled at your convenience.

Voluntary Participation Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any survey question, continue with the phone interview, or complete the survey for any reason without penalty or other benefits to which you are entitled. If you decide to withdraw early, the information or data you provided will be immediately destroyed.

Your partner does not have to participate in this research study for you to agree to participate.

Risks or Discomforts Potential risks and/or discomforts of participation may include feeling emotional distress after completing the interview and/or survey. The questions we ask during the interview or in the surveys ask about your views on your race and your relationship, which might make you uncomfortable or upset to think or write about. Although we will keep your name and other information confidential, it is possible that someone might find out that you have participated in this research study.

Benefits Possible benefits of participation include providing researchers and the scientific community information about how racial identity may be related to romantic processes for African American relationships. Information gathered in this study may provide insight on how to improve the quality of romantic relationships for African Americans. The study is not intended to provide direct benefit to you, however, you may benefit by being able to share and write about your relationship experiences.

Incentives to participate You will receive \$20 in the form of an Amazon gift card for participating in this research project. You will have the option to receive a visa check card in the mail or receive an online voucher. If you participate in an optional brief phone interview, you will be entered into a raffle to win a gift certificate for \$50 to Amazon.com.

Confidentiality The researcher will remove your name from any study data (i.e. your answers to the survey and interview questions), and will only use a study ID number to identify your answers in order to keep your information safe throughout this study. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published about this study. Any hard copies of your survey answers will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room, and your signed consent form will be kept separately from your other study data. Any data stored electronically will be stored on private university servers, and all identifying electronic data (i.e., your name and contact information) will be password-protected and accessible only by the researchers. The information you submit in this online survey is encrypted using HTTPS to keep others from reading it.

The researchers will keep your identifying information for up to 5 years following the study. After that, your identifying information will be destroyed, but your de-identified study data will be kept indefinitely. In addition, your de-identified study data may be shared with other researchers after this study is finished. The researchers will never share your name, contact information, or other information that could identify you with other researchers.

If you participate in the optional phone interview, your call will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. Audio recording of the phone interview is not mandatory for participation. Only the researchers will have access to the audio transcriptions, and audio files

will be destroyed 5 years after the study is completed. The responses for those who elect not to be recorded will be transcribed while the interview is being conducted. The results from the research may be shared at meetings or conferences, and may be in published articles. Your individual identity will always be kept private when information is presented or published. However, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena. The research information may be shared with federal agencies or local committees who are responsible for protecting research participants. Questions If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Aleja Parsons at alejaparsons@gmail.com or the faculty sponsor, Howard Markman at hmarkman@du.edu at any time. If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers. Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate, your completion of the research procedures indicates your consent. Please keep this form for your records.

Q105 Agreement to be in this study: I have read this consent form about the study or it was read to me. I understand the possible risks and benefits of this study. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I freely choose to be in this study. I can request a copy of this consent form. Please type your full name below to serve as your signature.

Q106 Today's Date:

Q123 Please complete the requested contact information to receive payment for your participation. As this is a research study, it is important that you provide your real name. As a reminder, your participation is completely confidential and all identifying information will be removed from your survey data.

Q124 What is your first and last name?

Q125 What is your partner's first and last name?

Q126 What is your e-mail address? (Please provide an accurate e-mail address as it will be used to send payment!)

Q55 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current relationship.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
We have a lot of fun together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We regularly have great conversation where we just talk as good friends.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I love my partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner loves me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have a satisfying sensual or sexual relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner supports me and my personal goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner does little things for me that show me he/she is thinking about me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner really listens to me when I have something important to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner and I are very close.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner is my best friend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner listens to me and gives me emotional support when I'm stressed about something other than us.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q56 Using the following scale, please answer the following statements about your current relationship.

	0 - Never	1 - Rarely	2 - Occasionally	3 - More often than not	4 - Most of the time	5 - All of the time
How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you confide in your mate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q57 Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

- ☐ Extremely unhappy
- ☐ Fairly unhappy
- ☐ A little unhappy
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Very happy
- ☐ Extremely happy
- ☐ Perfectly happy

Q58 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current relationship.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I may decide that I want to end this relationship at some point in the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want this relationship to stay strong no matter what rough times we may encounter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to grow old with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My relationship with my partner is clearly part of my future life plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I may not want to be with my partner a few years from now	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not have life-long plans for this relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q59 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current relationship.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I want to keep the plans for my life somewhat separate from my partner's plans for life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to have or develop a strong sense of identity as a couple with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to think about how things affect "us" as a couple more than how things affect "me" as an individual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to think of my partner and me more in terms of "us" and "we" than "me" and "him/her"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more comfortable thinking in terms of "my" things than "our" things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not want to have a strong identity as a couple with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q60 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current relationship.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My relationship with my partner comes before my relationships with my friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My career (or job, studies, homemaking, child-rearing, etc.) is more important to me than my relationship with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When push comes to shove, my relationship with my partner often must take a backseat to other interests of mine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When the pressure is really on and I must choose, my partner's happiness is not as important to me as are other things in life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything else in my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When push comes to shove, my relationship with my partner comes first	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q61 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current relationship.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe we can handle whatever conflicts will arise in the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good about our prospects to make this relationship work for a lifetime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am very confident when I think of our future together	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have the skills a couple needs to make a relationship last	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We can handle anything that comes our way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q62 No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, want different things from each other, or just have spats or fights because they are in a bad mood, are tired, or for some other reason. Couples also have many different ways of trying to settle their differences. This is a list of things that might happen when you have differences. Please fill in how many times you did each of these things in the past year, and how many times your partner did them in the past year. If you and your partner did not do one of those things in the past year, but it happened before that, fill in "1".

	0 - this has never happened	1 - Not in the past year, but it did happen before	2 - Once in the past year	3 - Twice in the past year	4 - 3-5 times in the past year	5 - 6 to 10 times in the past year	6 - 11- 20 times in the past year	7 - More than 20 times in the past year
I insulted or swore at my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I threw something to my partner that could hurt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I twisted my partner's arm or hair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a sprain, bruise, or small cut because of a fight with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pushed or shoved my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I shouted or yelled at my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I grabbed my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I stomped out of the room or house or yard during a disagreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I slapped my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I did something to spite my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner did this to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt physical pain that still hurt the next day because of a fight with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q63 The statements below refer to experiences many couples have at some point in their relationship. For each statement, please use the following scale to indicate how often you and your partner have that experience.

	1 - Never or almost never	2 - Once in a while	3 - Frequently
Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticisms, name calling, or bring up past hurts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner seems to view my words or actions more negatively than I mean them to be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When we have a problem to solve, it is like we are on opposite teams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I hold back from telling my partner what I really think and feel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel lonely in this relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When we argue, one of us withdraws, doesn't want to talk about it anymore or leaves the scene	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q70 Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experiences.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Racial jokes or harassment are directed at me at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have been refused housing because I'm black.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know of people who have gotten in trouble (gotten hurt, beaten up, shot) by whites (individuals, gangs, police, white hate groups) because of their race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty getting a loan because I'm black	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am followed, stopped or arrested by White police officers more than others because of your race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My house has been vandalized because of my race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have had to allow whites to obtain the best seats in public places because of your race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I have been denied hospitalization or medical care because I am Black.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have known Black men who have suffered negative consequences for talking to white woman (e.g. being hurt or killed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I go shopping I am often followed by white security guards or watched by white clerks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I hear comments from Whites expressing surprise at “minority” individuals’ intelligence or industriousness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People “talk down” to me because I am black	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waiters and waitresses ignore me and serve Whites first	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q64 Please respond to the following items about how much you agree or disagree with following statements about race.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music, and literature.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks would be better off if they adopted Afrocentric values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Black people must organize themselves into a separate Black political force.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whenever possible, Blacks should by from other Black businesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with problems facing all people than just focusing on Black issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a strong attachment to other Black people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The struggle for Black liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should strive to be full members of the American political system.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should try to work within the system to achieve their political and economic goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should strive to integrate all institutions which are segregated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The racism Blacks have experienced is similar to that of other minority groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should feel free to interact socially with White people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to Black Americans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The same forces which have led to the oppression of Blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We are all children of a higher being, therefore, we should love people of all races.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People, regardless of their race, have strengths and limitations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The same forces which had led to the oppression of Blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q65 Please respond to the following items about how much you agree or disagree with following statements about race.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
African Americans should make their community better than it was when they found it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The problems of other African Americans are their problems, not mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They unity of the African race is very important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more concerned with reaching my own goals than with working for the African American community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have very little faith in African American people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I owe something to African Americans who suffered before me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
African Americans need to stop worrying so much about "the community" and take care of their own needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am doing a lot to improve my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The success I have had is mainly because of me, not anyone else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more confidence in White professionals, like doctors and teachers, than in African American professionals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
African Americans should build and maintain their own communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I must do all I can to restore African Americans to their position of respect in the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make it a point to shop at African American businesses and use African American owned services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It hurts me when I see another African American person discriminated against.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important that African American people decide for themselves what to be called and what their needs are.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q66 You will now answer the same set of questions AS IF YOU WERE YOUR PARTNER, that is, to the best of your ability, indicate how much you think you YOUR PARTNER would agree or disagree with the following statements about race.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Overall, being Black has very little to do with how my partner feel about him- or herself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes it is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music, and literature.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks would be better off if they adopted Afrocentric values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Black people must organize themselves into a separate Black political forces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes whenever possible, Blacks should buy from other Black businesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner has a strong sense of belonging to Black people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with problems facing all people than just focusing on Black issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My partner believes being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner has a strong attachment to other Black people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes the struggle for Black liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should strive to be full members of the American political system.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should try to work within the system to achieve their political and economic goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should strive to integrate all institutions which are segregated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes the racism Blacks have experiences is similar to that of other minority groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes Blacks should feel free to interact socially with White people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My partner believes there are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to Black Americans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being Black is an important reflection of who my partner is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes the same forces which have led to the oppression of Blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q69 Please remember, you should be answering AS IF YOU WERE YOUR PARTNER....

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My partner believes African Americans should make their community better than it was when they found it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes the problems of other African American are their problem, not his/hers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The unity of the African race is very important to my partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner is more concerned with reaching his/her goals than with working for the African American community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner has very little faith in African American people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes he/she owes something to African Americans who suffered before him/her.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes African Americans need to stop worrying so much about "the community" and take care of their own needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner is doing a lot to improve his/her neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The success my partner has had is mainly because of him/her, not anyone else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner has more confidence in White professionals, like doctors and teachers, than in African American professionals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes African Americans should build and maintain their own communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes he/she must do all he/she can to restore African Americans to their position of respect in the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner makes it a point to shop at African American businesses and use African American-owned services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It hurts my partner when he/she sees another African American person discriminated against.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner believes it is important that African American people decide for themselves what to be called and what their needs are.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q74 Please answer the following questions about your current relationship.

Q75 Do you and your partner talk about race? (e.g., experiences with racism or media stories about race)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q76 How often do you and your partner talk about race?

- ☐ a. Less than once every 6 months
- ☐ b. Every few months
- ☐ c. Once a month
- ☐ d. A few times a month
- ☐ e. Once a week
- ☐ f. A few times a week
- ☐ g. Daily

Q77 Of the last 10 conversations you and your partner had about race, please give us a rough idea how many of those 10 were about each of the following topics: (Please note that your answers should add up to 10)

_____ Personal beliefs about race:

_____ Personal experiences related to race:

_____ Stories in the media about race:

_____ How race affects your romantic relationship:

_____ Other (please specify):

Q78 In general, how satisfied are you with how often you and your partner talk about race?

- ☐ We talk about race far more than I'd like us to
- ☐ We talk about race somewhat more than I'd like us to
- ☐ Neither too much nor too little
- ☐ We talk about race somewhat less than I'd like us to
- ☐ We talk about race far less than I'd like us to

Q79 In general, how satisfied are you with the topics you and your partner discuss when talking about race?

- ☐ Extremely satisfied
- ☐ Moderately satisfied
- ☐ Slightly satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Slightly dissatisfied
- ☐ Moderately dissatisfied
- ☐ Extremely dissatisfied

Q80 In general, how comfortable are you talking with your partner about race?

- ☐ Extremely comfortable
- ☐ Moderately comfortable
- ☐ Slightly comfortable
- ☐ Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- ☐ Slightly uncomfortable
- ☐ Moderately uncomfortable
- ☐ Extremely uncomfortable

Q81 In general, how supported do you feel by your partner when you talk about race?

- ☐ Extremely supported
- ☐ Moderately supported
- ☐ Slightly supported
- ☐ Neither supported nor unsupported
- ☐ Slightly unsupported
- ☐ Moderately unsupported
- ☐ Extremely unsupported

Q82 When you talk about race with your partner, who usually initiates these conversations?

- ☐ Me
- ☐ We both do about the same
- ☐ My partner

Q84 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
Please answer these questions about your current relationships

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When my partner and I talk about race with my partner, I feel my opinions are supported.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable talking to my partner about my opinions about race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When it's really important to me to talk about race, my partner is available and supportive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even if we disagree, I can talk openly with my partner about race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I talk with my partner about race, we usually end up arguing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When we talk about race, my partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When we talk about race, I hold back from telling my partner what I really think and feel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When we talk about race, one of us withdraws, doesn't want to talk about it anymore or leaves the scene.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I turn to my partner to talk about experiences with racism (e.g. race related conflict at work). Talking with my partner about race helps buffer against the negative impact of racism on my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q85 The following questions ask about your experiences during steps you may have taken in your current relationship.

Q86 Have you and your partner had one or more talks to "define your relationship"?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q87 How often did you and your partner talk about race when having "define your relationship" talks?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q89 Have you and your partner met each other's friends or family?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q88 How often did you and your partner talk about race during when meeting each other's friends and family?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q91 Are you and your partner living together? That is, do you share a single address without either of you having a separate place?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q90 How often did you and your partner talk about race when you began living together?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q93 Are you and your partner currently engaged?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q92 How often did you and your partner talk about race when you got engaged?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q96 Are you and your partner married?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q94 How often did you and your partner talk about race when you got married?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q97 Do you and your partner have children together?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q95 How often did you and your partner talk about race when you had children?

- ☐ Much more than usual
- ☐ Somewhat more than usual
- ☐ About the same than usual
- ☐ Somewhat less than usual
- ☐ Much less than usual

Q98 As best as you can remember, during which stage in your relationship did you and your partner FIRST start talking seriously about race?

- ☐ When we became a couple
- ☐ When we met each other's friends and family
- ☐ When we started living together
- ☐ When we got engaged
- ☐ When we got married
- ☐ When we had children
- ☐ Another defining time: _____

Q83 Even if you haven't talked with your partner about race, how important do you think it is to do so?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Moderately important
- ☐ Slightly important
- ☐ Not at all important

Q109 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
Please answer these questions about your current relationships.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is important that my partner acknowledges my unique experiences as a Black man.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a Black man, I experience different issues than my partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner understands some of the challenges I face as a Black man.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner is supportive of the challenges I face as a Black man.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can talk to my partner about how my experiences as a Black man differ from hers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a Black man, my role in my relationship is different than men of other races.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It is important that my partner acknowledges my unique experiences as a Black woman.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a Black woman, I experience different issues than my partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner understands some of the challenges I face as a Black woman.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner is supportive of the challenges I face as a Black woman.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can talk to my partner about how my experiences as a Black woman differ from his.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a Black woman, my role in my relationship is different than woman of other races.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q99 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
Please answer these questions about your current relationships.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It is important to me that my romantic partner is African American.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner's beliefs or perspectives about race were an important part of what attracted me to her/him.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I knew my partner's views on race before we became a couple	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner's beliefs or perspectives about race had nothing to do with why my partner and I began dating.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner's views on race played an important role in us becoming romantically involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to me that my partner and I have similar beliefs about race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to me that my partner and I have different beliefs about race	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner's views on race don't matter to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner and I talk about what it means to be an African American couple	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My partner and I agree on what it means to be an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner and I developed our beliefs about what it means to be an African American couple together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My partner and I have different opinions about what it means to be an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q100 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
Please answer these questions about your views in general, NOT specific to your current partner.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
There is something unique about being an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
African American couples have different experiences than couples of other ethnicities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a clear belief about what it means to be an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've thought a great deal about what it means to be an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defining what it means to be an African American couple is important.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a unique experience to be in an African American relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I haven't given much thought to what it means to be an African American couple.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to have or develop a strong sense of an identity as an African American couple with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I do not want to have a strong identity as an African American couple with my partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
---	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Q101 Have you ever ended a relationship because of your partner's beliefs about race?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q102 Please tell us about this experience:

Q1 Please fill in all that apply:

- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ White
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Q2 How do you identify racially? (e.g. Black, White, Multiracial...)

Q3 How do you identify ethnically? (e.g. African American, Latino, European American...)

Q4 How does your partner identify racially? (e.g. Black, White, Multiracial...)

Q5 How does your partner identify ethnically? (e.g. African American, Latino, European American...)

Q6 What is your gender identity? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Gender Queer or Non-Conforming
- ☐ Trans*
- ☐ I prefer to self-identify: _____

Q7 What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q8 What is your sexual orientation?

- ☐ Heterosexual
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Queer
- ☐ I prefer to self-identify: _____

Q9 Sometimes people have terms that they use to describe their relationship agreements. Examples include monogamous, polyamorous, open, or swinging. What terms, if any, do you use to describe your relationship?

Q10 Do you and your partner have an agreement that it's okay for one or both of you to be romantically and/or sexually involved with other people, under some circumstances?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q11 How many years of schools have you completed?

- ☐ 7 (Grade School)
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 (High School)
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12
- ☐ 13 (College)
- ☐ 14
- ☐ 15
- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17 (Graduate School)
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20
- ☐ 21
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 23
- ☐ 24

Q12 Highest degree earned:

- ☐ High School Diploma or GED
- ☐ Associate
- ☐ Bachelors
- ☐ Masters
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other: _____

Q13 Please enter your zip or postal code:

Q14 Please indicate your religious affiliation:

- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Protestant
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ New Age/Metaphysical
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Atheist
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other: _____

Q15 Please enter your partner's religious affiliation:

- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Protestant
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ New Age/Metaphysical
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Atheist
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other: _____

Q16 How often do you attend religious services?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Less than once a year
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Several times a year
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Two to three times a month
- ☐ Every week
- ☐ More than once a week

Q17 How often does your partner attend religious services?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Less than once a year
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Several times a year
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Two to three times a month
- ☐ Every week
- ☐ More than once a week

Q18 All things considered:

	0 - Not at all	1	2	3 - Somewhat	4	5	6 - Very Religious
All things considered, how religious would you say you are?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All things considered, how religious would you say your partner is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 Are you presently employed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q21 What is your current (or most recent) occupation?

Q22 What is your annual income (not including your partner's)?

- ☐ Under 4,999
- ☐ 5,000-9,999
- ☐ 10,000-14,999
- ☐ 15,000-19,999
- ☐ 20,000-29,999
- ☐ 30,000-39,999
- ☐ 40,000-49,999
- ☐ 50,000-59,999
- ☐ 60,000-69,999
- ☐ 70,000-79,999
- ☐ 80,000-89,999
- ☐ 90,000-99,999
- ☐ Over 100,000

Q23 What is your partner's annual income?

- ☐ Under 4,999
- ☐ 5,000-9,999
- ☐ 10,000-14,999
- ☐ 15,000-19,999
- ☐ 20,000-29,999
- ☐ 30,000-39,999
- ☐ 40,000-49,999
- ☐ 50,000-59,999
- ☐ 60,000-69,999
- ☐ 70,000-79,999
- ☐ 80,000-89,999
- ☐ 90,000-99,999
- ☐ Over 100,000

Q24 As of today, what is the status of your relationship? (Mark one.)

- ☐ Dating (living together or not)
- ☐ Engaged
- ☐ Married

Q25 Date of engagement: (mm/yyyy)

Q26 Date of marriage: (mm/dd/yyyy)

Q27 Have the two of you together made a specific commitment to marry?

- ☐ Yes, we are engaged
- ☐ Yes, we are planning marriage, but are not engaged
- ☐ No

Q28 Have you and your partner set a date for getting married?

- ☐ Yes, it is: (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
- ☐ No

Q29 Do you want to marry your current partner?

- ☐ Yes, I am sure I want to marry my partner
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ No, I do not want to marry my partner
- ☐ I haven't thought about it

Q30 Regardless of relationship status, how long have you been in this relationship? (please answer in months)

Q31 Please answer the following questions about your current relationship.

	1 - Not at all committed	2	3	4 - Somewhat committed	5	6	7 - Very committed
How committed are you to your relationship?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How committed is your partner to your relationship?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q33 Are you and your partner living together? That is, do you share a single address without either of you having a separate place?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Q34 How many times have you been married?

Q35 How many sexual partners have you had (not including your current partner)?

Q36 Have you and your partner had sexual intercourse?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Q37 How many children are currently living in your home?

Q38 Are you (or is your partner) pregnant?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Q39 How many children do you have from your current relationship (that is, both you and your partner are the sole parents of the child)?

Q40 How many children do you have from other relationships?

Q41 How many children does your partner have from other relationships?

Q42 Thinking back on your family while you were growing up, how true is the following statement?

	1 - Strongly Disagree	2	3	4 - Neither agree or disagree	5	6	7 - Strongly Agree
We fought a lot in our family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q43 Please check the type of parental relationship you spent the most time living with while you were growing up:

- ☐ Single mother
- ☐ Single father
- ☐ Both biological parents
- ☐ Biological father and stepmother
- ☐ Biological mother and stepfather
- ☐ Adoptive parents
- ☐ Other (please describe) _____

Q44 Have any of your parental figures died?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q45 If yes, which one(s)?

Q46 Your age(s) at their passing?

Q47 Did your parents get married?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q48 If not, did they ever live together?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q49 If yes, did your parents live together before they got married?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q50 Have you parents ever been divorced from each other?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q52 If yes, how old were you?

Q53 If yes, did either of your parents remarry after the divorce?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q108 If yes, which one(s)? Please also provide your age when your parent remarried.

Q54 Are there any comments you care to share about your family background?

Q103 Thank you for your participation! Are you interested in participating in a follow-up phone interview to discuss some of these topics in a little more detail? The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and you will be entered in drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card! If you are willing to participate please click the link below to provide your contact information. A member of the research team will contact you to schedule your interview!